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Select Committee on Soft Power
and the UK's Influence

Report of Session 2013–14

Persuasion and Power in the Modern World

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The Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence

The Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence was appointed by the House of Lords on 16 May 2013 with the orders of reference "to examine the use of soft power in furthering the United Kingdom's global influence and interests".

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Lord Foulkes of Cumnock
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Declaration of Interests

See Appendix 1.

A full list of Members' interests can be found in the Register of Lords' Interests:

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Publications

All publications of the Committee are available on the internet at:

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Evidence is published online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/soft-power-and-uks-influence> and available for inspection at the Parliamentary Archives (020 7219 5314)

References in footnotes to the Report are as follows:

Q refers to a question in oral evidence.

Witness names without a question reference refer to written evidence.

SUMMARY

Immense changes are taking place in the international landscape. The conditions under which international relations are conducted have undergone, and are continuing to undergo, major shifts which will accelerate and be compounded in the years immediately ahead. Unprecedented international access to state information, the digital empowerment of individuals and groups, the growing role of global protest networks and NGOs, the complexity of modern trade supply chains and multinational corporate operations, accelerated urbanisation, the increasing asymmetry of modern warfare, and transnational challenges are diffusing and fragmenting traditional state power, and enabling the world's peoples and countries to be increasingly interconnected and interdependent. At the same time, the rising power, economic and political, of non-Western countries (the so-called 'rise of the rest') is altering the international balance of power and influence.

The UK, like other nations, is directly affected by these new conditions. They create a demand for new approaches in the exercise and deployment of our influence. These new methods involve generating international power through influencing other countries to want the same things as the UK, by building positive international relationships and coalitions which defend our interests and security, uphold our national reputation and promote our trade and prosperity. This has been described as the exercise of 'soft power', as distinct from the use of force and coercion for a nation to assert itself, labelled as 'hard power'.

We emphasise at the outset that we do not see the use of 'hard' and 'soft' methods in the projection of a nation's power as alternatives, but as mutually reinforcing. The coercive or 'hard power' use of military resources remains a key component in a nation's armoury. But all our evidence confirms that new and more subtle combinations of both 'hard' and 'soft' methods of power deployment are now necessary for national effectiveness and advancement on the global stage. These combinations have been christened as 'smart power': the use of both traditional and modern instruments of power to project and gain influence in a fast-changing world. Nor is 'soft power' merely a new name for traditional diplomacy: on the contrary, it is an important new dimension in the conduct of international affairs.

We believe these powerful streams of change are converging to reshape global politics: they require a commensurate response from those who guide the UK's foreign policy. The UK cannot simply proceed as before. It must change fundamentally the way it interacts with other nations and communities if the country is still effectively to protect and promote its interests.

In this hugely changed international context, soft power has become vital for modern nations' security and prosperity. We have concluded that successfully communicating the attributes, values and outputs that gain for the UK both attractiveness and respect in the eyes of people abroad will be vital in maintaining the UK in positions of influence. The mindset of those who shape the UK's foreign policy must reflect this. Many other nations are rapidly grasping this agenda: the UK's traditional rivals are enhancing their foreign policy capabilities and styles on every front, including strengthening their cultural diplomacy institutions. China, Russia and other nations are also investing vast sums in supporting their strategies of power and influence assertion through softer and newer methods.

We urge those who shape and administer the UK's foreign policy in all Departments of Government and beyond to acquire a much deeper understanding of how others see the UK, and how the very most can be made of our undoubtedly unique assets. While the US is the UK's close ally, and while the UK is a European power by history, geography and interests, there can be real soft power gains for the UK if it is seen to have a role and direction which is distinct—at least in some respects—from the broad American-led sphere of influence, and distinct from collective European Union endeavours. It is also vital that the Government communicate confidently with the British public about how some of their actions and spending in support of soft power can only deliver tangible and measurable results over time, and with patience and dedication.

The UK finds itself with a tremendous range of institutions and relationships in politics, economics, science and culture, often amassed over generations, which give it a great deal of internationally recognised soft power. The UK could be said to have acquired a great many of these soft power assets 'in a fit of absence of mind', but we feel that the Government have moved from absent-mindedness to neglect of certain aspects of British soft power. The Government must not only defend and preserve the UK's accumulated estate of soft power. They must build on the UK's strengths, support the already evident success of soft power projection in many fields, avoid the false economies of short-termism in areas where results take time to mature—and capitalise on the gains which soft power generates in order to fulfil the UK's aims and purposes. We make a number of recommendations about actions that the Government should take, including:

- Recognising that the UK's Embassy network around the entire globe needs to be supported more than ever. Embassy resourcing should be strengthened.
- Reviewing how well DFID, the MOD and the FCO cooperated in Afghanistan, with a view to providing lessons for any future post-conflict reconstruction efforts: they should publish the results of their review as a Command Paper within a year of the withdrawal from Afghanistan.
- More fully grasping the importance of hard power in knitting together with soft power to create 'smart power': the Armed Forces, as they face the demands of a still faster-changing role, should be properly resourced to meet these challenges. The Government should undertake a thorough analysis of the contribution that soft and smart power might make to the UK's security as part of the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review.
- Aiming for the UK to be the best-networked state in the world. The UK must engage more actively and flexibly with the networks of the future that represent key emerging powers. The Government also need to put greater focus on the important potential in the Commonwealth: the Minister of State with responsibility for Commonwealth matters should have that task as his or her main role, and should be seen to do so.
- Taking positive steps to link soft power deployment and support for the country's exports, its enterprise, and its innovative capacities.
- Accepting that while managing immigration represents a highly complex challenge for any government, they must make every effort to ensure that legitimate visitors can access UK visas quickly, easily and cheaply; they should remove students from net migration targets. The Government must present and communicate their visa and immigration policies with a level of balance and in a tone that do not discourage those who would add to the UK's prosperity from coming to the UK and supporting its businesses; we do not believe that this is always the case at present.

To ensure that the UK's attractiveness and influence can be used by the Government and other British bodies to promote the country's interests, the Government and foreign policy community must develop new approaches. These approaches involve communicating openly and actively both with old allies and new partners; offering the UK's soft and hard power to the pursuit of solutions to common concerns; and avoiding false choices between international institutions, and working to nudge these institutions towards global arrangements from which the UK stands to gain. It also means allowing British Embassies to flourish as dynamic centres of commercial, diplomatic, and cultural activities.

To continue playing a responsible and progressive role in building global peace and stability, the UK needs to widen its diplomacy, understand that it is dealing with empowered and e-enabled publics everywhere and in every country, and accept through its tone and policies that power has in some degree shifted East, South and into the world's networks. Such an approach would enhance the UK's soft power, work with the grain of the changing nature of international relations, and further the country's security and prosperity.

Foreign policy development should no longer be shaped entirely by Western models of modernisation and political development: the UK must appreciate that nations such as China are following other paths, and working together outside traditional multilateral structures such as the UN Security Council. The UK should find this shift of perception manageable as a nation uniquely equipped to understand, respect and work with the new *mélange* of Eastern, Western and Southern powers, cultures and values now rapidly taking shape. The UK has to slip its twentieth-century moorings and look to Asia, Africa and other regions, countries and communities. This does not necessarily mean striking out alone: all nations are now intensely interdependent.

In a now almost totally transformed international scene, it is vital that the UK maintain its sense of purpose and direction: the British need to feel confident in knowing who we are and what our role is in a transformed and turbulent world.

We consider that better deployment of the UK's soft power will only achieve real momentum if the UK maintains this sense of purpose. There needs to be a long-term strategic narrative about the international role of the UK, promulgated from the centre of Government. Innovative and imaginative Departments would interpret this narrative, with the freedom to use their initiative but with a clear understanding of how their responses fitted into the broader theme. There must also be greater coherence across Government on issues affecting the UK's standing. We propose that there should be a small unit at the centre of Government specifically to assist the Prime Minister in reinforcing the consistency of the soft power story throughout Whitehall, and help him or her to counteract swiftly any developments that might undermine the UK's reputation. By putting into telling words all aspects of the UK's strategic story and direction, it would help Departments to understand the UK's place on the international stage, and how their actions might affect this.

A new approach to international power becomes more urgent by the day. The UK must remain a top-rank performer in the global network and it finds itself in the fortunate position of having every opportunity to do so. However, while celebrating the UK's situation, we also warn that if the Government do not face the facts of the transformed international order, the UK will risk finding itself outwitted, out-competed, and increasingly insecure.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This Committee was an ‘ad hoc’ appointment by the House and therefore ceased to exist on the production of this Report. The Liaison Committee, which is responsible for reviewing the work of the House’s select committees, has decided to follow up the recommendations of former ad hoc committees a year after their reports are published. Some of our recommendations (those marked with an asterisk below) are therefore identified as issues on which we hope progress can be made within a year, and which should be subject to this process.

1. The shifts sweeping the international order over the past 15 years will accelerate and be compounded in the years immediately ahead. Unprecedented international access to state information, the digital empowerment of individuals and groups, the growing role of global protest networks and non-governmental organisations, the complexity of modern trade supply chains and multinational corporate operations, accelerated urbanisation and transnational challenges are all operating both to diffuse and fragment traditional state power and to bring many of the world’s peoples and countries closer together. At the same time, the rising power, economic and political, of non-Western countries (the so-called ‘rise of the rest’) is altering the international balance of power and influence. (see paragraph 28 of the main body of the Report)
2. We have heard that these two powerful streams are converging to reshape global politics, and we believe that they require a commensurate response from those who guide the UK’s foreign policy, from the Government’s leaders downwards. In this hugely changed international context, the UK cannot simply proceed as before. If the UK is still effectively to protect and promote its interests, how it interacts with other nations and communities will need fundamentally to alter. We conclude that this demands a radical change in the mindset of those who direct the UK’s foreign policy and shape its international role. We note that the UK is hosting a NATO summit in Newport in September of this year. There will be considerable focus on the UK’s foreign policy in the weeks building up to that event: we recommend that the key themes of this Report should be evident in the Government’s current and forthcoming preparations for the summit and in their contribution to the public debate surrounding it.* (paragraph 28)
3. While the balances of power are shifting away from the West and away from governments, military force—though undoubtedly vital—is proving insufficient for defending the international interests of modern states. However, international relations are becoming ever more important as many nations become increasingly interconnected and interdependent, with a broadening interface between official, non-state and private interests and organisations. In this context, we consider that a country wishing to maintain or improve its place on the international stage must find new, complementary ways of establishing and exerting power and maintaining influence to reinforce and build on the crucial contribution made by the Armed Forces. (paragraph 39)
4. In the context of shared global threats and high economic and political interdependence between states, and because military coercion alone is proving insufficient for defending nations’ interests, being able to build positive international relationships and coalitions—as well as being able to

export goods and services—is vital for modern nations’ security and prosperity. The degree to which populations now form networks across borders gives this soft power a newly increased impact because it relies to a significant degree on popular perceptions. (paragraph 41)

5. The evidence that we have received about the role of soft power in modern international relations has convinced us that because the methods that countries use to sustain or gain international power are changing, successfully communicating the attributes, values and outputs that gain for the UK both attractiveness and respect in the eyes of people abroad will be vital in maintaining the UK in positions of influence. Soft power may be difficult to measure and control, but it is nonetheless essential for protecting the UK’s interests. The mindset of those who shape the UK’s foreign policy must reflect this. (paragraph 60)
6. To maximise their overall power, governments must strike an intelligent balance between supporting and benefiting from softer methods of power and persuasion now available and resorting to the use of force (hard power). Governments must also understand how hard and soft power are mutually reinforcing. Using the analogy of Professor Nye’s three-dimensional chess game (with military power still unipolar on the top board, economic power now multipolar on the middle board, and the realm of cross-border transactions outside governmental control on the bottom board where power is now widely dispersed), governments need to be able to negotiate their positions in all three dimensions. In the hyper-connected world, we consider that the game will be played more often on the third board, where transnational attractions and connections produce soft power. While it will be rarer for states to call on military force or economic sanctions, failure to consider the whole playing board could lead to the UK being outmanoeuvred. (paragraph 70)
7. For the UK to thrive in the new global milieu—as it should be well equipped to do—Government, Parliament, leading voices and shapers of opinion, non-governmental actors and the public will all need a better understanding of the importance of soft power alongside traditional hard power, and of how they interact. It is vital that the Government should have confidence in communicating with the British public about how some of their actions and spending in support of soft power can only deliver tangible and measurable results over time, and with patience and dedication. (paragraph 78)
8. A greater public appreciation for how the UK’s soft power assets (such as its cultural strengths) and most attractive characteristics (such as its diversity) contribute to the UK’s international standing, its security, and its prosperity, could improve both domestic and international understanding of the UK’s strategic narrative. It could also support internal community cohesion, and help voters recognise the benefits of the international networks of which the UK is a member, and the assets and policies that taxpayers fund. We urge strongly-led public debate about the Government’s approach to smart power. Particularly within Government and Parliament, there is a need for urgent reflection on the mechanisms through which the Government seek to exercise power to achieve the UK’s goals. (paragraph 79)
9. We also urge on all concerned a much deeper understanding of how others see the UK, and how the very most can be made of our undoubtedly unique assets. Thus, while the US is the UK’s close ally, and while the UK is a European power by history, geography and interests, we feel that there can

be real soft power gains for the UK if it is seen to have a role and direction which is distinct—at least in some respects—from the broad American-led sphere of influence, and distinct from collective European Union endeavours. (paragraph 80)

10. As our witnesses have made very clear, the days are long gone when this nation's, or any nation's, power could be measured in the size of its military forces, or in traditional patterns of enforcement. (paragraph 81)
11. If the UK is to benefit from its significant soft power potential, the Government need to recognise that some of the bigger gains will only emerge over time and as conditions evolve. An overemphasis on immediate returns on investment will dilute the urgent attention that the pursuit and exercise of soft power require. (paragraph 84)
12. The task for the Government will be to build on the UK's strengths, support the already evident success of soft power projection in many fields, and avoid the false economies of short-termism in areas where results take time to mature. Some of our proposals below involve relatively small levels of additional expenditure. We emphasise that investment now will realise significant future returns, not least because it is cheaper to support established and successful soft power assets now than it would be to attempt to regenerate neglected assets later, when the benefits of soft power become even clearer. In addition, the Government need to express honestly to the public that successes in the generation of soft power may come only from long-term commitments. (paragraph 85)
13. As the Government examine the UK's geopolitical situation, they need to refine the country's role to ensure that they and other UK actors are able to maximise both the UK's attractiveness and the benefit gained from the country's soft power. (paragraph 94)
14. We consider that the UK has much to offer the world, particularly because its history has bequeathed it both a global perspective and a deep understanding of most of the world's regions. It also enjoys alliances with many of the world's nations, both great and rising. The UK must therefore not accept any putative foreign policy choice between acting as a poodle of Washington or a lapdog of Brussels. The UK must chart its own course at the centre of a networked and transformed world in which it has significant comparative advantages. (paragraph 96)
15. We urge those shaping the UK's foreign policy to act with greater confidence on the international stage, particularly in the Commonwealth, and not be reluctant to play a global role because of the complexity of the UK's colonial history. (paragraph 97)
16. We consider that better coordination of the UK's overseas activities will require the Government to commit more resources to the Embassy network.* (paragraph 99)
17. Embassies are now 'super-facilitators', facilitating contacts abroad for British businesses and other organisations and then standing aside while new relationships develop. The global redistribution of power away from governments means that the Embassy network needs to be supported more than ever, and Embassy resourcing strengthened. We welcome the Government's ambition to reopen diplomatic posts across the world, particularly in the BRIC countries and Latin America. But we are concerned

that at a time when such posts have become vital to British soft power, the Government might have spread the UK's diplomatic representation too thinly.* (paragraph 101)

18. Ambassadors are now required to be polymaths, and need training in a wide range of skills. The Committee recognises that spending constraints currently prevent the Government from providing much in the way of extra compensation to acknowledge this increased level of responsibility, but we urge the Government to ensure that remuneration and career structures allow the FCO to retain the most able. (paragraph 102)
19. The era-shifting rise of social media will require the UK's official representatives to keep abreast of the skills that public diplomacy now demands. We therefore recommend that all UK diplomats receive professional training in public diplomacy. Government representatives should make use of all the methods and technologies that they have at their disposal to communicate effectively. In the hyper-connected world, UK diplomats will need always to be aware of the power of social media, and competent in their use of it.* (paragraph 104)
20. We urge the Government to keep under review their decision to decentralise public diplomacy funding. When making funding commitments, the FCO should consider how best to spend public money to achieve the widest possible soft power impact. (paragraph 105)
21. The Committee welcomes the re-opening of the FCO's Language Centre. The Government should conduct an audit of the language skills of civil servants across all Departments. The Government would not need to spend a great deal on such an exercise, but being able to draw upon all of the Government's language skills would bring sizeable advantages for officials working overseas or with foreign counterparts.* (paragraph 106)
22. There will be significant crossover between the roles that the Armed Forces, DFID and the FCO assume in unstable and post-conflict contexts worldwide. We therefore recommend that the Government should review how well DFID, the MOD and the FCO cooperated in Afghanistan, with a view to providing lessons for any future post-conflict reconstruction efforts. They should publish the results of their review as a Command Paper within a year of the withdrawal from Afghanistan.* (paragraph 113)
23. We acknowledge the concerns raised by some witnesses that the perceived blurring of boundaries between humanitarian organisations and armed forces can create political and security difficulties for aid workers. But the level of separation involved in 'humanitarian space' runs counter both to the idea that the Armed Forces involve themselves more closely in post-conflict and peacetime activities, and to the new imperative for the UK to use all the assets at its disposal in a joined-up way to gain influence in a changing world. Generally, such barriers should not be allowed to halt cooperation between military and civilian actors where cooperation is necessary. At the same time, servicemen and servicewomen deserve greater recognition for the important work that they do in post-conflict reconstruction.* (paragraph 115)
24. We recommend that the Government undertake a thorough analysis of the contribution that soft and smart power might make to the UK's security as part of the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review. They should look in particular at the role that the military plays in projecting soft power and at its humanitarian work.* (paragraph 116)

25. Because their work is now so dependent on understanding the cultural and political contexts of countries in which they operate, and because the work of the military is linked inextricably to broader efforts to improve the UK's reputation overseas, military attachés should be fully integrated into mainstream Embassy work under the purview of Ambassadors.* (paragraph 117)
26. The importance of hard power (military force) in knitting together with soft power as part of a smart power strategy should be more fully grasped. The Armed Forces, as they face the demands of a still faster-changing role in the new context, should be properly resourced to meet these challenges. (paragraph 119)
27. The promotion of British values through the funding of international development projects can yield significant soft power gains. The Government should improve their communications around the UK's involvement in Africa and other developing regions and countries, for example by promoting the UK as a partner (including a commercial partner), not simply as an aid-giver. (paragraph 124)
28. The Government should attempt better coordination of the activities that UK agencies undertake 'on the ground' in each post and market. The Committee feels that DFID is too divorced from other arms of Government and UK Embassies. (paragraph 127)
29. DFID could, for example, make an explicit commitment in its annual business plan outlining how it might better promote itself as an enabler of soft power and as a promoter of British industry and commerce. The Government should also consider soft power gains when reviewing DFID's activities. Humanitarian assistance and post-conflict reconstruction, for instance, might yield greater soft power gains than other forms of support, and this should be part of the picture when DFID's work is evaluated. (paragraph 128)
30. We consider that as well as its focus on when UK development assistance can achieve the most for the people it is intended to support, DFID should give consideration to the degree to which its work can support the promotion of British values. It should do so both because such a focus would support the UK's soft power, and because British values such as democracy and the rule of law promote the stability of the countries involved and the wellbeing of their people. (paragraph 131)
31. The Government should ensure that Departments are sufficiently resourced to deliver British aid in a way that supports the UK's soft power, because false economies here will result in aid spending that fails to deliver benefits for the UK in the long run. The Government should also ensure that DFID does more to improve the transparency and accountability of the overseas projects that it supports, of consultants whom DFID employs directly, and of consultants employed by the NGOs that DFID funds. In addition, DFID should be more open about the projects that it has paid for whose objectives have not been achieved. (paragraph 132)
32. Building on the UK's networked position will mean that the Government can work to shape the milieu of the international networks and global 'system' in which it plays a part, and not just relations within that system. (paragraph 144)

33. The underrepresentation of British officials in international institutions such as the EU and UN could well prove detrimental to the UK's long-term influence. (paragraph 145)
34. The UK must engage more actively and flexibly with the networks of the future that represent key emerging powers, such as ASEAN, the African Union, the Arab League, the Pacific Alliance and the new Latin American groupings now taking shape. We consider that the UK is in a uniquely strong position to seize the opportunities that its global history offers and present itself as able and keen to forge bonds with countries and communities across the globe. (paragraph 146)
35. The strategic imperatives of a transformed global order demand that the UK aim to be the best-networked state in the world. To answer one-time US Secretary of State Dean Acheson's challenge—that the UK had “lost an Empire and not yet found a role”—we submit that the country's history, experience and global reach now present it with an enviable opportunity to work with others in shaping the world. This role will require sometimes difficult engagement with partners old and new, but it is a role that the Government should embrace unequivocally and enthusiastically. (paragraph 147)
36. Since it is a clear source of advantage to UK interests, the Government could investigate how to give more support to intra-Commonwealth trade. (paragraph 154)
37. The Government need to put greater focus on the important potential in the Commonwealth. The Minister of State charged with responsibility for Commonwealth matters should have that task as his or her main role, and should be seen to do so, rather than just having care for Commonwealth relationships included amongst a list of numerous duties. (paragraph 156)
38. The UK must not be too timid about engaging energetically with the Commonwealth. Hyper-connectivity and the ‘rise of the rest’ are conspiring to give the Commonwealth every opportunity to become a vital network of the 21st century. The UK would be foolish not to recognise this development. (paragraph 157)
39. Our evidence suggested that the new significance for the UK of the modern Commonwealth, offering high-growth and high-savings markets, as well as a gateway to many of the great emerging powers of Asia, Africa and Latin America, is not quite understood in Whitehall. We note that the education, business, training and cultural sectors have taken the lead in Commonwealth networking. In particular, the UK's increasingly successful exporters of all kinds of services have forged ahead with this engagement—a highly promising trend in a world of fast-expanding knowledge-based exchanges. (paragraph 159) We recommend that the Government should follow this lead both in inspirational word and in deed: not just inside the FCO, but in all the lead Departments with a substantial international interface (including DFID, MOD, DCMS, DfE, DEFRA and others). The Government should foster and encourage Commonwealth linkages with much more vigour than before, while recognising the challenges which currently confront Commonwealth bodies. (paragraph 160)
40. Given the importance of the wide-ranging debate regarding the UK's membership of the EU, we feel that all political parties should ensure that their policy choices take heed of the UK's long-term global influence. While

recognising that the balance of evidence we received argued that membership of the EU offers the UK a useful and important arrow in the quiver to employ in international relations, we consider that the Government should enhance the UK's input to the reform and modernisation of the EU. We see major opportunities for the UK to work with many allies, at both the governmental and popular levels, throughout the European Union to strengthen and adapt the Union's 21st-century role. Such an approach would support British interests and help adapt the European Union's own position to new global challenges. However, the gains all round will also depend on the success of the EU in addressing present challenges, such as divisions within the Euro zone and unacceptably high youth unemployment. (paragraph 169)

41. UKTI, and other Government bodies charged with promoting UK companies abroad, should emphasise the reliability and trustworthiness of British businesspeople as one of the significant advantages of trading with the UK. (paragraph 182)
42. It is the Committee's opinion that the Government must take positive steps to link soft power deployment and support for the country's exports, its enterprise, and its innovation. (paragraph 186)
43. We welcome the Government's recognition of the importance of supporting exporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). A House of Lords Select Committee recently conducted an inquiry into this subject and we urge the Government to continue working on implementing its recommendations. (paragraph 191)
44. We agree with the evidence that we heard from a number of witnesses that UKTI should encourage more follow-up work in the aftermath of trade missions. Helping British businesses to export their goods and services to other countries and form supply chains and consortia is crucial for building up the UK's soft power, as these international connections strengthen trust in the UK and its reputation for providing valuable outputs. It is also vital that the UK's trade promotion bodies pull out all the stops to capitalise on the UK's soft power and translate it into trade deals. We urge the Government to put every energy into this effort. (paragraph 192)
45. Embassy staff should undergo training in seeking out opportunities for British SMEs as well as large businesses. The Government should also encourage the FCO actively to recruit more advisory staff from the private sector. What used to be purely commercial work should now be reinforced by linkages to new audiences in cultural, educational and broader spheres, to propel forward the whole UK 'package'.* (paragraph 193)
46. The Committee suggests that wherever feasible, UK Government bodies working to promote British commercial interests in a particular country should be brought under one roof, and under the direct purview of the Ambassador to ensure effective coordination of all the UK's efforts 'on the ground'.* (paragraph 194)
47. Constructive engagement with economies of a range of sizes is good for trade, not least because global supply chains are now so complex, and involve so many partners. (paragraph 195)

48. There should be reinforced private and public investment and supportive policy-making to protect the UK education sector's global position. (paragraph 206)
49. The FCO could sustain the important connections formed through education by working with universities and schools to scope out opportunities for the establishment of overseas campuses, and by funding new and targeted scholarships in key growth areas such as Africa. The Government should ensure that the Chevening, Commonwealth and Marshall awards offer a coherent package of engagement with the UK and its Embassies during the period of the scholarship and afterwards.* (paragraph 209)
50. While we are pleased to hear that "the Chevening cuts are in the process of being reversed", this is the minimum that the Government should do. Greater investment in scholarships by other countries is threatening the UK's competitive position. The Committee feels that a relatively small amount of extra funding would bring the country into line to ensure that the brightest and best of the world's future leaders feel an affinity with the UK.* (paragraph 210)
51. We agree that study abroad provides soft power benefits to the UK, and that the Government should work with universities to increase the number of students who are studying in other countries. (paragraph 211)
52. The Government should consider greater integration of science within their foreign policy strategy, objectives and formulation. For example, they should identify the ways in which science can inform diplomacy. The Government should also put considerable effort into assuming leadership roles in multilateral efforts to address science-related policy problems. To strengthen links between British scientists and their counterparts overseas, the Government should provide particular diplomatic assistance to scientists working in regions with weak governance. They should work to ensure that security concerns around nuclear physics and microbiology, for example, do not entirely limit progress or international cooperation in these areas. British Embassies should also more actively communicate scientific initiatives, and the FCO should give training in science policy to diplomatic staff. (paragraph 217)
53. The Committee is concerned that the Government are not supporting the teaching of British English as well as they might. The Government must ensure that the British Council is properly resourced. In order to ensure that its position does not disadvantage private-sector education providers, the Government should require the British Council to provide in its annual report a much more detailed appraisal of the work that it has done to support private sector British English education across the world.* (paragraph 223)
54. The UK's capacity to build connections is constrained by the small number of its citizens who are able to speak foreign languages. Given the transition towards a more people-to-people, reciprocal form of international relations, remaining mono-lingual goes against the grain of how influence and engagement, and therefore power, now operate. (paragraph 225)
55. We therefore urge the Government to make every effort to redress the decline in language learning in UK schools and universities. The Government could also provide increased support for study-abroad programmes. (paragraph 226)

56. In almost every one of our evidence sessions, witnesses told us that the Government's new visa policies were harming the assets that build the UK's soft power. (paragraph 227)
57. We call on the Government to present and communicate their visa and immigration policies with a level of balance and in a tone that do not discourage those who would add to the UK's prosperity from coming to the UK and supporting its businesses and trade. We do not believe that this is always the case at present. (paragraph 228)
58. We welcome the Government's announcement that they intend to make UK visas more attractive to Chinese visitors. We now urge the Government to improve visa application processes—including access to visa processing facilities—for other key growth areas such as India and other Commonwealth nations, and to keep a close eye on competitors' visa policies. The Government must make every effort to ensure that legitimate tourists can access UK visas quickly, easily and cheaply, as they contribute so much to both the UK's economy and the UK's international standing.* (paragraph 229)
59. We believe that the Government should remove students from net migration targets, and publish data on how previous progress on migration targets would have looked had the Government not counted students in previous years. The Government must work harder to ensure that their efforts to cut migration by those who would not add to the UK's wellbeing do not prevent those whose presence would further the UK's domestic and international interests from seeing the UK as welcoming. We note that we are the sixth Select Committee to recommend in this Parliament that the Government remove international students from the net migration target, and that the Chairs of the other five Commons and Lords Committees to do so wrote to the Prime Minister in January 2013 to stress their belief that this degree of consensus between committees of both Houses was unprecedented.* (paragraph 235)
60. We urge the Government to consider the effects that their visa and immigration policies might have on the UK's well-established reputation for academic and cultural cooperation. The Government should acknowledge the effects that tighter visa regulations might have on UK scientists' ability to undertake international research collaboration. (paragraph 236)
61. A focus on strengthening diversity in positions of influence is an important way to enhance the UK's reputation for being meritocratic and open. Any lack of diversity risks squandering any soft power benefits that might accrue if representatives of communities that are in the minority in the UK, but which link to huge and powerful communities beyond the UK's shores, were more visible in British institutions and media. We also believe that improving the UK's record on gender equality in the boardrooms and corridors of power is of utmost importance, and could add to the UK's reputation in regions where the role of women is expanding. (paragraph 243)
62. We feel that there is a real risk that anti-immigration rhetoric will lead immigrant communities in the UK to feel less welcome and less a part of the UK, with injurious consequences for the unity of the nation. This can only undermine the message of friendliness and diversity that the UK hopes to project. (paragraph 244)

63. The Committee acknowledges that in straitened economic times, the Government will have spending priorities other than the funding of the UK's cultural institutions. Yet now that the economy is returning to growth, we urge the Government to reconsider funding cuts to publicly subsidised collections. We suggest that the Government focus in particular on funding cultural exchanges with a demonstrable soft power value, along the lines of the Cyrus Cylinder tour to Iran. We further propose that the Government use GREAT Campaign funding and advertising resources to promote specific cultural activities that are likely to increase inbound tourism.* (paragraph 255)
64. We recommend that the Government should consider analysing tax incentives so that support for British creative industries is in line with the UK's competitors.* (paragraph 257)
65. We welcome the British Council's efforts to nurture creative industries. Because of their role in developing the innovators of the future, we would also underline the importance of teaching design and technology in British schools. In order to promote a business environment in which the creative industries might thrive, we further recommend that the Government ensure a regulatory environment that encourages creative industries to headquarter in the UK.* (paragraph 259)
66. Given the diversity of the BBC's international services, there is scope for a coordinated and cohesive approach. (paragraph 260)
67. While we understand that the BBC World Service's budget has been protected in the move to licence-fee funding, we are concerned that this protection might be more difficult to maintain in the face of future budget pressures and challenges to the principle of the licence fee. We are concerned that the Government are not currently doing enough to support the BBC World Service, and we urge the BBC and the Government to ensure between them that the BBC World Service's budget is not reduced any further in real terms, and the opportunities for coordination across multiple platforms to deliver content are taken.* (paragraph 268)
68. The Committee feels that the Government should consider a range of funding options for the BBC World Service—including drawing on commercial sources for income—to ensure that its reach and influence do not diminish in a newly competitive global media market. (paragraph 270)
69. We stress that any reorganisation of the BBC World Service should be commercially self-sustaining, but that the suitability of any proposals must be judged against their potential to help or harm the global influence of the BBC World Service and the UK as a whole. Should the BBC Trust or the Government deem any commercialisation to be detrimental to the UK's influence, we urge the Government to seek other means of providing increased support to the World Service, perhaps from central taxation. However, we should never forget that the BBC's independence from Government is an essential part of its credibility, so that the case for more direct funding from Government is not always valid. The Government must avoid at all costs following the example of other states where nationally funded radio and TV stations (often resourced on a lavish scale) are seen as mere instruments of propaganda. (paragraph 271)

70. The Committee supports the use of DFID funding to assist the BBC's development work, and we urge further consideration of how this type of support can be expanded. (paragraph 272)
71. The soft power benefits originating from sport convince us that now the London Olympic and Paralympic Games have concluded, the UK should work to find a way to retain the "glow" attached to British sport institutions. We suggest that the Government continue to publicise the success of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games wherever possible—particularly through UKTI and the GREAT Campaign—while promoting the upcoming Glasgow Commonwealth Games. In addition, UKTI should strongly promote the UK as a reserve of expertise in the design and delivery of megaprojects like the London 2012 Games and the 2014 Commonwealth Games. (paragraph 283)
72. It is clear that the UK has strong soft power assets: in their response to this Report, we urge the Government to provide a strong focus on the specific aspects of the UK's soft and smart power that they will seek to develop in reaction to the arguments made in this Report, how they will do so, and to what timetable. The response should examine the challenges faced by the UK's non-governmental soft power assets and what the Government can do to assist and support them. It should also clearly delineate precisely which of our recommendations they support and will implement, and if they do not accept any of our recommendations, it should explain why not.* (paragraph 288)
73. The Government must present, and keep updating, a strong narrative about the UK's changing position; a story about what values the UK stands for and where it should be heading. We consider that the UK's soft power will only achieve real momentum if the UK maintains this sense of purpose. Attractiveness will only convert into positive achievements if the UK and those who engage with it have a grasp of the contribution that the UK can make—it will amount to little if the UK is believed merely to be seeking admiration and economic gain. The Government must take responsibility for providing a clear vision for the country, which will help those across Whitehall who influence foreign policy to understand what is holding the UK back, or could hold it back in the future. (paragraph 293)
74. The UK's aim and claim to continue to play a major role in world affairs would be undermined by Scottish separation, because even a debate about whether the UK should continue to be a member of the UN Security Council, for example, would do damage to its reputation. Dismembering the UK is not consistent with promoting the country abroad as a strong, stable and successful state; nor is it consistent with promoting the sense of internal social cohesion that is so important to presenting a positive view of the UK on the international stage. This damage would be to the disadvantage of the Scottish people, as much as to the UK as a whole. (paragraph 295)
75. The Committee urges the Government to publish, as part of their response to this Report, an evidence-based explanation that demonstrates how the sharing of soft power promotion between the National Security Council, the GREAT Campaign, the FCO, the MOD, DCMS and DFID has been a success.* (paragraph 297)
76. While we welcome the role of the GREAT Campaign in bringing together those involved in the UK's international marketing, we feel that the

Government should do more to build on the campaign's successes. We have some concern about the lack of clarity about where the buck stops. We propose that the Government make publicly available their justification for how the structure of the GREAT Campaign brings added value.* (paragraph 298)

77. We urge Government decision-makers to consider adverse consequences for the UK's soft power when devising policies that might be domestically popular, but could damage the UK's reputation. It is important for the UK's international attractiveness and influence that the Government avoid expressing confusing views on immigration. The Government must ensure greater consistency between the development and communication of their policies on immigration and their plans to make the UK attractive to visitors, students, workers and investors, with all the soft power benefits that openness brings. The Government have demonstrated a worrying lack of coordination in the development and communication of certain policies, with detrimental results for British soft power. (paragraph 299)
78. We suggest that bureaucratic coordination through the establishment of a Government committee on the UK's soft power would lack the drive and purpose that the issue requires. An understanding of how soft power is generated, and how the UK should behave if it is to be attractive and influential should become mainstream in Whitehall thinking, not hived off to a Cabinet sub-committee. (paragraph 300)
79. We feel that there needs to be a long-term strategic narrative about the international role of the UK, promulgated from the centre of Government. Innovative and imaginative Departments would interpret this narrative, with the freedom to use their initiative but with a clear understanding of how their responses fitted into the broader theme. (paragraph 301)
80. If it does not have the capacity regularly to discuss the UK's broad international standing, the National Security Council (NSC) should make this clear, and the Government should move quickly to put responsibility for the UK's reputation in different hands. The Committee believes that while the NSC continues to play this role, soft power should be a regular item on its agenda—it needs to have a high priority. We urge the NSC to devote at least one session every six months to discussing the exercise of soft power, and to report to Parliament once a year about the UK's exercise of soft and smart power.* (paragraph 302)
81. We propose that there should be a small unit at the centre of Government specifically to assist the Prime Minister in reinforcing the consistency of the soft power story throughout Whitehall, and help him or her to counteract swiftly any developments that might undermine the UK's broader message, story and reputational standing across the world. The unit would set the theme on which Departments and non-state soft power actors could improvise. It would not impose strategies on Departments or add a layer of bureaucratic meetings and planning: by assembling and putting into telling words all aspects of the UK's strategic story and direction, it would help Departments to understand the UK's place on the international stage, and how their actions might affect this.* (paragraph 304)
82. We consider that there ought to be a Committee in Parliament which annually publishes a review of the Government's soft power strengths and weaknesses, goals and priorities, looking particularly closely at the work that

- the Government have done to support the UK's international standing and attractiveness. We note that there are a number of Parliamentary Committees with international dimensions to their work, such as the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee and the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy, and we hope that one such Committee will consider pursuing this. We further recommend that, as the UK's international standing is the ultimate in long-term and non-partisan concerns, the Government should regularly consult with all the major parties in the Westminster Parliament and in the devolved assemblies on the UK's strategic direction and future on the world stage. The unit tasked with shaping and embellishing the UK's strategic narrative should also consult widely with non-state soft power actors, including firms, charities and scientific, sporting and cultural institutions. (paragraph 310)
83. In an era in which the distribution and very nature of power, influence and engagement are undergoing radical change, the UK finds itself with a tremendous range of institutions and relationships in politics, economics, science and culture, often amassed over generations, which give it a great deal of internationally recognised soft power. To parody the old saw about how it came to rule an empire, the UK could be said to have acquired a great many of these soft power assets 'in a fit of absence of mind'. We feel that the Government have moved from absent-mindedness to neglect of certain aspects of British soft power potential, particularly the UK's relations with the Commonwealth. The Government's imperative now must be to defend and preserve the UK's accumulated estate of soft power—and capitalise on the gains which soft power generates in order to fulfil the UK's aims and purposes. (paragraph 311)
84. To make sure that the UK's attractiveness and influence can be used by the Government and other British bodies to promote the country's interests, the Government and foreign policy community must develop new approaches to international relations. These approaches involve communicating openly and actively both with old allies and new partners; offering the UK's soft and hard power to the pursuit of solutions to common concerns; and avoiding false choices between international institutions and working to nudge these institutions towards global arrangements from which the UK stands to gain. It means allowing British Embassies to flourish as dynamic centres of commercial, diplomatic, and cultural activities, and ensuring that all of these activities are underpinned by a positive vision or narrative about the UK and about its role in shaping how the world will look in the future. (paragraph 312)
85. The Government should employ the UK's soft power advantages to ensure and protect national security by employing a judicious and 'smart' mixture of hard and soft power, and through opening and safeguarding the access routes that its various industries need to ensure the UK's continuing prosperity. To play a responsible and progressive role in building global peace and stability, the UK needs to widen its diplomacy, understand that it is dealing with empowered and e-enabled publics everywhere and in every country, and accept through its tone and policies that power has in some degree shifted East, South and into the world's networks. The Committee submits that such an approach would enhance the UK's soft power, work with the grain of the changing nature of international relations, and further the country's security and prosperity. (paragraph 313)

86. A huge change of mindset is required among those who shape the UK's international role and placing in the world. This mindset should not only recognise the fundamental ways in which international power balances are changing and the crucial role played by soft power in adapting to those shifts, but come to see the UK in the 21st century no longer solely as a 'Western' power—tied to Western models of modernisation and political development—but as a nation uniquely equipped to understand, respect and work with the new *mélange* of Eastern, Western and Southern powers, cultures and values now rapidly taking shape. The UK must appreciate that nations such as China are following other paths, and working together outside traditional multilateral structures such as the UN Security Council. (paragraph 314)
87. The UK has to slip its twentieth-century moorings and look to Asia, Africa and other regions, countries and communities. This does not necessarily mean striking out alone: all nations are now intensely interdependent. But the UK can exploit its singular position and its uniquely strong networks to put it in a very influential position in the changing international scene. The Government should be clear about what the UK wishes to achieve as an interdependent, networked power. This will include fulfilling its international roles and responsibilities and encouraging others to do the same in a way that spreads the load of international policing, and building the UK's prosperity, not least to enable it to perform those roles and meet those responsibilities effectively. The Government must work to restore the UK's reputation, and show up outdated perceptions of the UK as an outdated power. The UK can, and should, act as a serious force for good as the world continues to change. (paragraph 315)
88. This new approach becomes more urgent by the day. The UK must remain a top-rank performer in the global network and it finds itself in the fortuitous position of having every opportunity to do so. However, while celebrating the UK's fortune, we also warn that if the Government do not face the facts of the transformed international order, the UK will risk finding itself outwitted, out-competed, and increasingly insecure. (paragraph 316)

Persuasion and Power in the Modern World

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence was appointed on 16 May 2013 to examine the use of what has come to be called 'soft power' in furthering the UK's global influence and interests.¹ The Committee held 24 meetings and took evidence from 60 witnesses listed in Appendix 2, as well as receiving 146 detailed written submissions.² We are grateful to all those who gave evidence, and also acknowledge the assistance of our specialist adviser, Ben O'Loughlin, Professor at Royal Holloway University of London.
2. Soft power, a term originally coined by the US political scientist Professor Joseph Nye in 1990, has been defined as "the ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes one wants through attraction rather than coercion or payment".³ We must preface our examination of this concept by acknowledging that the phrase 'soft power' can mislead. It is in no way an alternative or soft option in place of strong defences and effective military forces, as we explore in paragraphs 61 to 70. Nor is it merely a new name for traditional diplomacy and the exercise of diplomatic skills. It does, however, add an important new dimension to the conduct of international affairs, posing new challenges which our inquiry sought to explore.
3. Why inquire into soft power? The body of evidence received by this Committee indicated that the conditions under which international relations are conducted have undergone, and are continuing to undergo, major shifts, which are making the concept of soft power increasingly relevant.⁴ The so-called 'rise of the rest' (the rising power and influence of the non-Western world), and in particular the rapid escalation in the might of Asia are coinciding with an unprecedented explosion in instant cross-border connectivity between citizens. These parallel phenomena are resulting in major alterations in the distribution of global power, and real changes in the very nature of power. In our inquiry, we explored what these shifts mean for the UK's position in the world and its ability to maintain its prosperity and security. Should the UK seek to protect its standing on the international stage by supplementing its traditional military and economic strengths (its 'hard power') with other ways of gaining meaningful influence: with soft

¹ The members of the Committee are listed in Appendix 1, with their declared interests.

² All the evidence received by the Committee is published in the Evidence Volume at <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/soft-power-uk-influence/SoftPowerEvVol1-as-of-12March.pdf> and <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/soft-power-uk-influence/SoftPowerEvVol2.pdf>.

References in this Report that read "Jonathan McClory" refer to the written evidence submitted by that author; references that read "Jonathan McClory, Q200" refer to the oral evidence at that question number.

³ Nye J. S. Jr. (2008) 'Public Diplomacy and Soft Power', *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 616 no. 1 pp94–109.

⁴ Richard Norton-Taylor; National Museum Directors' Council. Nye J. S. Jr. (1990). 'Soft power', *Foreign policy*, No.80, pp153–171; Nye J. S. Jr. (1990). The changing nature of world power. *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 105 no. 2, pp177–192.

power, or with novel combinations of hard and soft power? We also took note of how disillusionment with the outcomes of ‘hard’ military deployment in various theatres in recent decades—with no apparent solutions or ‘victories’ being obtained—has spread, especially in the United States.

4. In Chapters two and three of this Report we examine the ways in which international power balances are changing against this background. We consider the role of soft power in the international affairs of a country that wishes to maintain its position as a global leader in economic and political terms. In Chapter four, we analyse the practical strengths that could allow the UK to gain substantially from its soft power, and make recommendations to the UK Government about how to support those strengths. In Chapter five, we make recommendations about how the Government must act to ensure that the UK is able to seize the opportunities presented by those soft power strengths, in order to turn them into the real competitive advantages that we believe can help to maintain and if possible enhance the UK’s world position and deliver its interests. We see profound implications for the UK in addressing these new, but now central issues.

CHAPTER 2: RADICAL CHANGES TO BALANCES OF POWER

5. Soft power is a concept with huge practical importance at a time when international relations are undergoing radical transformations, with serious implications for the UK's prosperity and security. As the British Council told us, "the tectonics of power are in flux", forcing a reconsideration of how states can exercise influence.⁵

Geopolitical shifts in the distribution of power

6. What commentators on international affairs call the 'rise of the rest' is resulting in a new international distribution of power, as nation states with distinctly non-Western economic, social and political structures are experiencing rapid economic and demographic growth.⁶ As a consequence, power is moving between states, and the global centre of power is drifting from West to East and from North to South.⁷ Jonathan Glennie of the Overseas Development Institute told the Committee that it was hard to exaggerate the "mega-shifts" currently underway in what he called "the geography of power". He referred to the rise of fast-developing giant economies such as China, Brazil and India, and of the CIVETS nations (Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey and South Africa); he told us that developing countries and so-called 'emerging' countries are beginning to dominate global economic growth, with their political power increasing as a consequence. These states have also begun to form regional groupings such as the Latin American 'ALBA' alliance (Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America—Peoples' Trade Treaty), and the Eurasian Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. The countries are also home to rapidly increasing reserves of global savings—almost 50 per cent of world savings, according to the World Bank—and are therefore the source of growing foreign investments, aid and concessional loans.⁸
7. An "age of choice", in which developing economies have access to many more external financing options and expanded domestic resource revenues, has led to what Jonathan Glennie called a "new assertiveness" among developing countries.⁹ Richard Dowden, Director of the Royal African Society, told us that "In recent years African nations have become more self confident and are increasingly pushing back against the former colonial powers".¹⁰ Such assertiveness has seen countries beyond the permanent members of the UN Security Council driving productive initiatives in

⁵ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁶ Lord Williams of Baglan, Q36; John Micklethwait, Q36; Richard Norton-Taylor; Zakaria, F. (2008) 'The rise of the rest', *Newsweek*, 12 May, pp24–31; Nye J. S. Jr. (2013) 'American power in the 21st century will be defined by the 'rise of the rest', *The Washington Post*, 29 June, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/american-power-in-the-21st-century-will-be-defined-by-the-rise-of-the-rest/2013/06/28/f5169668-dced-11e2-9218-bc2ac7cd44e2_story.html.

The term 'BRICs' and their rise first appeared in two papers by Jim O'Neill for Goldman Sachs, see: O'Neill, J. (2001) 'Building Better Global Economic BRICs', *Goldman Sachs Global Economics Paper*, 66; O'Neill, J. (2005) 'How Solid are the BRICs?', *Goldman Sachs Global Economics Paper*, 134.

⁷ Jonathan McClory.

⁸ Q127.

⁹ Q127.

¹⁰ Richard Dowden. See also Professor Michael Cox, Q32; Ian Birrell, Q129; Indra Adnan; British Council supplementary written evidence; Research Councils UK; Royal Society.

international relations: for example, Turkey has recently offered its mediation services in some of the world's most intractable conflicts.¹¹

8. A growth in international recognition of the importance of non-Western norms in governance has accompanied the new assertiveness of developing nations.¹² It is now important to understand how the modernisation of other countries differs from classic European models. Rising states in Asia and Africa may hold entirely different understandings of political legitimacy, and of the primacy of national sovereignty over individual human rights, from those in the Western traditions that have dominated international discourse in recent years.¹³ Professor Michael Cox described the tensions that will arise as non-Western countries such as China assume stronger roles in the world economic order.¹⁴ As Professor Cox, Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science, put it, "All those countries are coming at us ... with a different set of assumptions about how the world ought to be organised".¹⁵ They may have only local or regional ambitions, not global ones, and thus leave the political and diplomatic order fundamentally untouched.¹⁶ Nevertheless, these countries will have considerable political influence as they come to represent a greater share of the global economy and as developing countries look to them instead of Western nations to provide development models.¹⁷ Jonathan Glennie told the Committee that "poor countries no longer [only] want to be the US or France ... They look to Brazil, Vietnam and, of course, China ... countries are looking much [more] broadly for examples and help than ever before".¹⁸
9. This power shift was illustrated in 2010 by the political confidence on the international stage shown by Brazil and Turkey in trying to bypass the UN Security Council permanent member states (the US, UK, France, Russia and China) plus Germany by offering a solution to the Iran nuclear issue.¹⁹ The British Council told us that there are "multiplying players on the international stage seeking to make their mark and challenge established

¹¹ Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University.

¹² Durham Global Security Institute.

¹³ See Lord Williams of Baglan, Professor Cox, John Micklethwait, Q36; Professor Nye, Q180; Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK; Professor Rooney.

¹⁴ Q36.

¹⁵ Q36.

¹⁶ John Micklethwait, Q36. See also Patrick, S. (2014) 'The Unruled World: The Case for Good Enough Governance', *Foreign Affairs*, January/February, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/140343/stewart-patrick/the-unruled-world>.

¹⁷ Asia House told the Committee that Asian economies constitute 50 per cent of global GDP (Asia House); British Council supplementary written evidence.

¹⁸ Q127. Since 2002 the EU and the US had taken turns in leading negotiations with Iran to find a deal to manage the development of Iran's nuclear programme, but after years of failure to achieve lasting agreement, in May 2010 Brazil and Turkey announced a new compromise. When the deal was rejected by the US, Iranian state television quoted Iranian leader Ayatollah Khamenei as saying, "Domineering powers headed by America are unhappy with cooperation between independent countries", and in June 2010 Brazil and Turkey voted against a UN Security Council resolution proposing intensified sanctions on Iran.

While Iran and the permanent Security Council states plus Germany finally made progress in 2013, the 2010 Brazil-Turkey approach signalled the growing assertiveness of rising powers, as did India's spearheading of efforts during negotiations for the World Trade Organization's first multilateral trade deal in 2013 to protect emerging markets' agriculture sectors from new 'food security' policies.

¹⁹ 'Doha Delivers', *The Economist*, 9 December 2013.

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/freexchange/2013/12/world-trade-organisation>.

power structures”, and that “International challenges like the Syria crisis and global poverty create new alliances and bring new voices to the fore”.²⁰

10. Accordingly, Dr Robin Niblett, the Director of Chatham House, told us that “The UK has enjoyed a privileged position in a Western-led world order that may soon be eclipsed”.²¹ The UK risks being less influential in the UN Security Council in a world of rising powers; as the Rt Hon Sir John Major KG CH reported, membership of the Security Council is already “grotesquely out of date” having been fixed in 1946 “in a world that bears no relationship to today”.²² The UK’s relationship with the US might change as US leaders’ focus turns more to the rising nations of Asia.²³ In Dr Niblett’s view, the UK could also become “less significant in a leaderless G20 world than [in] one led by the G8”.²⁴ The small group of countries who have in recent decades or centuries enjoyed a position of considerable influence over the world’s political and economic structures, including the UK, face increasingly stiff competition.

Hyper-connectivity

11. Along with the ‘rise of the rest’ and associated power transition in international terms we could be seeing an equally important change to the Government’s role in steering the ship of state—namely the dispersal and “diffusion” of power away from governments, and into the hands of multiple others.²⁵ As we were told by Jonathan McClory, policy and place branding consultant and author of the IfG-Monocle Soft Power Index, “power is shifting away from states altogether, as non-state actors play more significant roles and wield greater influence in world affairs”.²⁶ This move is closely associated with the new phenomenon of hyper-connectivity²⁷, which the British Council described as follows:

“People-to-people contacts are growing in importance at a dramatic pace. 24-hour broadcasting, social media and mobile services mean people are better informed than ever before and can interact directly with each other across national boundaries with limited governmental interference—even in places where government seeks to impose barriers upon the flow of information and opinion. With 6 billion mobile phones around the world, 75 per cent of which are in developing countries, the explosion in people-to-people contacts is far from being a purely Western phenomenon. Shared interests, passions and beliefs bring people together in chat rooms, the blogosphere and other online fora,

²⁰ British Council supplementary written evidence.

²¹ Dr Robin Niblett.

²² Dr Robin Niblett; Sir John Major, Q347.

²³ Dr Robin Niblett.

²⁴ Dr Robin Niblett.

²⁵ Nye J. S. Jr. (2011) *The Future of Power*, ppixii–xiii. See also HM Government (2010) *A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The National Security Strategy*, October,

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61936/national-security-strategy.pdf, p16, p21, p29, p30.

²⁶ Jonathan McClory.

²⁷ British Council; British Council supplementary written evidence. For previous uses of the term ‘hyper-connectivity’ see Quan-Haase, A. and Wellman, B. (2005) ‘Local virtuality in an organization: Implications for community of practice’, *Communities and Technologies* p215; Friedman, T. (2008) ‘Why How Counts’, *New York Times*, 14 October, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/15/opinion/15friedman.html?_r=0.

creating a platform for people to organise themselves—with everything from Pussy Riot supporters to Twilight Fanfic to be found in the undergrowth of this rich, wild new digital jungle”.²⁸

12. Research by Demos in 2007 found that the internet had enabled “mass peer-to-peer cultural contact”: such contact “had originally been elite-to-elite, then elite-to-many, and was now entering a people-to-people phase, through travel, migration and the internet”.²⁹ New media technologies allow mass self-communication; anyone with internet access and basic media literacy can publish their thoughts on public forums.³⁰ This sits alongside and competes with mass communication by traditional broadcast and print media.³¹ The result is a world politics featuring many-to-many communications, which governments increasingly cannot control.³²
13. We explore below why mass people-to-people information sharing and the new, widespread ability to communicate are having a powerful impact on international affairs, but their effects are already visible. The actions of one Tunisian street vendor, Mohammed Bouazizi, triggered a regional upheaval whose consequences are ongoing and severe. By self-immolating while relatives and bystanders recorded his actions on their mobile phones and uploaded it to YouTube, his actions created awareness that soon translated into collective action.³³ While journalists could not safely reach protest areas, news organisations relied on citizens’ mass social media activity that was very difficult for Tunisian authorities to control, and created a sense among protesters that the whole world was watching. As events across the region proved, that sense was justified.³⁴
14. Hyper-connectivity will soon be enhanced by the emergence of digital infrastructures that are international in scope, and which connect not only people but devices, objects, and systems.³⁵ While the spread of mobile phones in areas of political instability in Africa is strongly correlated with upsurges in violence, crisis mapping programmes process mobile phone communications in these environments to create automated visualisations of conflict outbreaks that military and humanitarian organisations can use to target interventions.³⁶ International affairs now feature countless feedback loops of humans, devices and systems, meaning the world that international relations operates within has become markedly different.³⁷

²⁸ British Council supplementary written evidence.

²⁹ Demos; Professor Nye, Q181.

³⁰ Indra Adnan.

³¹ Gillespie and Webb. Some experts pointed to the convergence of mainstream and social media as traditional corporate media have adapted to the challenges posed by new patterns of connectivity—for instance see Indra Adnan and Dr Cristina Archetti.

³² Professor Nye, Q181.

³³ Indra Adnan.

³⁴ Wilson, C., and Dunn, A. (2011) ‘Digital media in the Egyptian revolution: Descriptive analyses from the Tahrir data set’, *International Journal of Communication*, vol. 5, pp1248–1272.

³⁵ Taylor, P. (2014) ‘CES 2014: Cisco boss hails ‘internet of everything’’, *Financial Times*, 7 January, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/576d2f4c-7709-11e3-807e-00144feabdc0.html>.

³⁶ Dr Ali Fisher; Pierskalla, J.H. and Hollenbach, F.M. (2013) ‘Technology and Collective Action: The Effect of Cell Phone Coverage on Political Violence in Africa’, *American Political Science Review*, 107.

³⁷ Miskimmon, A., O’Loughlin, B., Roselle, L. (2013) *Strategic Narratives: Communication Power and the New World Order*, New York: Routledge, 22, pp148–175. The Fukushima triple disaster of 2011 exemplified this trend: information systems such as weather sensors, radiation monitors and stock markets became interconnected in ways that outpaced human control, for some days at least.

Hyper-connectivity and the diffusion of power: loss of Governmental control

15. Hyper-connectivity has made the actions of states such as the UK more visible than ever before, and this involves a loss of control.³⁸ All organisations now have indelible, and vastly accessible, digital footprints comprising all of their webpages and communications. In the context of Government, this means that all Departments now have an international presence: their actions, statements, and their media coverage are instantly and freely accessible to almost anyone, anywhere. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)—or even the external affairs ‘triumvirate’ of the FCO, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and the Department for International Development (DFID)—no longer has the monopoly on the British Government’s interface with the rest of the world, let alone that of the country as a whole.
16. The last decade alone has seen a massive growth in the worldwide transparency of information. Words and images can emerge or re-emerge in uncontrollable, unforeseeable ways. It is increasingly hard for governments to keep secrets, as the mass release of governmental data by Wikileaks in 2010 and by Edward Snowden in 2013 showed. The intrinsic insecurity of communications data is a new, but fundamental, feature of the modern international order: those working in Government and in Embassies must work on the assumption that their communications will not stay private. As private communications are opened to scrutiny, and as political speeches and actions become globally accessible, it has become difficult for governments (and others) to ‘segment’ their messages on a particular issue for different audiences.³⁹ Jonathan McClory wrote that “Governments no longer have the luxury of offering domestic audiences one message whilst feeding another to the international community”.⁴⁰ In the words of Professor Laura Roselle, Professor of Science and Policy Studies at Elon University, “Elites have lost relative power over information, timing, and audience as political actors, including individuals, non-state actors, NGOs, terrorist cells, and international organizations have access to communication technologies that will reach a vast audience”.⁴¹ We note that access to the internet is not universal and that there are parts of the world where governments seek to constrain internet usage, but the trend is clearly towards greater openness and a lower degree of state control.

Hyper-connectivity and the diffusion of power: the empowerment of citizens

17. This new level of exposure has joined a torrent of commentary, critique and citizen journalism made possible by the internet and social media. While politicians in the West have been concerned for some time about falling trust in political leaders⁴² (although not in political institutions⁴³), the change is

³⁸ Gillespie and Webb; Indra Adnan; British Council; British Council supplementary written evidence; Dr Ali Fisher; Professor Scott-Smith.

³⁹ Universities UK and the UK Higher Education International Unit (UUK and IU).

⁴⁰ Jonathan McClory.

⁴¹ Professor Roselle.

⁴² ‘Eurobarometer 76: Public Opinion in the European Union’, December 2011, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb76/eb76_first_en.pdf; for explanations see Hay, C. (2007) *Why We Hate Politics*, Putnam, R. (2001) *Bowling Alone*.

- now more profound. In a hyper-connected context, the very nature of political trust and confidence are altered due to the number and diversity of information sources on offer, and the greatly extended reach of commentators dissecting and criticising that information. As Professor Marie Gillespie and Dr Alban Webb of the Open University wrote (in evidence hereafter referred to as ‘Gillespie and Webb’), “Citizens and publics now expect credible and convincing explanations and appropriate evidence from governments and if they don’t get [it] in mainstream media they look to social media”.⁴⁴ In the hyper-connected age, it is also easier than ever before to find voices closer to one’s own; social media users are now more likely to trust and believe their peers than politicians or the media.⁴⁵
18. As the ability to create content, access information and disseminate opinion is democratised, citizens increasingly expect to be, or at least to feel, empowered.⁴⁶ The Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies at Coventry University wrote that “rapid developments in the global communications infrastructure [are] empowering citizens and enabling them to make their voices heard, pressure their representatives and participate in decision-making”. Hyper-connectivity is “redefining the balance of power between the state and citizens in many countries, including in those that may have previously lacked a culture of public consultation and accountability”.⁴⁷ The rapid movement of information has made individuals more powerful than they have been at any point in history, according to Jonathan McClory: influence is moving away from governments and towards individuals and civil society groupings, even as some governments gather more information about citizens than ever before.⁴⁸
19. Alongside this empowerment, the real-time monitoring of public opinion facilitated by the internet makes publics appear extremely volatile and disruptive to anxious authorities.⁴⁹ There is no evidence that individuals’ opinions about political, economic or social issues have become more changeable over time, but politicians, journalists and bloggers can now identify small, rapid surges and dips that give the appearance of substantive

⁴³ Based on over-time and cross-sectional analysis of public attitudes to political authorities, Harvard/Sydney political scientist Professor Pippa Norris concluded: “no significant erosion of system support was detected from the indices of composite institutional confidence (with the notable exception of declining public confidence in parliaments), attitudes towards democratic governance and rejection of autocracy, or feelings of nationalism. Instead, trendless fluctuations over time (suggesting explanations based on either actual or perceived performance) or a relatively stable pattern can be observed”. Professor Norris therefore agreed with Professor Margaret Levi and Professor Laura Stoker who found that: “Finally, despite all the verbiage decrying the decline in trust, there is little actual evidence of a long-term secular decline, either in the United States or in Western Europe across the board. If it is true that political distrust is the norm for Americans, then surveys that date only since World War II may not be of sufficient duration to sustain the claim of a major and unusual decline. And even then, the time-series evidence available suggests that trust levels have been moving both up and down since the mid 1970s. The evidence in other countries is generally of even shorter duration and depends on less comparable questions”. See Norris, P. (2011) *Democratic Deficit: Critical Citizens Revisited*, p102; Levi, M., and Stoker, L. (2000) ‘Political trust and trustworthiness’, *Annual Review of Political Science*, vol.3(1), p483.

⁴⁴ Gillespie and Webb.

⁴⁵ Gillespie and Webb; Professor Rawnsley. See also Weinberger, D. (2014) ‘What blogging was’, *Joho the Blog*, 8 January, <http://www.hyperorg.com/blogger/2014/01/08/what-blogging-was/>.

⁴⁶ Professor Philip Seib (Professor of Journalism and Public Diplomacy and Professor of International Relations at the University of Southern California).

⁴⁷ Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University.

⁴⁸ Jonathan McClory; British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁴⁹ British Council; Ingenious Media.

opinion swings.⁵⁰ There is also evidence that when long-term grievances do reach a tipping point, the process of political mobilisation and protest, once underway, undergoes a “quickening” thanks to use of new media technologies.⁵¹ When these phenomena are allied to powerful iconography and the perceived threat of social media-driven revolutions as in the so-called ‘Arab Spring’—or more recently in Kiev, Ukraine—it is little wonder that many political authorities have become super-sensitised to publics and groupings linked in totally digitalised and constant communication and exchange.⁵² Every grievance or pressure group becomes empowered, but arguably without producing any prospect for social cohesion: they thus provoke at least the appearance of unending instability.

20. The digital transformation of communication is affecting virtually all institutions and political processes in the West, including citizen-government relations. International relations will undoubtedly undergo changes of similar nature, scope and scale. Our evidence-taking was concluded before recent events in Ukraine, but the relevance of our key themes to the situation is clear.

Hyper-connectivity and the diffusion of power: the empowerment of international networks

21. The diffusion of power away from governments is also evident in the growing prevalence and influence of global networks.⁵³ Social media have enabled the quick creation, with no barriers to entry other than internet access, of ever-expanding virtual networks connecting like-minded people, bypassing borders and geographical distances.⁵⁴ This has greatly increased the strength of transnational lateral ties and the ease and speed of communication across those ties, increasing the importance of non-nation communities such as cross-border ideological groups, religious communions and protest movements. Professor Caroline Rooney of the University of Kent told us that “the intensification of cynicism towards mainstream politics leads to loss of trust and competing forms of transnationalism”. She described a process akin to a pushing outward, whereby citizens’ interests transcended national politics:

“international power relations are structured through strata that are transnational as opposed to just national” and “the transnational lateral ties are increasingly at least as important as national ones, if not more

⁵⁰ The seminal text is Zaller, J. (1992) *The Nature and Origin of Mass Opinion*. McCombs, M. and Zhu, J.H. (1995) ‘Capacity, Diversity, and Volatility of the Public Agenda Trends From 1954 to 1994’, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol.59(4), pp495–525; for the first studies of the deployment of real-time public opinion monitoring in UK politics see Anstead, N., and O’Loughlin, B. (2011) ‘The emerging viewertariat and BBC question time television debate and real-time commenting online’, *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, vol. 16(4), pp440–462; and Anstead, N., and O’Loughlin, B. (2012) ‘Semantic polling: the ethics of online public opinion’, <http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/documents/MPP/Policy-Brief-5-Semantic-Polling-The-Ethics-of-Online-Public-Opinion.pdf>.

⁵¹ Sloam, J. (2014) ‘The outraged young: young Europeans, civic engagement and the new media in a time of crisis’, *Information, Communication & Society*, 10 January, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1369118X.2013.868019>.

⁵² Gowing, N. (2011) ‘Time to move on: new media realities—new vulnerabilities of power’, *Media, War & Conflict*, vol. 4(1), pp13–19.

⁵³ Jonathan McClory; Professor Rawnsley; Indra Adnan; British Academy; Dr Ali Fisher.

⁵⁴ Dr Cristina Archetti.

so”, she told us.⁵⁵ While the uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa in 2011 and the Occupy network of protests point to the potential for more widespread political participation resulting from this shift, the potential threats of Islamism could be interpreted as part of the same dynamic.⁵⁶ Professor Rooney told us that “young rappers in Egypt, the UK and America feel they have much more in common with each other in terms of values and outlooks than with the elite bankers of their own nationalities” and that “Islamism and Zionism are internationally supported movements in ways that can override national interests”.⁵⁷

22. The growing importance of non-state actors, and the increasing influence of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and their activities, is another dimension of the power shift. NGOs have become important as vehicles for popular political interests and causes. Indra Adnan, Director of the Soft Power Network, noted that “more people sign up to NGOs that fight for pan-global causes such as climate change than sign up for political parties”.⁵⁸ Phil Vernon, Director of Programmes at International Alert, drew the Committee’s attention to NGOs’ role in policy, arguing that along with the Government, British NGOs have been at the forefront in shaping the next round of targets which are set to replace the Millennium Development Goals.⁵⁹ NGOs such as the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the International Rescue Committee and the WWF have a global reach, and, with international organisations such as the World Trade Organization [WTO] and International Monetary Fund, arguably have an international power greater than that of many governments.
23. Commercial globalisation is a further aspect of the trend towards the expansion of networks and diffusion of power.⁶⁰ The dismantling of trade barriers, the building of global supply chains, and the increasing global mobility of goods, services, capital and investment, workers and knowledge all operate to connect people and systems across borders. Multinational corporations such as JPMorgan Chase & Co. and Wal-Mart Stores can hold assets worth trillions of dollars and employ millions of people. The growth of the middle classes in rising nations will be crucial in the continued expansion of commercial globalisation. Indra Adnan, wrote that “The rapidly growing ranks of middle-class consumers span a dozen emerging nations, not just the fast-growing BRIC countries [Brazil, Russia, India and China] ... and include almost two billion people, spending a total of \$6.9 trillion annually. Our research suggests that this figure will rise to \$20 trillion during the next decade—about twice the current consumption in the United States”.⁶¹ Commercial globalisation is underpinned by the economic importance of

⁵⁵ Professor Rooney.

⁵⁶ Professor Rooney; Richard Norton-Taylor.

⁵⁷ Professor Rooney.

⁵⁸ Indra Adnan.

⁵⁹ Q136.

⁶⁰ Andrew Mitchell, Director of Prosperity Directorate, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, told the Committee, “our work is about using political insight and influence to promote British business interests, to work for open economies, to combat protectionism, and to work to remove barriers to business, including weak governance, overregulation and corruption. We use that wide network and strong relationships to sustain an open, transparent, rules-based international economic system, and to advance international trade” (Q2).

⁶¹ Indra Adnan.

intangible assets, intellectual capital and professional services.⁶² Trade is no longer dominated by the shipping of tangible goods: some of the world's most valuable industries are based on transnational and completely mobile assets, with search engine providers, social media companies, banks, and accountancy and law firms among the world's richest businesses.

24. The new cartography of power is also marked by urbanisation and the rise of megalopolises, which act as hubs in global networks. Jonathan McClory told us that “more than half the world's population [is] living in cities, which has big implications for the economy and for how innovation happens, how ideas spread, and how political movements start and manifest”.⁶³ Some cities now rival states in their wealth, population and global clout.
25. Hyper-connectivity and the expansion of powerful global networks also have a dark side. Just as multinational corporations can move billions of dollars across borders in the blink of an eye, so can international criminal networks, including those trafficking drugs and people.⁶⁴ Terrorists can build groups that stretch around the world, while cyber-criminals can steal information or occasion mass denials of service from ten thousand miles away. Other intrinsically transnational threats to security have also emerged in recent years, which—like terrorism and organised crime—cannot be tackled by any one state alone. These include international piracy that can disrupt world-wide shipping networks, global pandemics facilitated by mass air travel, threats to global financial stability, climate change, cross-border air and sea pollution (including radioactive pollution), and environmental damage that degrades the planet and threatens our natural resources.⁶⁵
26. Professor Nye has written that in today's world, power resources are distributed in a pattern resembling a complex, three-dimensional chess game. On the top chessboard, military power is still largely unipolar and the US is likely to remain the only superpower for some time. On the middle chessboard, economic power has already been multipolar for more than a decade. The bottom chessboard is the realm of cross-border transactions that occur outside of government control, including the exploits of non-state actors such as terrorists, hackers and “bankers electronically transferring sums larger than most national budgets”, and the kind of transnational challenges described above. On this board, power is now widely dispersed. In his words, “there are more and more things outside the control of even the most powerful state”.⁶⁶
27. This empowerment of individuals and bodies outside governmental control coincides with an unprecedented degree of synchronicity in international affairs. In the middle of the 19th century, protestors in Paris could not watch

⁶² ICAEW; City of London Corporation; Dr Robin Niblett.

⁶³ Q215; Jonathan McClory.

⁶⁴ Nye J. S. Jr. (2011) *The Future of Power*, pp137, 145.

⁶⁵ Government (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) further supplementary written evidence; John Micklethwait, Q41; Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University; International Alert further supplementary written evidence; Dr Robin Niblett; Richard Norton-Taylor; Welsh Government; Jonathan McClory; Lord Hannay of Chiswick; British Academy; Dr Robin Brown; Professor Nye, Q183; Durham Global Security Institute; see also General Sir Nicholas Houghton (2013) ‘Annual Chief of the Defence Staff Lecture 2013’, Royal United Services Institute, London, 18 December, <http://www.rusi.org/events/past/ref:E5284A3D06EFFD>.

⁶⁶ Nye J. S. Jr. (2012) *Diversifying American Power*, 9 September, <http://www.internationalrelations.com/2012/09/09/joseph-s-nye-jr-diversifying-american-power/>.

and communicate in real time with protestors in Moscow: agitators in the Arab Spring uprisings were able to do exactly that, from Tunisia to Cairo to Syria.

28. **The shifts sweeping the international order over the past 15 years will accelerate and be compounded in the years immediately ahead. Unprecedented international access to state information, the digital empowerment of individuals and groups, the growing role of global protest networks and NGOs, the complexity of modern trade supply chains and multinational corporate operations, accelerated urbanisation and transnational challenges are all operating both to diffuse and fragment traditional state power and to bring many of the world's peoples and countries closer together. At the same time, the rising power, economic and political, of non-Western countries (the so-called 'rise of the rest') is altering the international balance of power and influence. We have heard that these two powerful streams are converging to reshape global politics, and we believe that they require a commensurate response from those who guide the UK's foreign policy, from the Government's leaders downwards. In this hugely changed international context, the UK cannot simply proceed as before. If the UK is still effectively to protect and promote its interests, how it interacts with other nations and communities will need fundamentally to alter. We conclude that this demands a radical change in the mindset of those who direct the UK's foreign policy and shape its international role. We note that the UK is hosting a NATO summit in Newport in September of this year. There will be considerable focus on the UK's foreign policy in the weeks building up to that event: we recommend that the key themes of this Report should be evident in the Government's current and forthcoming preparations for the summit and in their contribution to the public debate surrounding it.**

CHAPTER 3: RESPONDING TO CHANGE: HARD, SOFT AND SMART POWER

Shortcomings in what can be achieved through force alone

29. Military strength has long been one of the main components of power on the international stage and will continue to be so, not least as a result of the UK's commitment to uphold the UN-mandated 'Responsibility to Protect' doctrine.⁶⁷ However, we heard evidence that the ability of military force alone to secure a nation's interests has been recognised as facing increasing challenges due to the scattered and dispersed nature of modern conflict and war, including by the defence communities in the US and UK.⁶⁸ It is important to note, though, that as we explore in paragraphs 61 to 70 and 107 to 119 below, limitations on what can be achieved through force do not equate to limitations on what can be achieved by the Armed Forces.
30. Sir Jeremy Greenstock told us that "The first decade of the 21st century has provided plenty of evidence of the importance in politics and geopolitics of ... the declining effect of the use of military and political compulsion. The symptoms of the trend are clear in the stories of Iraq and Afghanistan [and] in the relative helplessness of outside powers trying to address the instability in the Middle East".⁶⁹ Sir Jeremy attributed this trend to several causes, including "the moral force of the concept of self-determination", "the growing power of the people's voice", "the increasing trend for moral and political legitimacy to reside in the wishes of the people of a particular locality", "the openness and global comprehensiveness of economic exchange and opportunity" and "the deepening distaste among both governments and individuals for war and the use of military force, in a reaction against the legacy of the 20th century, against the increasing destructiveness of modern weaponry and against the uncontrolled human rights and humanitarian consequences of warfare".⁷⁰
31. In Iraq and Afghanistan, despite the military might of the US and the sacrifices and investment made by the UK, the US and their allies, coercive interventions since 2001 appear to have achieved only deeply unclear outcomes.⁷¹ Consequently, American and other Western publics appear to have become disillusioned with purely military 'solutions' to complicated problems involving the use of overwhelming force or 'shock and awe' tactics.⁷² In the UK, there is a high level of public support for British troops but much less support for their deployment in kinetic operations, noted the UK Chief of Defence Staff General Sir Nicholas Houghton in December

⁶⁷ See FCO (2013) *UK Fully Committed to Implementing the Responsibility to Protect*, 11 September, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/uk-fully-committed-to-implementing-the-responsibility-to-protect>.

⁶⁸ See, for example, the US Army Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual 2006; Simpson, E. (2012) *War from the Ground Up*.

⁶⁹ Sir Jeremy Greenstock.

⁷⁰ Sir Jeremy Greenstock.

⁷¹ See Richard Norton-Taylor.

⁷² Sir John Major, Q349; Jack Straw MP; Tara Sonenshine, QQ358–9; Indra Adnan; Richard Norton-Taylor; British Council supplementary written evidence; Lord Soley.

- 2013.⁷³ Some reports suggest that there is even confusion among taxpayers about the continued purpose of the military in the modern world.⁷⁴ In January 2014 the House of Commons Defence Committee reported that “One of the greatest strategic threats to defence is the disconnect between the Armed Forces and the public”. The Defence Committee’s view was that the “disconnect” was caused by “a lack of understanding of the utility of military force in the contemporary strategic environment”.⁷⁵
32. Former Gurkha officer Emile Simpson has gone further, inverting Clausewitz’s noted maxim that “war is a continuation of political intercourse carried on by other means”⁷⁶ by arguing that politics is now a continuation of war—that the outcomes of many conflicts are messy, negotiated, indefinite and based on compromise between combatants.⁷⁶ He told us that “When the enemy is endless, and even becomes more an idea to which people can subscribe, then military activity to defeat that enemy can often not be clearly conceptually distinguishable from political activity with the same aim”.⁷⁷
33. The challenges presented to coercive military power in the 21st century have been exposed to public scrutiny by the success achieved by those waging asymmetric warfare against the UK and its allies since 11 September 2001 (if not before). Such combatants have imposed great costs on the national economy, on military personnel and their families, and at times on the UK’s international image and standing. By the early 2000s the accessibility, immediacy and connectivity of digital global media ensured that “the price of terrorism has been brought down to zero”.⁷⁸ Damage can be inflicted with no more than a smartphone and an improvised explosive device (IED) or mixture of home chemicals, while one bomb in a Kabul restaurant allowed the Taliban to signal that the International Security Assistance Force had not achieved security in Afghanistan.⁷⁹ The importance of attempts to secure ‘hearts and minds’ in Afghanistan and efforts to de-radicalise individuals in the UK testify to the fact that defeating or diminishing these security threats could not be achieved by force alone.⁸⁰ Richard Norton-Taylor offered the example of Nigeria, which is “facing terrorist attacks in the north by the extreme Islamist group, Boko Haram, where armed groups, some loosely affiliated to al-Qaeda, some not, many fed by South American drug money, pose a growing threat that will not be defeated by western military intervention”.⁸¹ International power no longer equates to the size of nations’

⁷³ General Sir Nicholas Houghton (2013) ‘Annual Chief of the Defence Staff Lecture 2013’, Royal United Services Institute, London, 18 December, <http://www.rusi.org/events/past/ref:E5284A3D06EFFD>.

⁷⁴ House of Commons Defence Committee, *Towards the Next Defence and Security Review: Part One*, (7th Report, Session 2013–14, HC Paper 197), <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmdfence/197/197.pdf>; Dr Peter van Ham.

⁷⁵ House of Commons Defence Committee, *Towards the Next Defence and Security Review: Part One*, (7th Report, Session 2013–14, HC Paper 197), <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmdfence/197/197.pdf>.

⁷⁶ Simpson, E. (2012) *War from the Ground Up*, p27.

⁷⁷ Emile Simpson.

⁷⁸ Durodie, B. (2006) ‘We are the enemies within’, *Times Higher Education Supplement*, 22 September, <http://www.durodie.net/articles/THES/20060922enemies.htm>.

⁷⁹ See Reuters (2014) ‘IMF, UN officials among 21 killed in Kabul suicide attack’, 18 January, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/01/18/us-afghanistan-explosion-idUSBREA0G12P20140118>.

⁸⁰ VICTUS; Richard Norton-Taylor.

⁸¹ Richard Norton-Taylor.

armed forces: if militants in some of the poorest nations on earth can face down the might of the US Army, as in Afghanistan, it is no longer a gunboat world.⁸² Popular and political expectations of the outcomes of wars are being forced to change, and new complementary tactics for fighting or dissuading those who threaten our interests are becoming more important.⁸³

34. As Professor Nye put it, “states are no longer the only important actors in global affairs; security is not the only major outcome that they seek, and force is not the only or always the best instrument available to achieve those outcomes”.⁸⁴ The disillusionment of American and other Western publics with the ability of military force to further the interests of Western nations has led to a feeling that there must be a subtler way of achieving international objectives and curbing violence, terrorism and aggression (including through the use of armed forces) that can supplement—rather than substitute for—traditional warfare.⁸⁵

The changing nature of diplomacy

35. At the same time that Western confidence in the role of military force is falling, greater international interconnectedness is changing another vital aspect of how nations relate to each other: the role of diplomats and the meaning of diplomacy.
36. Thanks to hyper-connectivity, citizens and pressure groups can instantly and to an unprecedented degree communicate across national, cultural and (thanks to instant translation programmes) linguistic borders, sharing opinions and information about each others’ societies. Contact between nations had historically been largely elite-to-elite, through Ambassadors and royal courts (as well as the occasional merchant, pilgrim and scholar), but international contact opened to the masses through cinema and broadcasting in the 20th century, and has now entered a phase dominated by people-to-people contact through the internet and mass air travel.⁸⁶ Governments have almost instant access to the pronouncements of other governments, and to what other countries’ media and citizens are saying. The importance of diplomats specifically as the primary conduits for this kind of information is therefore decreasing as non-governmental connections proliferate, marginalising diplomats’ traditional roles, particularly within the EU (although we explore below how other roles are becoming more important).⁸⁷ European government figures meet regularly while EU leaders who wish to communicate now pick up the phone. Diplomats now spend less time on information-gathering and more time on advocacy, agenda-setting and lobbying.⁸⁸
37. Sir Antony Acland, a former head of the UK Diplomatic Service and Ambassador to Washington, told the Committee that where once diplomacy was conducted by diplomats entirely on an intergovernmental level, the business of diplomacy has broadened enormously, and involves many more

⁸² Richard Norton-Taylor.

⁸³ VICTUS.

⁸⁴ Nye J. S. Jr. (2011) *The Future of Power*, p19.

⁸⁵ Tara Sonenshine, QQ358–9; Indra Adnan.

⁸⁶ VisitBritain.

⁸⁷ Dr Cristina Archetti.

⁸⁸ Dr Cristina Archetti.

people, including Ministers, civil servants, doctors, scientists, religious leaders and journalists, creating a thick “cable” of connections across the Atlantic.⁸⁹ All Government Departments now engage in transnational cooperation and negotiation, in effect spreading the UK’s interface with the world away from being handled primarily by the FCO to becoming a dimension of the work of all of Whitehall—and of regional and local governments as well.⁹⁰ At the same time witnesses pointed to the significant increase in the responsibilities of Ambassadors. Embassies have to handle far more than government-to-government messages: they act as “mini-Whitehalls”, involved in the international dimensions of many Departments’ work as well as with travellers, migrants and traders.⁹¹ Lord Jay of Ewelme, another former head of the UK Diplomatic Service and Ambassador to Paris, told the Committee that in some parts of the world, the amount of pure Foreign Office work that an Ambassador does can take as little as 10 per cent of their time, with the other 90 per cent spent on other matters such as extending UK commercial interests.⁹² At the same time, the issues with which they are dealing are increasingly transnational and multilateral, within a rules-based international framework.⁹³

38. Diplomats are increasingly concerned with public diplomacy: diplomacy from the government of one state directed at the people, rather than the government, of another.⁹⁴ Some diplomats have been particularly adept at using hyper-connectivity to engage with overseas publics. The UK Ambassador to Lebanon, Tom Fletcher, has employed satire to defuse criticism of UK foreign policy and demonstrate that he is open for debate with people who communicate with him online, and has used Twitter to highlight local issues in Lebanon.⁹⁵ Then Deputy Head of Mission at the German Embassy in London, Dr Rudolf Adam, told the Committee that the task for diplomats was not to report facts or figures, and that while his job was to “try to explain to my government what is happening in the society and in Parliament in this country rather than only within this Government”, it was also “trying to explain the reality of Germany in its multi-faceted way to this country”. Diplomats like him “regard ourselves as spokesmen not for the government any more but for the people”. Where historically diplomats operated on a narrow bandwidth, international interactions now involve communication by millions more voices across a much wider spectrum.⁹⁶
39. **While the balances of power are shifting away from the West and away from governments, military force—though undoubtedly vital—is proving insufficient for defending the international interests of modern states. However, international relations are becoming ever more important as many nations become increasingly interconnected and interdependent, with a broadening interface between official, non-state and private interests and organisations. In this context, we**

⁸⁹ Q292.

⁹⁰ See BP; Welsh Government.

⁹¹ Lord Jay of Ewelme, Q292.

⁹² Q292.

⁹³ Lord Hannay of Chiswick, Q293.

⁹⁴ Professor Seib.

⁹⁵ For instance, see his unexpected YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKvslV9SFn4>; <https://twitter.com/HMATomFletcher/media>.

⁹⁶ See British Council supplementary written evidence.

consider that a country wishing to maintain or improve its place on the international stage must find new, complementary ways of establishing and exerting power and maintaining influence to reinforce and build on the crucial contribution made by the Armed Forces.

A different form of power: attraction and influence

40. Instead of getting what one wants by using coercion or inducement to force other countries to do what one wants—'hard power', which includes the threat or use of military coercion or of economic coercion through sanctions or boycotts—'soft power' involves getting what one wants by influencing other countries (via their governments and publics) to want the same thing, through the forces of attraction, persuasion and co-option.⁹⁷ According to Professor Nye, soft power is "the ability to get what you want by the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction".⁹⁸ Gently framing the international agenda can make other countries' preferences seem irrelevant, illegitimate or unfeasible. Even more subtle is shaping others' basic or initial preferences.⁹⁹ Persuading nations, leaders and populations to trust a country's people and government, to feel sympathy with a country's position and experience, to share its norms and values, to understand that country's interests and aspirations, and to value its contribution to the international community, should lead other countries to be more likely to support and pursue that country's agenda, to support it in international disputes (or be lenient in punishing transgressions), to agree to the establishing or modification of international rules that accommodate that country's interests, and to buy and consume its goods and services (both in that country and overseas). Professor Simon Anholt, policy advisor and author of the Anholt-GfK Roper Nations Brands Index, argued that "One of the great advantages of soft power ... is that it achieves this marvellous effect that people feel that they know you. As a consequence, while they can occasionally hate the things that you do, they cannot quite hate you".¹⁰⁰ As Professor Nye put it, "when co-opting is possible, policymakers can save on carrots and sticks".¹⁰¹ Soft power involves working to affect the preferences of others by using networks, developing and communicating compelling narratives, establishing international norms, building coalitions, and drawing on the key resources that endear one country to another.¹⁰² The BBC wrote of the UK's soft power that "When effective, it is characterised by foreign countries or businesses choosing to associate themselves with the UK".¹⁰³
41. The British Council told us that "Influence and attraction, how a country wins the support and good will of other nations, are becoming increasingly important as the power structures of the 20th century give way to an

⁹⁷ The Royal Commonwealth Society told us that "Creating a situation where states 'want' the same thing through building shared understanding is absolutely central to the modern Commonwealth, and to the RCS's vision of how the Commonwealth can continue to develop over the coming years" (Royal Commonwealth Society). See also Royal Society.

⁹⁸ Nye J. S. Jr. (2011) *The Future of Power*, p13.

⁹⁹ Nye J. S. Jr. (2011) *The Future of Power*, pp12–13.

¹⁰⁰ Q206.

¹⁰¹ Nye J. S. Jr. (2011) *The Future of Power*, p16.

¹⁰² Jonathan McClory.

¹⁰³ BBC.

increasingly volatile present where that influence and attraction is increasingly dependent on people rather than governments”.¹⁰⁴ **In the context of shared global threats and high economic and political interdependence between states, and because military coercion alone is proving insufficient for defending nations’ interests, being able to build positive international relationships and coalitions—as well as being able to export goods and services—is vital for modern nations’ security and prosperity.**¹⁰⁵ **The degree to which populations now form networks across borders gives this soft power a newly increased impact because it relies to a significant degree on popular perceptions.**¹⁰⁶

42. According to Professor Nye, “A country can try to attract others through actions such as public diplomacy, but it may also attract others through the structural effects of its example or what can be called the ‘shining city on the hill’ effect”.¹⁰⁷ Central to attraction is being understood by others to be benign and competent, and to possess beauty or charisma.¹⁰⁸ Appearing to be benign tends to generate sympathy, trust, credibility and acquiescence. Brilliance or competence produces admiration, respect and emulation; and beauty or charisma produce inspiration and adherence. To have soft power the UK’s attractive traits and assets, such as the creativity revealed by its culture, need to be understood to have these qualities, so that they result in behavioural change in others. People might engage with the UK’s traits and assets through consuming the products and outputs of British individuals, groups, institutions and firms; seeing the UK as a leader in a field or as doing or representing something valuable to them; or even better, building relationships with British people, including through coming to the UK (we discuss how the UK achieves these types of engagement in Chapter four of this Report). The resulting positive influence can develop through elite relations and networks. But more often publics and third parties are influenced, and they in turn influence the leaders of other countries.¹⁰⁹

Why soft power is difficult: the problem of orchestration

43. We received a range of definitions of soft power, suggesting some disagreement about exactly what the term covers. For example, the National Museum Directors’ Council defined soft power as “the influence achieved through activities which are not formally organized by Government”.¹¹⁰ However, soft power is not divorced from governments, as

¹⁰⁴ British Council supplementary written evidence.

¹⁰⁵ Baroness Prashar, Q152; Lord Hannay of Chiswick; Dr Peter van Ham; Jonathan McClory; Sir Peter Marshall; Dr Robin Niblett; Royal Commonwealth Society; VisitBritain; Dr Matt Beech (Director of the Centre for British Politics) and Dr Peter Munce (Leverhulme Early Career Fellow), Centre for British Politics, School of Politics, Philosophy and International Studies, University of Hull.

¹⁰⁶ Dr Daniel Arthur of International Policy Dynamics wrote that “A digitally connected world makes soft power more important due to speed and extent of reach of communications” (Dr Daniel Arthur). See also Indra Adnan.

¹⁰⁷ Nye J. S. Jr. (2011) *The Future of Power*, p17.

¹⁰⁸ Nye J. S. Jr. (2011) *The Future of Power*, p92.

¹⁰⁹ Nye J. S. Jr. (2011) *The Future of Power*, pp92–96; Government written evidence; Maria Miller MP, Q332; Sir John Major, Q350.

¹¹⁰ National Museum Directors’ Council. UUK and IU called it “the influence enjoyed by a nation or state from sources other than its economic, military, or formal diplomatic strengths” (UUK and IU).

we explore below.¹¹¹ Nor (as we also explore below) is it defined by the resources which produce it, even though, as Dr James Pamment of the University of Texas at Austin pointed out, ‘soft power’ is variously used to refer to a set of assets or resources that make a country attractive, to communicative practices, and/or to the process of attraction. He also highlighted that ‘hard power’ is used “equally imprecisely” to refer to economic and military assets and resources, the practice of coercion, and/or the process of submission to a superior force. The relationship between economic value and attraction is particularly awkward: many of the soft power assets that make a country attractive require substantial investment. Soft power is not therefore a cheap alternative to hard power, but is “in many respects the indirect outcome of being wealthy and powerful, and therefore of developing an infrastructure and culture which exudes the benefits of affluence”.¹¹²

44. Governments can make countries more attractive to others through their policies, their diplomacy, and the deployment of resources including development assistance. Even military forces can add to soft power—for example, by sending ships to respond to natural disasters. Attractiveness is also generated by non-state actors, including cultural bodies, broadcasters, education providers, NGOs, businesses, sporting bodies and athletes, popular culture, products and brands, clubs and associations, religious organisations, parliaments and institutions of state, and any other actor which improves the reputation or international standing of a country in the eyes of foreign individuals, groups, companies and governments. Such attractiveness is often generated as a by-product of the everyday work of individuals or bodies whose core purpose is not to increase the country’s international influence.¹¹³
45. We heard that the characteristics that make the UK seem attractive to others might best be generated by institutions that maintain some distance from Government.¹¹⁴ VisitBritain wrote that “There is broad consensus that soft power is most potent when exercised independently of government” because “direct government control often invites suspicion and hostility and soft power activity is quickly undermined if it comes across as lacking in authenticity or as government propaganda”.¹¹⁵ Professor Gary Rawnsley, Professor of Public Diplomacy at Aberystwyth University, wrote that “If there is any suspicion about the motivations or method of exercising soft power, any potential benefits are lost”. In his view, falling trust in politicians means that governments or institutions associated with the state were not the best agencies of “soft power activity”: “In fact, the more distance the better between the government and a nation’s soft power capacity”.¹¹⁶ Professor Nye stated plainly that “If you are not credible you are not going to be able to generate soft power”.¹¹⁷

¹¹¹ Professor Seib.

¹¹² Dr James Pamment.

¹¹³ Gillespie and Webb; Professor Rawnsley; BBC; Maria Miller MP, Q329. See also Professor Anholt.

¹¹⁴ Professor Nye, Q186; Demos.

¹¹⁵ VisitBritain.

¹¹⁶ Gillespie and Webb; Professor Rawnsley.

¹¹⁷ Q186.

46. For example, national broadcasters are often seen as a ‘soft power asset’ because they increase international awareness of a country, and promote understanding in their audiences about that country’s story, values, people and aspirations, as well as furthering other aspects of the country’s international agenda (such as encouraging development). In discussing the BBC’s relationship to the Government, Professor Nye told us: “The fact that the BBC can bite the hand that feeds it occasionally means the BBC is seen as credible rather than as propaganda. You do not see that with the Chinese media broadcasters”.¹¹⁸ International Alert agreed that the fact that the BBC is “from a British perspective” but “frequently critical of the UK” has earned it a reputation for credibility.¹¹⁹ The BBC stressed to us the importance of credibility, emphasising that “Unlike some other international broadcasters, the objective of the World Service is not to advance the foreign policy of the UK Government”, and arguing that the move from FCO to licence fee funding from 2014 will distance the Service from perceptions and accusations that it has been an arm of government.¹²⁰ Similarly, Sir Martin Davidson, Chief Executive of the British Council, told us that he has a “conversation” with the FCO about its major foreign policy objectives and what the Council can do to support them, but not “how”: this day-to-day independence he sees as critically important for the Council’s international “credibility”.¹²¹ The Council told us that research by Demos “suggests direct government involvement invites suspicion and hostility; it is people-to-people contact and reciprocity that build trust”.¹²²
47. A country’s cultural reputation can make it attractive. But as an example of what can happen when culture is seen as a tool of government, the Centre for World Cinemas, University of Leeds and B-Film: Birmingham Centre for Film Studies drew our attention to “the disaster that was *Confucius* (2010), a large-budget Chinese historical fantasy film which was the product of a policy intended to showcase to the world the potential of the Chinese film industry. The film famously flopped, even at home, being unable to compete with James Cameron’s *Avatar* (2010), despite the Hollywood film receiving only very limited distribution within China”.¹²³ Professor Urs Matthias Zachmann, of the University of Edinburgh told us that when Japanese elite bureaucrats appropriate Japanese pop culture outputs and gear them to official national interests, the pop culture “loses its claims to the subcultural and, thus, its allure and power”. He argued

¹¹⁸ Q186. The BBC’s written evidence quoted Professor Nye as saying: “If you are a citizen in Brasilia or Beijing and you want to know what is true about a certain event which you read on internet, the BBC is the gold standard that you turn to”(BBC).

¹¹⁹ International Alert further supplementary written evidence; Maria Miller MP, Q333. The BBC told us that it is consistently rated the most trusted and best-known international news provider (BBC).

¹²⁰ BBC; Peter Horrocks, Q83. From April 2014, jurisdiction over the World Service passes entirely to the BBC Trust, who will be funding the Service from the BBC licence fee rather than through the grant-in-aid that the Service has been receiving from the FCO since 1938 (Peter Horrocks, Q64). While the Foreign Secretary will continue to have a role in agreeing the World Service’s languages, objectives, priorities and targets, the BBC will have “full editorial and managerial independence and integrity in the provision of the World Service” (BBC; BBC trust (2013) *BBC World Service: A licence fee funded service*, June; *An Agreement Between Her Majesty’s Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport and the British Broadcasting Corporation*, Cm 8170, September 2011).

¹²¹ Q83; British Council; British Council supplementary written evidence.

¹²² British Council.

¹²³ HE Mr Roberto Jaguaribe, Q188; Centre for World Cinemas, University of Leeds and B-Film: The Birmingham Centre for Film Studies; Dr Christina Rowley.

that “The same can be said, more abstractly, of any use of culture towards political ends, as it limits the former’s interpretive range and thereby trivializes it”.¹²⁴ As Levant Education Consulting wrote, “As soon as artists, writers, businesses or education institutions are seen to be part of government ‘soft power’ propaganda, their appeal/reputation is inevitably tarnished”.¹²⁵

48. Another problem with ‘using’ soft power is that it is not easy to show that any international goodwill towards the UK generated by an act or asset has directly resulted in sales or security gains. Soft power is very difficult to measure¹²⁶ and largely intangible: trying only to achieve the outcomes of soft power approaches that are measurable could mean that a country does not benefit to the full.¹²⁷ The number of albums by British artists sold overseas can be counted, while the UK’s reputation for upholding the rule of law cannot, but this does not make One Direction more important for the UK’s standing than its legal history; and it is hard to prove that either has directly resulted in behavioural change.¹²⁸
49. Governments can therefore neither direct soft power generation¹²⁹ (except through their own resources) nor treat soft power as a lever that they can pull when desired: soft power is difficult to treat as a tool (or to ‘instrumentalise’).¹³⁰ Sir Martin Davidson told the Committee that building and exercising soft power “is a long-term, slow-burn activity. It ... is generational: ‘How do you build a generation of engagement between this country and other countries?’ not, ‘How do you make it highly instrumental within a very short period of time?’”¹³¹ Demos argued that governments should “embrace long-term relationship building instead of short-term transactional and instrumental thinking”, because the former is more effective.¹³²
50. However, many of our witnesses proposed that it *was* possible for soft power to be capitalised upon—by the Government and by others such as UK businesses—to change the behaviour of others towards the UK, in ways that

¹²⁴ Professor Zachmann.

¹²⁵ Levant Education Consulting; Dr Jamie Gaskarth; Gillespie and Webb.

¹²⁶ BBC, Conrad Bird Q310, Q320, Q324; Gillespie and Webb; Dr James Pamment, Dr Robin Brown, Professor Roselle, Professor Rawnsley; Demos; Dr Jamie Gaskarth.

¹²⁷ Dr Daniel Arthur of International Policy Dynamics wrote that “soft variables have no fixed form” and consequently become extremely difficult to analyse and model (Dr Daniel Arthur).

¹²⁸ The BBC undertakes relatively rigorous evaluation of the impact of its activities and works with academics to refine its concepts, models and methods to evaluate its engagement and influence. In the light of new digital methods to research influence, the Arts and Humanities Research Council has funded Professor Marie Gillespie to explore and develop these evaluation models. The project, ‘Understanding the Changing Cultural Value of the BBC World Service and British Council’, began in October 2013. See: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funded-Research/Funded-themes-and-programmes/Cultural-Value-Project/Documents/CVP-project-summaries.pdf#MGillespie>.

¹²⁹ Martin Davidson, Q63; Peter Horrocks, Q68; David Blackie; British Council supplementary written evidence; Professor Cox, Q26, Q30; Richard Dowden; Ingenious Media; Jonathan McClory; Professor Nye, Q186; VisitBritain.

¹³⁰ Sir Martin Davidson, Q69; Dr Jamie Gaskarth; Dr Christina Rowley. The BBC stressed that it was “not a soft power ‘asset’ to be deployed at will by the Government” (BBC).

¹³¹ Q63; Gillespie and Webb.

¹³² Demos.

fulfil objectives set or supported by Government.¹³³ The Government might be able to construct strategies regarding its international goals that align with the priorities of independent actors and in this way ‘harness’ their efforts—witness the Government’s work alongside NGOs and businesses to campaign for the adoption of the international Arms Trade Treaty in 2013.¹³⁴

51. The Prime Minister expressed this logic in his speech to the World Economic Forum in Davos on 24 January 2013. He outlined a number of British “soft power assets” (see Chapter four) and added that “While the Government cannot, and does not seek to, control all of these directly, it can support and harness their strengths, for instance through our international scholarships, aid programmes or collaboration with public diplomacy partners including the British Council”.¹³⁵ The Government can support activities that show a track record of generating soft power for the UK: Professor Rawnsley told us that as soft power is “a natural by-product of one’s values, principles, and behavior” it “cannot be strategised”, but that “*instruments* of exercising soft power” can be developed. These include public diplomacy (diplomacy aimed at people rather than governments) and cultural diplomacy (using the exchange of ideas, values, traditions and other aspects of culture and identity to strengthen relationships, enhance cooperation and promote national interests).¹³⁶ While Sir Martin Davidson did not want “government fingerprints” on soft power activities, the British Council regarded “Government as having a critical role in creating the environment and conditions within which soft power can be operated”.¹³⁷ In Chapters four and five we explore what the Government can do to help this process.

Why soft power is difficult: the problem of communication

52. The possession of soft power can bring greater international influence for the UK if overseas governments, companies and individuals receive a favourable impression that makes them more willing to associate themselves with the UK and its interests. Soft power is therefore intimately bound up with communication. But Gillespie and Webb warned that the idea “that power lies in the hands of the media and the communicator to shape meanings ... ignores 80 years of audience research which shows that the messages intended and messages received are not equivalent”.¹³⁸ The power of communication depends less on projection than on how audiences understand and interpret the act of communication in its entirety (what is said, how, why, in what context) and over time (because interpreting communication depends on prior experiences, assumptions, and

¹³³ Dr Jonathan Williams (Deputy Director of the British Museum), Q64; Demos; John Krige; British Council supplementary written evidence; Dr Peter van Ham; Laura Roselle; Indra Adnan; see also Durham Global Security Institute. Emile Simpson emphasised that in international military missions the underlying story, and the process by which that story was shaped and established, had become central to effectiveness and success (Emile Simpson).

¹³⁴ Government written evidence; Sir Peter Marshall; British Academy; VisitBritain.

¹³⁵ Government written evidence.

¹³⁶ Professor Rawnsley; VisitBritain.

¹³⁷ Sir Martin Davidson, Q63; Demos; Jonathan McClory.

¹³⁸ Gillespie and Webb. This argument was supported by Dr Cristina Archetti’s written evidence, the British Council’s supplementary written evidence and Dr Ali Fisher’s written evidence.

expectations).¹³⁹ Attraction is in the eye of the beholder, meaning the UK cannot decide what is attractive about itself.¹⁴⁰ Professor Cox told us that soft power is fundamentally not what you say but “what you have” and “what your society and system are”.¹⁴¹ Others’ perceptions of the attractiveness of the UK also depend on how they view British actions.¹⁴²

53. Professor Giles Scott-Smith of Leiden University warned us of the dangers of “getting the message right but the reality wrong”. For example, the US State Department played a film at passport control points that expressed the welcoming nature of the American people, but whose message did not match the long queues for those waiting to go through immigration control, or the hard-edged attitude of the US immigration staff.¹⁴³ The US had run into what Emile Simpson has called the ‘say-do’ gap, the distinction between what a state says it does and what it actually does.¹⁴⁴ Hyper-connectivity makes the gap visible to an unprecedented degree.¹⁴⁵
54. If the UK wants others to have their ears open to its communication, it can only avoid accusations of hypocrisy and cultural imperialism if its ears are open too.¹⁴⁶ Just the act of projecting a narrative or trying to engage can be viewed as an act of coercion or manipulation.¹⁴⁷ Sir Martin Davidson told the Committee that “We cannot expect others to be interested in us if we are not interested in them ... they want us to be involved and looking at them and seeing them as of interest to us, just as much as presenting ourselves”.¹⁴⁸ He argued that “mutuality” was crucial to the British Council’s success as “the UK’s leading soft power agency”: its contribution comes from “not just showcasing the UK’s assets” but “sharing” those assets and supporting a reciprocal exchange of ideas and culture.¹⁴⁹ The Council sees sharing rather than broadcasting, and discussing rather than lecturing, as key to the way it builds “trust between the people of the UK and the peoples of other

¹³⁹ This point was made by a majority of the academic experts researching international political communication who sent us evidence, including in the written evidence of Gillespie and Webb, Professor Rawnsley, Dr Jamie Gaskarth, Dr James Pamment, Dr Robin Brown, and Professor Roselle. It is also supported by the broader study of power in political science. The leading theorist of power in politics, Professor Steven Lukes, has written that “merely possessing or controlling the means of power is not the same as being powerful”. Power is a relationship and thus depends on the other party. Hence, soft power and the power of communication depend on the recipient. See Lukes, S. (2007) ‘Power and the battle for hearts and minds’, in Berenskoetter, F. and Williams, M.J. (Eds.) *Power in World Politics*, p83.

¹⁴⁰ Indra Adnan; Professor Scott-Smith.

¹⁴¹ Q155.

¹⁴² According to Professor Seib, American public diplomacy efforts in the Middle East are struggling to alter perceptions of the US in the region because “deep-rooted skepticism about US intentions in the Arab world ... limit even the most cleverly designed public diplomacy tactics” (Professor Seib).

¹⁴³ Professor Scott-Smith.

¹⁴⁴ Simpson, E. (2012) *War from the Ground Up*, p181. See also Khatib, L., Dutton, W. and Thelwall, M. (2011) ‘Public Diplomacy 2.0: An Exploratory Case Study of the US Digital Outreach Team’, *The Middle East Journal*, vol.2, <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1734850>.

¹⁴⁵ Jonathan McClory; Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University. On the dangers of hypocrisy; see Professor Nye Q180; Professor Rawnsley; Ian Birrell Q129; Institute of Export; Dr Cristina Archetti.

¹⁴⁶ Professor Rawnsley.

¹⁴⁷ Professor Rawnsley; Bially-Mattern, (2005) *Ordering International Politics*; Nye J. S. Jr. (2011) *The Power to Lead*, p43.

¹⁴⁸ Sir Martin Davidson, Q63.

¹⁴⁹ Q74; British Council supplementary written evidence; British Council.

nations”.¹⁵⁰ Keith Nichol, Head of Cultural Diplomacy, Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), concurred that with soft power, “Reciprocity is absolutely vital ... This should not be just about us doing things to the rest of the world”.¹⁵¹ Richard Dowden warned about a tone of “we know best for you” alienating a new generation of self-confident Africans.¹⁵² Peter Horrocks, Director of Global News at the BBC with responsibility for the BBC World Service, also stressed its focus on mutuality and told us that the BBC was “no longer people in London saying, ‘This is how the world is’, to people around the world. It is a dialogue; it is a debate”.¹⁵³

55. Consistent with this message, we heard about UK institutions that are supporting the development of similar bodies overseas on a basis of equality rather than paternalism. The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) supports international capacity building projects to develop local professional bodies and institutions.¹⁵⁴ Gilly Lord, Partner and Head of Regulatory Affairs at the London-based multinational professional services firm PricewaterhouseCoopers, told us that in the ICAEW’s work with emerging economies, “Rather than saying, ‘Please come and join our accountancy profession because it is so great’, it is helping them to work out how you do it in your own country”, establishing affectionate relationships with the UK instead of more unequal connections.¹⁵⁵ In Abu Dhabi, while France and the US have planted outposts of the Louvre and the Guggenheim, the British Museum is supporting the United Arab Emirates (UAE) government to create the UAE’s own national museum (designed by a British architectural firm).¹⁵⁶ David Collier, Chief Executive of the England and Wales Cricket Board, reported that the Board would see more competition from the growth of professional sports in other countries as “an opportunity and a bonus” because the Board would be in a position to export expertise and help other countries’ institutions develop.¹⁵⁷
56. Another difficulty regarding successfully communicating the characteristics and outputs that make the UK attractive is making one’s voice heard above the crowd.¹⁵⁸ In the hyper-connected world, the visibility of international affairs is increasing—there is an explosion of information and comment surrounding what governments are doing and saying and what countries’ institutions and populations are creating and thinking. Dr Ali Fisher told us that in an era of proliferating choice of information sources it is difficult for any single actor to control a debate: “the influence of shifting networks and relationships makes genuine dominance extremely difficult”—hence, yet again, the importance of soft power being generated by a plethora of

¹⁵⁰ British Council supplementary written evidence; British Council.

¹⁵¹ Q119. See also Professor Rooney; Dr Ali Fisher; Peter Horrocks, Q64 and Q90; Sir Martin Davidson Q63 and Q74; British Council; Centre for World Cinemas, University of Leeds and B-Film: The Birmingham Centre for Film Studies; Demos.

¹⁵² Richard Dowden.

¹⁵³ Q64, Q90, Q79; BBC. Professor Rawnsley, however, felt the BBC was not as responsive as it should be, as complaints on the BBC’s Facebook pages about its coverage were “rarely addressed” (Professor Rawnsley).

¹⁵⁴ ICAEW.

¹⁵⁵ Q233.

¹⁵⁶ British Museum.

¹⁵⁷ Q287.

¹⁵⁸ Professor Roselle.

actors.¹⁵⁹ In a hyper-connected and multi-polar world, attention is the scarce resource and currency of international relations.¹⁶⁰ The Government and other UK bodies need to understand how to generate the capacity to attract it, and when and how to take advantage of that capacity.

57. Because it is linked to a country's reputation, soft power is slowly gained but quickly lost.¹⁶¹ Images that fly around the world of rioting in London, or mass protests in São Paulo or Istanbul, can damage international impressions of a developed nation, and can contradict the notion that emerging powers are advancing rapidly and smoothly.¹⁶² It is for this reason that many experts recommended that the UK Government see soft power as a very long-term commitment, and emphasised the importance of patiently building up relationships and networks over years, decades and generations.¹⁶³ Gillespie and Webb therefore argued for the careful nurturing of assets such as the BBC World Service, saying: "We lose this soft power at our peril and once lost it will not be regained in a media saturated world where voices struggle to be heard".¹⁶⁴
58. One more difficulty with the concept of soft power is apparent from the evidence that we received about what counts as success in the world of soft power. Instinctively, it may seem that the greater the international reach and attractiveness of a country's 'soft power assets', the bigger that country's soft power capability, and the greater its ability to influence others through soft power. The 'reach' of the BBC and the British Council is immense, and this certainly adds to their ability to enhance the UK's soft power.¹⁶⁵ However, if

¹⁵⁹ Dr Ali Fisher.

¹⁶⁰ Professor Scott-Smith. Anholt, S. (2012) *Soft Power as Moral Authority: a New Model of National Influence*, p1, available at: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/177347151/Simon-Anholt-Soft-Power-as-Moral-Authority-A-Different-Perspective-on-National-Influence>.

¹⁶¹ Professor Cox, Q25.

¹⁶² Lord Williams of Baglan, Q25.

¹⁶³ Demos; Professor Anholt; Sir Martin Davidson, Q63; Dr Jonathan Williams, Q87; Peter Horrocks, Q81 and Q88; Jonathan Glennie, Q133; British Academy; Uday Dholakia, Q93; City of London Corporation. See also Jonathan McClory's 2011 report for the Institute for Government in which he wrote, "affecting world opinion and projecting a compelling international narrative are long-term pursuits. Building soft power requires a sustained effort spanning years, if not decades". McClory, J. (2011) *The New Persuaders II: A 2011 Global Ranking of Soft Power*, p23.

¹⁶⁴ Gillespie and Webb.

¹⁶⁵ The BBC's international services include: the BBC World Service ("the world's leading international multimedia broadcaster providing impartial news and analysis in English and 27 other languages"), which reaches 192 million people around the world; BBC World News, a commercially funded TV channel; bbc.com, which alongside BBCNews.com delivers news, business, features and analysis, and which saw more than 1 billion page views in a single month in 2013; and BBC Worldwide, the BBC's main commercial arm which develops brands and licenses merchandise, and operates TV and digital services including 44 channels available in over 406 million households across the world. The first three of these (the BBC World Service, BBC World News and bbc.com) together reach 170 countries, with a weekly audience of over a quarter of a billion people—one in every 28 people (BBC; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2013/global-audience-estimate.html>).

In 2012 the British Council "reached" over 553 million people worldwide; worked with 10.8 million people face-to-face; attracted 12.7 million people to its exhibitions, fairs and festivals; worked on English with 1.7 million policy-makers, ministers, teachers and learners, 2.37 million exam candidates, 55.9 million website users and 143.8 million viewers, listeners and readers; connected around the arts with 532,000 artists, art lovers, cultural leaders and ministers, 9.5 million exhibition and event attendees and 142.3 million viewers, listeners and readers; and in the area of education and society worked with 2.9 million education and citizenship exhibition attendees, 5.9 million teachers, academics, education and youth sector leaders and young people, and 14.7 million website users (British Council supplementary written evidence).

others emulate a country's values or cultural practices, to what extent do those values and practices continue to be associated with the 'original' country and add to its international standing? Professor Zachmann told us that "popular culture originating in Japan is all the more successful and pervasive abroad, the less distinctly 'Japanese' it is"—for example, "the pervasiveness of Japanese characters ... on children's television programming is rarely associated with a distinct consciousness that these are particularly Japanese, let alone particular sympathy with its country of origin". This means that "soft power which is successful *because* it is 'universal' is self-defeating in its purpose to promote specific national interest".¹⁶⁶

59. Attempting to present both a universal and a British perspective therefore generates a paradox that can be difficult to resolve. If they are to bring the UK power by drawing others to trust in and sympathise with the UK, the characteristics that attract that trust and sympathy must have broad appeal, but they must also continue to be associated with the UK. Publicly funded bodies in particular should consider how their actions contribute to British attractiveness before presenting themselves as 'universal' assets. We were told that a number of the UK's soft power assets try actively to use global appeal to enhance British attractiveness. Peter Horrocks emphasised to us that the BBC's main channels in English do not "use Britishness" to describe themselves. The World Service is described as "the world's radio station", meaning "a sense of ownership by the world of something that is obviously a British-funded asset".¹⁶⁷ The BBC Trust has said explicitly that the World Service's perspective should not be based on a British national or commercial interest, because, as Peter Horrocks told us, "other countries have services that are explicitly about reflecting the national political agenda ... and their services are regarded as being propaganda".¹⁶⁸ According to Horrocks, by having an "even-handed global perspective", the BBC "can attract people to Britain precisely because we are not pursuing a British agenda".¹⁶⁹ Professor Mary Kaldor, Professor of Global Governance at the London School of Economics and Political Science, wrote that the British Council, the BBC World Service and British universities are significant because "they are global institutions rather than British institutions", so they "contribute to global debates about the construction of rules and norms rather than conveying an insular national message".¹⁷⁰ The *Financial Times* and *The Economist* were also singled out as internationally "deemed to be not British but global"; while we were told that the British Museum describes itself as "a museum of the world, for the world".¹⁷¹ The international character of English football's Barclay's Premier League was also highlighted: its Chief Executive, Richard Scudamore, argued that the number of foreign players in the League enhanced its international appeal, with spikes of interests in certain countries when particular players are playing. He added that the

¹⁶⁶ Professor Zachmann.

¹⁶⁷ Q64.

¹⁶⁸ Q64, Q68.

¹⁶⁹ Q68, Q64; BBC. Indra Adnan argued that as the UK "has such an extensive network of news organisations, the active development of a global story ... is in its gift" (Indra Adnan). However, this would hardly be consistent with the BBC's impartiality, so the UK eschews this opportunity in exchange for what it gains through the BBC's credibility.

¹⁷⁰ Professor Kaldor; Peter Horrocks, Q92; Research Councils UK.

¹⁷¹ Professor Cox, Q39; British Museum; Dr Jonathan Williams, Q65.

presence of foreign club owners contributed to the UK being viewed as “open for business”.¹⁷²

60. **The evidence that we have received about the role of soft power in modern international relations has convinced us that because the methods that countries use to sustain or gain international power are changing, successfully communicating the attributes, values and outputs that gain for the UK both attractiveness and respect in the eyes of people abroad will be vital in maintaining the UK in positions of influence. Soft power may be difficult to measure and control, but it is nonetheless essential for protecting the UK’s interests. The mindset of those who shape the UK’s foreign policy must reflect this.**

How to use power smartly

61. What matters is not how much soft or hard power a country has, but how it uses its power to shape the behaviour of others in a way that furthers its interests. Soft power alone will never be sufficient to protect all of the UK’s security and prosperity interests. In the mid-2000s, Professor Nye acknowledged the interplay of hard and soft power by formulating a new concept, ‘smart power’, which he described as “The ability to combine hard and soft power into an effective strategy”.¹⁷³ International leadership involves drawing strategic benefit from both—knowing when to use hard or soft power depending on context and opportunity.¹⁷⁴
62. Much of the evidence that we received indicated that the UK is in a strong position regarding smart power. The British Council told us that “The UK is one of a handful of international players to have the capacity to project power in all its forms anywhere. It has unique strengths in the soft and hard power stakes”.¹⁷⁵ It has scored consistently highly in two of the most respected global rankings of soft power—the IfG-Monocle Soft Power Index and the Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index. In the former index, the UK ranked first in 2012 and second in 2013; the Prime Minister has described the UK as “the soft power superpower”.¹⁷⁶ (The UK’s soft power strengths are examined in Chapter four of this Report.) Dr Peter van Ham of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations considered that “the UK has a unique blend of soft and hard power, combined with an equally unique fusion of a European identity and cosmopolitan worldview. There is no other European country with these qualities and capabilities”. Accordingly, “the UK should shape a policy based on clearly defined values and interests. And it should ram home that it is willing to defend these values and interests, if need be by using hard power. By making this clear, the UK would not only educate its own populace that its freedom and prosperity requires vigilance

¹⁷² Q279; Henry Jackson Society.

¹⁷³ Nye J. S. Jr. (2008) *The Power to Lead*, p43; Nye J. S. Jr. (2011) *The Future of Power*, pxiii.

¹⁷⁴ Nye J. S. Jr. (2011) *The Future of Power*, p10.

¹⁷⁵ British Council supplementary written evidence.

¹⁷⁶ Anholt, S. (2013) Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index; Jonathan McClory, J. (2013) The New Persuaders III, A 2012 Global Ranking of Soft Power, http://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/The_new_persuaders_III_0.pdf; McClory, J. And Bloomfield, S. (2013) ‘The Soft Parade’, *Monocle*, issue 69; Rt Hon David Cameron MP (2014) ‘The Importance of Scotland to the UK’, 7 February 2014, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-importance-of-scotland-to-the-uk-david-camersons-speech>. See also British Council; British Council supplementary written evidence; Conrad Bird, Q324.

and grit, but also send the message to outsiders that it considers these values (and interests) *worth* defending. The optimal mix of hard and soft power ... will add to the UK's global influence".¹⁷⁷ (We explore how the Government can achieve this in Chapters four and five.)

63. Soft power and hard power are intrinsically linked, and finding the "optimal mix" of the two is crucial to protecting and furthering a country's interests. As we have said, soft power is not a cheap substitute for hard power: rather, hard power can be invaluable in underpinning soft power. The Rt Hon Jack Straw MP, former Foreign Secretary, told the Committee that "there is no intrinsic dichotomy between 'soft power' and 'hard power'; rather, the reverse, with the one supporting the other".¹⁷⁸ He counselled that it "would be naive in the extreme for a belief to grow up that we could make up for any serious deficiencies in our military strength by seeking to 'develop' our soft power. Instead, we should strive for a proper balance between the two".¹⁷⁹ Dr van Ham warned that the EU, which was "built upon the understanding that using (and even just having) hard power is wrong and dangerous since this could quickly awaken the ghosts of nationalism", and for which soft power is the "main, if not only currency and unique selling point", has "intentionally made itself vulnerable to the bullying and intimidation of hard-nosed competitors who still value the uses of hard power (China, Russia, etc.)".¹⁸⁰
64. Jack Straw MP contrasted the UK with Germany: he argued that while Germany was the world's most successful exporter, with high living standards, "their unwillingness generally to use their armed forces in active offensive operations means that they have surprisingly little wider 'soft power' influence across the world and their diplomatic clout is also diminished as a result".¹⁸¹ Mr Straw concluded that, "as Theodore Roosevelt wrote in 1900, a state should seek to, 'Speak softly and carry a big stick.'" ¹⁸² This was echoed by John Micklethwait, Editor-in-Chief of *The Economist*, who told the Committee that if power is the "ability to get people to do things that they would otherwise not want to do" then it is useful to create the impression that "it is generally in their interest to be nice to us".¹⁸³ Sir John Major explained how smart power brought an end to the conflict in Northern Ireland:

"Hard power bled into soft power. The fact that hard power had been there for so long was one of the reasons that soft power began to work. We had had hard power—that is the Army in Northern Ireland—for a long time and it led to a stand-off. It protected people. It prevented chaos and that was absolutely necessary, so we owe a great deal to the Army and the RUC for doing that. But it was when you got to smart power, that is the continuation of hard power allied to soft power, that we moved to a settlement".¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁷ Dr Peter van Ham.

¹⁷⁸ Jack Straw MP.

¹⁷⁹ Jack Straw MP.

¹⁸⁰ Dr Peter van Ham.

¹⁸¹ Jack Straw MP.

¹⁸² Jack Straw MP.

¹⁸³ Q39; Sir Jeremy Greenstock.

¹⁸⁴ Q348.

65. Another example of the way in which soft power to some extent depends on hard power—on economic might and being able to bring military power to bear if needed—is provided by the case of Syria in 2013.¹⁸⁵

BOX 1

The 2013 Syria crisis: the roles of hard, soft and smart power

We heard a number of different interpretations of the crisis regarding Syria's chemical weapons in August 2013. Indra Adnan, in her written evidence, read the way in which the Syrian government had succumbed to diplomatic pressure to destroy its chemical weapons as “a demonstration of how the many different elements of soft power combine to get an effect hard power can no longer deliver”.

However, the Henry Jackson Society's written evidence argued that “the recent case of Syria has starkly demonstrated the necessity of hard power, particularly military hard power, in an instance where soft power has failed. The UK is one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, acts as the base for a host of Syrian exiles, is the second largest donor of humanitarian aid to Syrians, and (in relation to hard power actions) has led diplomatic efforts to create economic sanctions on Syria and frozen regime assets within the UK. All of this ultimately failed to buy the UK, or the Western powers in general, influence in events on the ground in Syria. Only the threat of military force by the US, France and (briefly, implied) the UK has forced concessions from the Syrian government in the form of the surrender of its chemical weapons”.

Professor Nye saw an application of hard and soft power combined in “a smart power strategy: the threat of force led the Russians, as [President] Assad's protectors, to press him to move on this, which then led to the UN resolution and the work that is being done there now” (Q181). It is hard to imagine that President Assad would have agreed to destroy the government's chemical weapons without any application of sanctions or threat of the use of force.

66. As well as adding a “hard edge to diplomatic soft power”, hard power assets and the judicious use of hard power can generate soft power.¹⁸⁶ As Research Councils UK told us, “conventional military forces nowadays are to a considerable extent used for ‘soft’ purposes such as reinforcing diplomacy and protecting communities”.¹⁸⁷ Economic sanctions can force parties to seek diplomatic solutions, as recently occurred in international discussions over Iran's nuclear programme.¹⁸⁸ Economic strength can also be hugely beneficial to a nation's soft power, because a country with a strong economy has more resources to invest in culture and education and distribute as aid and scholarships.¹⁸⁹
67. In counter-insurgency conflicts, military gains can in some circumstances depend on soft power approaches. While in the last decade ‘hearts and

¹⁸⁵ Henry Jackson Society; Professor Nye, Q181.

¹⁸⁶ John Micklethwait, Q39.

¹⁸⁷ Research Councils UK.

¹⁸⁸ Humanitarian Intervention Centre; British Council supplementary written evidence.

¹⁸⁹ Ingenious Media; see also Dr Robin Niblett.

minds' dimensions of military campaigns and the ideas of 'securing the civilian' and 'human security' have garnered public attention, the UK Armed Forces have long placed an emphasis on such an approach.¹⁹⁰ Human security is about the security of individuals and the communities in which they live and involves both physical security (protection from violence) and material security (protection from poverty, homelessness or environmental risks).¹⁹¹ It underpins the merging of development and security operations, as exemplified by recent operations in Afghanistan. Professor Kaldor told us that "the current UK-led EU anti-piracy mission in Somalia, the intervention in Sierra Leone in 2001, the Northern Ireland experience, and the British role in Basra after the Charge of the Knights in 2008 are all good examples of missions that had strong human security elements". She argued that the UK has a comparative advantage in the type of instruments needed for promoting human security, as it showed in those contexts, but that "this advantage is in danger of being frittered away in part by the UK involvement in militant counter-terror efforts (the invasion of Iraq or the current drone campaign) and in part by defence cuts which are designed to preserve classic war-fighting capabilities".¹⁹² The balance of a country's security instruments, and the balance between emphases on national security and human security, can therefore enhance or inhibit that country's attractiveness to others. Stuart MacDonald, Executive Director of the Centre for Cultural Relations, University of Edinburgh, also noted that "Cultural relations and dialogue are increasingly recognised as important in security and conflict resolution".¹⁹³

68. Hard power can undermine soft power, for example through failings and abuses in the field. The Durham Global Security Institute told us that "Between 2009 and 2012, when US drone attacks increased, Pakistani public support for US financial and humanitarian aid to militant areas dropped from 72 per cent to 50 per cent, while those regarding the US as an enemy rose from 64 per cent to 74 per cent". Development aid is usually seen as a core contributor to soft power, but the Institute added that "where development aid is too closely linked to the projection of hard power, it can come to be seen as an extension of hard power, losing much of its persuasive power—particularly when aid flows drop after the withdrawal of military personnel, as was the case with Afghanistan in the 1990s (and may happen again post-2014)".¹⁹⁴
69. Soft power can also act as a cover for hard power. Professor Zachmann told us that Japan's "renewed thrust" of soft power initiatives, including those of 'Cool Japan', may also serve "security purposes". Due to constitutional provisions, "Japan's military options are, at least in theory, severely restricted and, in any case, require additional argumentative support or justification. Thus, it has been argued that 'soft power' is the liberal compensation for Japan's lack in 'hard power' to pursue its national interests abroad. However, considering Japan's post-1990 naval build-up [Japan's navy now has four

¹⁹⁰ See the US Army Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual, 2006; Professor Kaldor.

¹⁹¹ Professor Kaldor.

¹⁹² Professor Kaldor.

¹⁹³ Centre for Cultural Relations, University of Edinburgh.

¹⁹⁴ Durham Global Security Institute.

times as many major warships as the Royal Navy¹⁹⁵] and increased radius of activity in ‘areas surrounding Japan’, it could be argued that, on the contrary, Japan’s renewed emphasis on soft power is also a trust-building measure to sheath the edges of its newly acquired hard power, especially with its East Asian neighbours”. Professor Zachmann, who was sceptical about soft power as a ‘power instrument’ to pursue specific policy goals or a narrowly defined agenda of national interests, told us that “it could be argued that under strained relationships, soft power can at best soften an otherwise uncompromising antagonism and render attitudes more ambivalent”, which could be viewed as a successful outcome to such an approach.¹⁹⁶

70. Hard power and soft are therefore interdependent. **To maximise their overall power, governments must strike an intelligent balance between supporting and benefiting from softer methods of power and persuasion now available and resorting to the use of force (hard power). Governments must also understand how hard and soft power are mutually reinforcing. Using the analogy of Professor Nye’s three-dimensional chess game (with military power still unipolar on the top board, economic power now multipolar on the middle board, and the realm of cross-border transactions outside governmental control on the bottom board where power is now widely dispersed), governments need to be able to negotiate their positions in all three dimensions. In the hyper-connected world, we consider that the game will be played more often on the third board, where transnational attractions and connections produce soft power.¹⁹⁷ While it will be rarer for states to call on military force or economic sanctions, failure to consider the whole playing board could lead to the UK being outmanoeuvred.**

Communicating smart power

71. Professor Nye told us that the crux of international relations today is “not just whose army wins, it is also whose story wins in an information age”.¹⁹⁸ Regarding the US, he has written that “The ability to get the outcomes we want will rest upon a new *narrative* of smart power” (italics added).¹⁹⁹ That is, it is not enough just to exercise power in a smart way: countries, or their leaders, also have to persuade the world that they are exercising power in a smart way. Transnational challenges mean that countries cannot achieve all their international goals by acting alone. Jonathan McClory told us that “Power *with* other actors is becoming as important as power *over* them—and it is certainly more plausible to exercise power in such a way. The ability to build and mobilise networks of state and non-state actors towards the advancement of an objective is what will separate successful and unsuccessful states in the future of foreign policy”.²⁰⁰ Not only do policy-makers, firms,

¹⁹⁵ Robert D. Kaplan (2012) ‘The Return of Toxic Nationalism’, *The Wall Street Journal*, http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424127887323297104578174932950587010?mod=googlenews_wsj&img=reno64-wsj&url=http%3A%2F%2Fonline.wsj.com%2Farticle%2FSB10001424127887323297104578174932950587010.html%3Fmod%3Dgooglenews_wsj.

¹⁹⁶ Professor Zachmann.

¹⁹⁷ See Henry Jackson Society.

¹⁹⁸ Q176.

¹⁹⁹ Nye J. S. Jr. (2011) *The Future of Power*, p xvii.

²⁰⁰ Jonathan McClory.

cultural institutions and citizens need to use power more smartly—and with other countries instead of over them—but they need to enter into a new way of talking about power, providing a more sophisticated narrative than the classical stories of the rise and fall of great powers.

72. Many policy-makers and academics have argued that possessing an attractive strategic narrative has become vital for states seeking to exercise influence and maintain credibility in international relations.²⁰¹ A narrative about a country's identity and how it expects to use power helps clarify interests and direction internally, helps to 'harness' soft power generated by non-governmental actors, and creates expectations abroad.²⁰² By communicating a consistent conception of how a country exercises power, domestic and overseas audiences can arrive at a shared expectation of how that country is likely to behave, opening the possibility for enhanced credibility and legitimacy for that country's foreign policy. Professor Roselle told us that "a compelling narrative can be a soft power resource, as people may be drawn to certain actors, events, and explanations that describe the history of a country, or the specifics of a policy" (see Chapter five).²⁰³

Maintaining a lead in smart power

73. Other countries are aware of their own soft or smart power strengths and weaknesses and are seeking to enhance their soft power to compete in new and fast-changing world conditions. China, Turkey, Brazil, Russia, South Korea and other leading economies are all developing soft power strategies and investing in cultural institutes, scholarship programmes and broadcasting, the British Council told us.²⁰⁴ In 2011 the budget of Russia's international television broadcaster Russia Today was 20 billion roubles or US\$705 million.²⁰⁵ Sir Martin Davidson focused on China, which he told us has established around 350 Confucius Centres (public institutions aligned with the government of China that promote Chinese language and culture, support Chinese teaching, and facilitate cultural exchanges) in the last 10 years. He added: "It is very difficult to know exactly how much money the Chinese are spending on this. The best published ... number that we have been able to find is US\$200 million, but my guess is that a multiple of that is being spent".²⁰⁶ As early as 2010 Richard Sambrook, formerly of the Global News Division at the BBC, noted: "In 2009 the Chinese Government announced that it will spend almost [US]\$7 billion on the international expansion of key media outlets, of which \$2.2 billion will be spent each on CCTV [China Central Television] and the Xinhua news agency".²⁰⁷

²⁰¹ Gillespie and Webb; Professor Roselle; Indra Adnan; Professor Michael Cox, Q37; Dr Jamie Gaskarth; Jonathan McClory; Dr James Pamment; Professor Anholt; Miskimmon et al. (2013) *op. cit.*

²⁰² See Anne-Marie Slaughter, introduction to Porter W. and Mykleby M. (2011) *A National Strategic Narrative*, p4, <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/A%20National%20Strategic%20Narrative.pdf>.

²⁰³ Professor Roselle; Dr Jonathan Williams, Q64.

²⁰⁴ British Council supplementary written evidence.

²⁰⁵ von Twickel, N. (2011) 'Sobyanin Embraces Luzkhov's TV Station', *Moscow Times*, 25 May, <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/sobyanin-embraces-luzkhovs-tv-station/437408.html>.

²⁰⁶ Q74.

²⁰⁷ Sambrook, R. (2010) 'The Dragon Stirs', *Edelman*, 13 September, <http://blogs.edelman.co.uk/richardsambrook/2010/09/13/the-dragon-stirs/>.

74. Meanwhile traditional power rivals are continuing to strengthen their cultural diplomacy institutions, such as Germany's Goethe Institutes and France's Instituts Français. The Ambassador of Brazil, HE Mr Roberto Jaguaribe, argued that because Brazil lacked hard power it was seeking to maximise its soft power, and was increasing its visibility in international affairs as a result.²⁰⁸ Brazil sought to work through international organisations such as the WTO and engage other countries in non-coercive ways, for instance by offering technical assistance to developing countries.²⁰⁹ The Ambassador of Japan, HE Mr Keiichi Hayashi, told a similar story: while the Japanese Navy has expanded in recent years, in 2003 Japan lacked sufficient army personnel in the field to protect Japanese engineers whom it had sent to Iraq. Instead of a hard power strategy, he claimed, Japan had tended to follow the UK's example of 'Cool Britannia' with a 'Cool Japan' soft power strategy.²¹⁰ The then Deputy Head of Mission at the German Embassy, DR Rudolf Adam, told the Committee that Germany approached soft power by seeking to set fashions in thinking. Germany tried to generate the perception that it could make a positive contribution to addressing the world's problems.²¹¹
75. Professor Nye told the Committee that the United States had no soft power strategy, but that Secretary Clinton had used smart power as the "guiding principle" for her diplomacy. Professor Nye argued that the US lacked sufficient coordination of its smart power budgeting. The US government might decide to cut a language service of Voice of America (the US government's external broadcasting institution) that costs US\$1 million per year whilst maintaining an aid project costing US\$100 million per year that was failing.²¹² Former Under-Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs for the US Department of State Tara Sonenshine told the Committee about the US "strategy of engagement and exchange and education: three 'Es' that we [the US] feel are very much strategic pillars of this soft power/smart power public diplomacy". She spoke of engagement through social media alongside traditional educational exchanges, suggesting how digital and face-to-face connectivity can complement each other to build strong personal relationships with individuals from overseas.²¹³ Professor Nye has explained how US spending on public diplomacy stayed around US\$1.5 billion per year between 1994 and 2008 with a slowdown before 11 September 2001.²¹⁴ Approximately half of this was spent on international broadcasting.²¹⁵ In addition, however, US spending on strategic

²⁰⁸ Q188.

²⁰⁹ HE Mr Roberto Jaguaribe, Q193.

²¹⁰ Q192; Professor Zachmann.

²¹¹ Q188.

²¹² Q182.

²¹³ Q359.

²¹⁴ Armitage, R. and Nye, J. (2007) 'A 'Smart' Funding Strategy?', *Appendix to Armitage-Nye Joint Testimony before US Senate Foreign Relations Committee*, 24 April.

http://csis.org/files/media/isis/congress/ts0804024Armitage-Nye_Appendix.pdf.

²¹⁵ Glassman, J.K. (2013) 'Beyond Tinkering', Committee on Foreign Affairs of the United States House of Representatives hearing on, "The Broadcasting Board of Governors: An Agency 'Defunct'", 26 June, <http://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA00/20130626/101050/HHRG-113-FA00-Wstate-GlassmanJ-20130626.pdf>.

communication by the Department of Defense alone in 2009 was US\$626 million.²¹⁶

76. Evidence we received suggested that Norway is a leading soft power actor and possibly an instructive example for others. Norway has a population of only about five million, but consistently comes in the top five of the IfG-Monocle Soft Power Index and the Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index. Indra Adnan considered that “Norway has built its international reputation as the home of peace: the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded there each year, tourists visit the Peace Institute and the government actively brokers peace partnerships the world over”.²¹⁷ The Norwegian Ambassador, HE Mr Kim Traavik told us that Norway has no single soft power strategy. Rather, its soft power is the end result of policies and forms of engagement that Norway would have pursued “in any case”. Soft power was “a coincidental result”.²¹⁸ Yet he cautioned that the success Norway may enjoy was built upon its international orientation and the character of its society, which could not be “copied” by other countries.²¹⁹ He felt instead that Norway’s example could “inspire”.²²⁰
77. The UK simply cannot compete with the huge resources that China is investing in culture and commerce.²²¹ But the UK is perhaps not competing with medium-power rivals as effectively as it could, either. Demos told us that “There is a growing seriousness about, and expenditure on, cultural relations in BRIC countries ... and more widely across Asia and the Middle East. Western powers face competition from emerging, high-growth economies that are becoming increasingly outward looking. By contrast, in the case of many Western nations, cultural relations have been subject to retrenchment and short-termism, as countries look inwards in a time of intense economic pressures. This is creating an inherent risk to these countries’ long-term global influence”.²²² We heard that the UK will need to use its resources in a targeted, skilful way. For example, the British Council argued that we, the UK, “will need to think strategically about how we invest, supporting organisations like our universities and museums to be more entrepreneurial and to be ambitious internationally”.²²³ Demos told us that “The level of resources invested by countries matters, but enabling a genuine and open exchange of culture and ideas will be far more important in staying ahead in the race for soft power. The most successful nations will in future be those that are flexible and open to other cultures, responding quickly to changing dynamics and global trends”.²²⁴
78. **For the UK to thrive in the new global milieu—as it should be well equipped to do—Government, Parliament, leading voices and**

²¹⁶ Pincus, W. (2009) ‘Pentagon reviewing strategic information operations’, *Washington Post*, 27 December, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/12/26/AR2009122601462.html?hpid=moreheadlines>.

²¹⁷ Indra Adnan; Durham Global Security Institute; Jonathan McClory; VisitBritain.

²¹⁸ Q189.

²¹⁹ Q189.

²²⁰ Q189.

²²¹ Stephen Pattison, Q229.

²²² Demos.

²²³ British Council supplementary written evidence.

²²⁴ Demos.

shapers of opinion, non-governmental actors and the public will all need a better understanding of the importance of soft power alongside traditional hard power, and of how they interact. It is vital that the Government should have confidence in communicating with the British public about how some of their actions and spending in support of soft power can only deliver tangible and measurable results over time, and with patience and dedication.

79. A greater public appreciation for how the UK's soft power assets (such as its cultural strengths) and most attractive characteristics (such as its diversity) contribute to the UK's international standing, its security, and its prosperity, could improve both domestic and international understanding of the UK's strategic narrative. It could also support internal community cohesion, and help voters recognise the benefits of the international networks of which the UK is a member, and the assets and policies that taxpayers fund. We urge strongly-led public debate about the Government's approach to smart power. Particularly within Government and Parliament, there is a need for urgent reflection on the mechanisms through which the Government seek to exercise power to achieve the UK's goals.
80. We also urge on all concerned a much deeper understanding of how others see the UK, and how the very most can be made of our undoubtedly unique assets. Thus, while the US is the UK's close ally, and while the UK is a European power by history, geography and interests, we feel that there can be real soft power gains for the UK if it is seen to have a role and direction which is distinct—at least in some respects—from the broad American-led sphere of influence, and distinct from collective European Union endeavours.²²⁵ We explore this aspect of the UK's international relations in Chapter four.

²²⁵ See Richard Norton-Taylor; Tara Sonenshine, Q365; Sir John Major, Q351; Sir Jeremy Greenstock.

CHAPTER 4: THE UK'S SOFT POWER ASSETS: THEIR ROLE AND FUNCTION

81. The effective deployment of the UK's power, both in its own direct interests and those of the wider world, requires firstly a fresh recognition of the assets and tools at its disposal in a radically transformed and intensely connected world. Secondly, it requires fresh thinking about how best these assets and tools should be used. **As our witnesses have made very clear, the days are long gone when this nation's, or any nation's, power could be measured in the size of its military forces, or in traditional patterns of enforcement.** New, softer and smarter methods must now be combined with older approaches in order to secure and promote the UK's interests and purposes.
82. Chapters two and three of this Report discussed the central importance of soft power and smart power in the modern world milieu. Chapter five will specify ways in which the Government and policy-makers, by direct or indirect methods, could improve their approach to soft and smart power deployment. This Chapter makes an inventory of the UK's rich panoply of soft power strengths and assets. The guardianship and projection of much of the UK's soft power lies outside the control or reach of Government. But full recognition of what the UK possesses in this field is, of course, the essential precondition both for preserving and strengthening the nation's soft power potential, and for avoiding damage to what has already been built up—resources and strengths whose value has sometimes been neglected rather than nourished.
83. As we shall show, both neglect and negative policy measures have certainly played a part in weakening the UK's performance in the past—a pattern that we suggest can now be remedied and repaired to some extent. The British Council told us that “Knowing when to get out of the way and avoiding undermining the UK's soft power is a key challenge for Government”. The Council concluded that “The UK has been getting the mix broadly right”²²⁶; we feel that there are areas for improvement.
84. The analysis below does not present a soft power instruction booklet. As Chapter three demonstrated, successfully wielding soft power requires far more than simply directing certain messages to certain audiences, not least because potential ‘audiences’ intertwine and overlap. We emphasise that **if the UK is to benefit from its significant soft power potential, the Government need to recognise that some of the bigger gains will only emerge over time and as conditions evolve. An overemphasis on immediate returns on investment will dilute the urgent attention that the pursuit and exercise of soft power require.**
85. We recognise that today's straitened economic circumstances make public policy choices difficult. But as Jonathan McClory told us, the global trends explored in Chapters two and three “will make the tools and approaches of soft power more, not less, important to achieving foreign policy objectives, from security to prosperity”.²²⁷ **The task for the Government will be to build on the UK's strengths, support the already evident success of**

²²⁶ British Council supplementary written evidence.

²²⁷ Jonathan McClory.

soft power projection in many fields, and avoid the false economies of short-termism in areas where results take time to mature. Some of our proposals below involve relatively small levels of additional expenditure. We emphasise that investment now will realise significant future returns, not least because it is cheaper to support established and successful soft power assets now than it would be to attempt to regenerate neglected assets later, when the benefits of soft power become even clearer. We agree with the British Academy that “governments need to make investments in critical areas such as the BBC, higher education and the arts, and then to hold their nerve when payoffs are not immediately visible”.²²⁸ **In addition, the Government need to express honestly to the public that successes in the generation of soft power may come only from long-term commitments.**

86. The overarching priorities of national policy are enduring and easily stated. They are encapsulated in the words ‘security’ and ‘prosperity’. But in new world conditions we have to understand how the channels of soft power generation and deployment underpin and reinforce these broad aims. The catalogue of benefits from soft power that we have drawn from our evidence and discussions runs broadly as follows:

- securing greater protection for the UK’s citizens by reducing the likelihood of attack, building alliances, and increasing international goodwill;
- reducing hostility towards the UK;
- winning friends and supporters for the UK’s values;
- dealing with threats that can only be tackled internationally;
- opening the way for greatly expanded trade in British goods and services and challenging trade barriers, visible and covert;
- promoting large-scale investment flows, both inwards and outwards and increasing the attractiveness of the UK as a place in which to invest; and
- supporting the UK’s internal cohesion and social stability.

87. We see the new and existing channels of soft power influence and communication (catalogued below) as fulfilling these aims by enabling the UK to:

- connect to *specific* individuals, groups and governments overseas;
- connect to overseas publics *in general* by facilitating public ‘access’ to the UK’s attractive attributes, by enhancing the UK’s visibility and reputation, and by providing global public goods (services and outcomes that many people want); and
- influence global norms, by putting the country in influential positions.

Shaping foreign policy to gain soft power

88. Professor Nye identified a country’s soft power as originating from not only its culture and its political values, but also its foreign policy. A country may derive soft power by impressing publics overseas through its foreign policy

²²⁸ British Academy.

- when it is seen to be legitimate and to possess moral authority.²²⁹ Evidence suggested that the Government have a key role in “living up to” the UK’s political values, and implementing foreign policies that are viewed both as legitimate and as having moral authority.²³⁰ The Humanitarian Intervention Centre likewise reported that a country’s soft power derived largely from its foreign policies, “particularly where those policies reflect the perceived legitimacy of the state and are a manifestation of its moral authority”.²³¹ The Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies considered that the UK needed to ensure that its actions were “values-based”.²³²
89. To be attractive and influential, in the view of Indra Adnan a country must “develop a clear moral stance on the future and be consistent rather than opportunistic”.²³³ When governments govern according to ethical, democratic, transparent and accountable principles, soft power results.²³⁴ For Professor Rawnsley, this means that the British Government need to “act responsibly” and according to the UK’s “principles and traditions of democracy, free speech, human rights, rule by law and transparency”.²³⁵ According to Sir Jeremy Greenstock, the UK’s adherence to the principles of international behaviour and its ability to win the backing of mainstream international opinion will become increasingly important in a world in which legitimacy of foreign policy is so vital that as he put it, it “has a concrete force”.²³⁶
90. The Humanitarian Intervention Centre argued that on the international stage the UK is, for the most part, “highly respected for its moral conscience and standing which is based to a large extent on its rigorous upholding of the rule of law, protection of human rights and engagement with the international legal system”.²³⁷ The UK is a signatory to all major human rights treaties, the International Criminal Court and the Council of Europe, and advocates for the protection of human rights in Europe and across the world. In the Centre’s view, this position was underscored by the UK’s condemnation of atrocities committed in Syria, and by the work that the UK has undertaken in developing the Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict.²³⁸ According to the British Council, the work of the FCO in promoting human rights abroad is “incredibly important to the UK’s reputation”, and “speaking out against repression, intolerance and criminality builds trust” with the victims of abuse and the “silent majority” who despise injustice.²³⁹ The Government told us that the UK has become the first country to set out guidance to companies on integrating human rights into their operations. Through the Business and Human Rights Action Plan, launched in September 2013, the UK “will use [its] international

²²⁹ Nye J. S. Jr. (2006) ‘Think Again: Soft Power’, *Foreign Policy*, February; Professor Nye, Q180.

²³⁰ Dr Jamie Gaskarth.

²³¹ Humanitarian Intervention Centre.

²³² Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University.

²³³ Indra Adnan.

²³⁴ Professor Rawnsley.

²³⁵ Professor Rawnsley.

²³⁶ Sir Jeremy Greenstock.

²³⁷ Humanitarian Intervention Centre.

²³⁸ Humanitarian Intervention Centre.

²³⁹ British Council supplementary written evidence.

reputation for high corporate standards and respect for human rights to help British companies succeed in a way that is consistent with [UK] values”.²⁴⁰

91. We also heard how the UK plays a key role in negotiating international treaties, including leading the way in securing international adoption of the UN Arms Trade Treaty in 2013 by working to build a broad coalition of support. For the Humanitarian Intervention Centre, this was “something which it would not have been able to do without its moral and legal standing”—a case of a virtuous circle in which the UK’s reputation assisted it in securing an achievement that further enhanced its stature.²⁴¹
92. Liberal intervention and military power can also be “used as soft power instruments to increase the UK’s legitimacy at home and abroad”, according to the Humanitarian Intervention Centre, which argued that international and unilateral intervention can bring the UK “a soft power legacy within affected countries”.²⁴² Professor Nye, the British Council and the Humanitarian Intervention Centre each cited the example of the UK’s intervention in Sierra Leone in 2000–01. What the UK achieved using coercive hard power produced soft power in terms of “admiration”, Professor Nye told us, and according to the British Council the UK’s “global reputation was enhanced” as a result.²⁴³ In the aftermath, UK military power secured an environment “where development assistance, education reform, capacity building and reconciliation work could be taken forward”.²⁴⁴ In April 2013 Sierra Leone’s Minister of Defence declared that the UK was his country’s “most important bilateral partner” in its ongoing development. Professor Nye felt that the intervention had also made the UK more attractive in other parts of Africa.²⁴⁵ Joint military exercises, military action as part of coalitions, and the UK’s military contribution to NATO also serve to strengthen the UK’s international relationships through forming cross-border connections.²⁴⁶
93. Yet a country’s policies can also undermine its attractiveness. Professor Nye reported that while American culture was widely seen as attractive, “American policies are very unattractive”, particularly in large parts of the Muslim world where policies that grew out of the ‘war on terror’ have alienated many. The result was that “in some places policies are undercutting soft power, even where culture and values may still be enhancing soft power, but if the policies are unpopular enough that becomes the dominant hand in the issue”.²⁴⁷ The UK’s soft power can suffer when the British Government make policy choices that go against public opinion, Professor Rawnsley argued. For him, the UK’s 2003 intervention in Iraq, and “collaboration” in the “War on Terror”, both undermined the country’s soft power.²⁴⁸ Nicholas Beadle, CMG, Senior Associate fellow of the Royal United Services Institute, considered how over the past decade, British military operations have had a

²⁴⁰ Government written evidence.

²⁴¹ Humanitarian Intervention Centre.

²⁴² Humanitarian Intervention Centre.

²⁴³ Professor Nye, Q180; British Council.

²⁴⁴ British Council supplementary written evidence.

²⁴⁵ Q180; Humanitarian Intervention Centre; Government written evidence.

²⁴⁶ Government written evidence.

²⁴⁷ Q180, Q178.

²⁴⁸ Professor Rawnsley.

profound effect on international perceptions of the UK, whether it was “seen as a staunch ally in the war against terrorism” or as “a nation that is an aggressor intent on damaging, for example, the Islamic religion”.²⁴⁹

94. Maximising the influence that the UK is able to bring to bear in the world depends not just on overseas perceptions of the UK’s foreign policy, but also on the country being in a position of maximum leverage. The UK’s relationships with other states have an important effect on the country’s ability to exert its influence, as well as on the UK’s standing itself (the states with which a country is allied speak volumes about that country). Dr Jamie Gaskarth, Deputy Director of the School of Government at Plymouth University, argued that the Government should “announce a reappraisal of Britain’s identity in world politics. In a world of rising powers and relative decline of Britain’s traditional allies, the UK needs to reappraise how it sees itself, who it needs to reach out to and attract, and what policies will enable it [to] do so”. He referred to recent parliamentary inquiries into national strategy and foreign policy that “have called for just such a re-examination but have thus far gone unheeded”.²⁵⁰ **As the Government examine the UK’s geopolitical situation, they need to refine the country’s role to ensure that they and other UK actors are able to maximise both the UK’s attractiveness and the benefit gained from the country’s soft power.**
95. Discussing the UK’s place on the world stage, Sir John Major told us:
- “I would like us to be a bit more self-confident and proactive in our policies. ... We are not some tiny little country pushed to one side. We are still a big country in the eyes of the world and a powerful and influential country. We should be more confident about launching initiatives on our own, if necessary, in terms of international problems. ... I do not think it would hurt us to take positions independent of our principal allies from time to time. If we have a slightly different view, I do not think it diminishes our alliances with them if we said so, whether that is Europe or whether that is the United States”.²⁵¹
96. **We agree heartily with Sir John Major’s view of the UK’s position. We consider that the UK has much to offer the world, particularly because its history has bequeathed it both a global perspective and a deep understanding of most of the world’s regions. It also enjoys alliances with many of the world’s nations, both great and rising. The UK must therefore not accept any putative foreign policy choice between acting as a poodle of Washington or a lapdog of Brussels. The UK must chart its own course at the centre of a networked and transformed world in which it has significant comparative advantages.**

²⁴⁹ Nicholas Beadle, Q42.

²⁵⁰ Dr Jamie Gaskarth. The Reports he referred to were: Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy, *First review of the National Security Strategy 2010* (1st Report, Session 2010–12, HL Paper 265, HC Paper 1384), pp18–19, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt201012/jtselect/jtnatsec/265/265.pdf>; and House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee, *Who Does UK National Strategy? Further Report* (6th Report, Session 2010–12, HC Paper 713), para 7, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmpublicadm/713/71303.htm>.

²⁵¹ Q356.

97. Dr Christina Rowley of the University of Bristol told us that “the UK does not want to project an image of itself as a colonial power, but nor should it want to deny that aspect of its history, and how its present place in the world is fundamentally built upon that colonial past”. She considered that the UK was likely to attract friends and establish enduring relationships with others by “‘Owning up to’ and owning those aspects of the UK’s past and present that it is less proud of, as well as publicising the good—deploying honesty, modesty (perhaps even a touch of humility now and then), in its dealings with others”.²⁵² **We urge those shaping the UK’s foreign policy to act with greater confidence on the international stage, particularly in the Commonwealth, and not be reluctant to play a global role because of the complexity of the UK’s colonial history.**²⁵³ It must demonstrate that it is willing to listen to other countries and take into account grievances, concerns and alternative perspectives while offering a positive narrative about creating new mutual benefits and solutions.²⁵⁴ For instance, it should “respect and understand the BRIC markets on their own terms rather than as a passive recipient of traditional British goods”.²⁵⁵

Supporting diplomacy that works

98. The UK’s soft power is enhanced by the strength of its diplomatic network.²⁵⁶ Jack Straw MP told us that he was “in no doubt that a strong diplomatic presence produces high dividends for the United Kingdom” and applauded the efforts of the current Foreign Secretary to extend it.²⁵⁷ FCO Minister the Rt Hon Hugo Swire MP maintained that the FCO has responded to global power shifts by redeploying FCO resources to reflect better the priority markets of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.²⁵⁸ There are now additional diplomatic positions in 23 emerging markets. By 2015, 20 new British diplomatic posts will have opened, with 300 more staff in emerging economies, including in South Korea, Malaysia, Nigeria, Angola, Argentina, Peru, Pakistan, Vietnam, and the Philippines.²⁵⁹ The Prime Minister said in Davos in January 2013 that “We’re now one of only three European countries to be represented in every single country in ASEAN and we have the largest diplomatic network in India of any developed nation”.²⁶⁰
99. As we discussed in paragraph 37, the FCO no longer possesses a soft power monopoly in Whitehall as other Government Departments expand their global footprints.²⁶¹ These Departments, and government bodies and agencies, are making direct contributions to the UK’s soft power. The UK’s policing, intelligence and justice institutions share their expertise with a

²⁵² Dr Christina Rowley.

²⁵³ See Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK.

²⁵⁴ See VICTUS.

²⁵⁵ Indra Adnan.

²⁵⁶ Durham Global Security Institute; Henry Jackson Society.

²⁵⁷ Jack Straw MP.

²⁵⁸ Q368.

²⁵⁹ Dr Robin Niblett; Government written evidence.

²⁶⁰ Government written evidence.

²⁶¹ See Hugo Swire MP, Q376.

number of other countries.²⁶² While the central FCO's role may be diminishing, Embassies are becoming more important (as we discussed in paragraph 37). Ambassadors are now called upon to support all of the UK's ambitions in the networked world and global marketplace. **We therefore consider that better coordination of the UK's overseas activities will require the Government to commit more resources to the Embassy network.**

100. Dr Robin Niblett told us that “the UK's diplomatic capabilities remain under-funded, from compensation levels to technology infrastructure to overall staff numbers”.²⁶³ Lord Jay worried that:

“There is a risk of our being so short staffed that we cannot properly serve all the places we believe we should have our Embassies in. I worry slightly about what I understand the policy is at the moment of cutting back on people going out from London and depending more on local staff in a lot of our Embassies. You need to have people from London there, and they are not going to be good diplomats if they have not had the training earlier on in their career in lower positions in Embassies ... There is a genuine question as to whether we have enough staff now involved in the Diplomatic Service to carry out the policies the Government would like us to”.²⁶⁴

The Government reported that of 127 UK overseas posts with five or fewer UK-based FCO staff at the end of last year, 38 had two UK-based staff FCO and 32 just one FCO staff member from the UK. Forty-seven posts were recorded as having “No UK Based [FCO staff] or UK Based [FCO staff] recorded elsewhere”.²⁶⁵ The figures compare to the 92 posts that have six or more UK-based FCO staff.²⁶⁶ These data suggest, therefore, that 64.5 per cent of FCO overseas posts have five or fewer UK-based FCO staff members, with fully 17.7 per cent of posts unable to record a British FCO staff presence.²⁶⁷

101. **Embassies are now ‘super-facilitators’, facilitating contacts abroad for British businesses and other organisations and then standing aside while new relationships develop. The global redistribution of power away from governments means that the Embassy network needs to be supported more than ever, and Embassy resourcing strengthened.**²⁶⁸ **We welcome the Government's ambition to reopen diplomatic posts across the world, particularly in the BRIC countries**

²⁶² British Council; Durham Global Security Institute; Government written evidence; Professor Kaldor; Research Councils UK. See also Warner M, (2013) ‘An Exclusive Club: the Five Countries that Don't Spy on Each Other’, *PBS Newshour*, 25 October, <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/an-exclusive-club-the-five-countries-that-dont-spy-on-each-other/>.

²⁶³ Dr Robin Niblett.

²⁶⁴ Q300.

²⁶⁵ The posts at Damascus and Tehran, both recorded as having no UK based FCO staff or UK based FCO staff recorded elsewhere, were both suspended at 31 December 2013.

²⁶⁶ Government (Rt Hon Hugo Swire MP, Foreign and Commonwealth Office) supplementary written evidence.

²⁶⁷ The Foreign Affairs Select Committee of the House of Commons recently concluded that “There are signs that the FCO is being stretched, almost to the limit”. House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, *FCO performance and finances 2012–13* (6th Report, Session 2013–14, HC Paper 696), <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmfaff/696/696.pdf>, p3.

²⁶⁸ See Hugo Swire MP, Q368; Sir John Major, Q356.

- and Latin America.²⁶⁹ **But we are concerned that at a time when such posts have become vital to British soft power, the Government might have spread the UK's diplomatic representation too thinly.**²⁷⁰
102. **Ambassadors are now required to be polymaths, and need training in a wide range of skills. The Committee recognises that spending constraints currently prevent the Government from providing much in the way of extra compensation to acknowledge this increased level of responsibility, but we urge the Government to ensure that remuneration and career structures allow the FCO to retain the most able.**²⁷¹
103. Professor Rawnsley underlined that the time “when diplomats could dismiss engagement with the media as trivial or the work of the press office has long gone; in the digital age ... characterised by the 24/7 flow of global information demanding instant responses, all members of an overseas post are public diplomats”.²⁷² The Government have recently announced that they intend to establish a Diplomatic Academy to teach public diplomacy skills.²⁷³ They should seek to learn from US practice in this area. Tara Sonenshine informed the Committee that “All of our Embassies now have expertise in public diplomacy, local contact with local media, with citizens”.²⁷⁴ Crucially, diplomats receive relevant instruction. “Many are trained at the Foreign Service Institute, taking courses in public diplomacy, social media, online, business contact, trade and travel”, Ms Sonenshine said.²⁷⁵ She explained that the State Department budget oversees 3,540 public diplomacy and public affairs positions.²⁷⁶ British diplomats should be equipped to react quickly and flexibly when public diplomacy opportunities arise.²⁷⁷
104. **The era-shifting rise of social media will require the UK's official representatives to keep abreast of the skills that public diplomacy now demands. We therefore recommend that all UK diplomats receive professional training in public diplomacy.** Since their words and actions will now inevitably be reported online, diplomats must learn how to manage their digital presence.²⁷⁸ How they decide to achieve this will vary according to the individual diplomat and the context in which they are working. Some diplomats will already have familiarity with social media; some contexts require more face-to-face interaction; other contexts still will demand that diplomats employ “‘old’ media” such as a “newsletter [or] a series of

²⁶⁹ Hugo Swire MP, Q368; Sir John Major, Q356.

²⁷⁰ See House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, *FCO performance and finances 2012–13* (6th Report, Session 2013–14, HC Paper 696); see also Hugo Swire MP, Q371.

²⁷¹ Hugo Swire MP, Q368.

²⁷² Professor Rawnsley.

²⁷³ FCO (2013) ‘Foreign Secretary Opens Foreign Office Language School’, 19 September, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/foreign-secretary-opens-foreign-office-language-school>.

²⁷⁴ Q361.

²⁷⁵ Q363.

²⁷⁶ Q363.

²⁷⁷ Professor Seib told us that the US State Department’s digital outreach venture was hampered by slow responses in the digital forums in which State Department staff seek to engage with foreign publics due to staff members having to show their draft posts to colleagues (Professor Seib).

²⁷⁸ See Professor Rawnsley.

receptions”.²⁷⁹ **Government representatives should make use of all the methods and technologies that they have at their disposal to communicate effectively. In the hyper-connected world, UK diplomats will need always to be aware of the power of social media, and competent in their use of it.**²⁸⁰

105. We heard conflicting evidence about whether the Government have shifted funding from the FCO public diplomacy budget to resource an international marketing campaign (the GREAT Campaign, established in 2011).²⁸¹ It is clear that the Government have abandoned a centralised public diplomacy fund—the separate funding stream for the FCO Public Diplomacy Campaign, which had been allocated a budget of £1.7 million in 2009–10, was scrapped as part of the 2010 emergency budget. The FCO have stated that “The work stream continues to have access to wider Public Diplomacy funds to support communications work at Post but the accent is now very much on no or low cost ways of doing business as well as increased use of commercial sponsorship”.²⁸² This decision concerned Dr James Pamment because it put a much stronger focus on an “economic component” of soft power.²⁸³ **We urge the Government to keep under review their decision to decentralise public diplomacy funding.**²⁸⁴ **When making funding commitments, the FCO should consider how best to spend public money to achieve the widest possible soft power impact.**
106. Foreign language capabilities are of critical importance in diplomacy, and the growing requirement for diplomats to engage directly with overseas publics will only make such skills more necessary.²⁸⁵ **The Committee therefore welcomes the re-opening of the FCO’s Language Centre.**²⁸⁶ We hope that the Government will go further, however. Because so many Departments now have international dimensions, we follow the British Academy in recommending that **the Government should conduct an audit of the language skills of civil servants across all Departments. The Government would not need to spend a great deal on such an exercise, but being able to draw upon all of the Government’s**

²⁷⁹ Dr Cristina Archetti; Professor Seib. See, for example, Tom Fletcher, HM Ambassador to Lebanon (2013) ‘Dear Lebanon: An Open Letter’, 21 November, <http://blogs.fco.gov.uk/tomfletcher/2013/11/21/dear-lebanon-an-open-letter/>; Lord Jay of Ewelme, Sir Antony Acland, Lord Hannay of Chiswick, Q297; Dr Ali Fisher.

²⁸⁰ Dr Daniel Arthur, International Policy Dynamics.

²⁸¹ Dr James Pamment; Conrad Bird, Alex Aiken, Q317; Hugo Swire MP, Q372. The GREAT Campaign was established in September 2011, in the run-up to the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games (BBC News, ‘London 2012: David Cameron Launches “Great” Campaign’, 22 September 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-15019587>). According to the Government’s briefing on the GREAT Campaign, its “aim is to get people from around the world to visit the UK and do business here”. It focuses “on 11 areas of British excellence (Trade and Investment: Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Creativity, Technology, Knowledge, Green, Business. Tourism: Heritage, Sport, Shopping, Music, Countryside)”. It is “a single campaign that brings together all our overseas activity to promote Great Britain under a common banner, so that Britain speaks with one voice ... to gain more impact and make sure we are getting better value for taxpayers’ money” (GREAT Britain Campaign, ‘GREAT Britain. Questions and Answers’).

²⁸² House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, *FCO Public Diplomacy: the Olympic and Paralympic Games 2012* (2nd Report, Session 2010–11, HC Paper 581), Ev23.

²⁸³ Dr James Pamment.

²⁸⁴ Professor Gary Rawnsley; Dr James Pamment.

²⁸⁵ Hugo Swire MP, Q368.

²⁸⁶ Hugo Swire MP, Q368.

language skills would bring sizeable advantages for officials working overseas or with foreign counterparts.²⁸⁷

Making the most of the Armed Forces in a changing world

107. Steve McCarthy, the MOD's Director of International Security Policy, pointed us towards the importance of using the UK's military power to carry out non-martial tasks in order to make a contribution to the Government's broader objectives: what he called "international defence engagement".²⁸⁸ The FCO and MOD launched the UK's International Defence Engagement Strategy in February 2013.²⁸⁹ In addition, representatives of the MOD, DFID and the FCO are members of the Building Stability Overseas Board, which manages a line of funding of around £200 million a year known as the conflict prevention pool. This is used to fund joined-up security, stability and capacity building activity in areas that are at risk of instability or conflict, as well as the UK's contribution to the UN peacekeeping budget.²⁹⁰
108. Partly funded by this pool, Lt General Simon Mayall CB, the MOD's Defence Senior Adviser for Middle East, told us that he works in the Middle East and North Africa as a "force multiplier" for the FCO and its Ambassadors. He brings the "UK brand" to countries where security is a high priority, and his involvement is designed to show that the UK is a reliable, long-term, strategic ally.²⁹¹ His engagement assists with UK defence sales in the region, he added.²⁹² The UK's defence sales "underpin long-term strategic partnerships", and give the country political influence, enabling it "to engage through Ambassadors, Ministers and senior officials in parts of the world that give us challenges between interests and values".²⁹³
109. In a similar vein, Steve McCarthy outlined how in some countries where the military plays a prominent role, the UK's Armed Forces could make an important contribution to diplomatic contact. In Burma (Myanmar), for example, a visit by the Prime Minister was followed up with significant defence engagement because "a lot of Burmese society, whether we like it or not, is influenced by the military". In this way the UK might help to "sustain issues to do with democracy and the rule of law by engaging at a defence level" and by demonstrating that in the UK, the armed forces operate under civilian societal control.²⁹⁴
110. We also heard that the British military has attractive power because of its calibre and credibility, and that this builds connections with specific individuals overseas.²⁹⁵ The armed forces of a number of countries "beat a path to our door for defence engagement [and] places on our courses".²⁹⁶ The Henry Jackson Society told us that the UK "remains at the forefront of

²⁸⁷ Lord Hannay of Chiswick.

²⁸⁸ Q43, Q48.

²⁸⁹ Government written evidence.

²⁹⁰ Steve McCarthy, Q45, Q61; Lt General Simon Mayall, Q44.

²⁹¹ Q49.

²⁹² Q49.

²⁹³ Q62.

²⁹⁴ Q57.

²⁹⁵ Lt General Simon Mayall, Q43.

²⁹⁶ Lt General Simon Mayall, Q55, Q58.

training foreign military officers”, and that when foreign officers are trained at Sandhurst, “this allows for both the development of an understanding of British culture amongst future foreign military leaders, and the establishment of informal networks between influential individuals”.²⁹⁷ Officer training academies at Dartmouth, Lymington, Sandhurst and Cranwell between them boast more than 30 international alumni currently serving as Chiefs of Defence or Service Chiefs, with international civilian alumni having served as Heads of State or Ministers.²⁹⁸ Dr Andrew Murrison MP, Minister for International Security Strategy at the MOD, suggested that this indicated how “defence is playing its part in making sure that those who can be expected to assume prominent roles in their societies in the future have a relatively benign view of the UK”.²⁹⁹ The Government told us that defence education can promote important principles including “legitimate use of the military and other security organisations as a lever of civilian government; proportionate use of force; observance of human rights; and international humanitarian law”. 1,050 students from over 90 countries attended Defence Academy courses between 2011 and 2012 and the Defence Academy’s Managing Defence in the Wider Security Context course has 4,300 cross-government alumni from 150 nationalities.³⁰⁰ We welcome the training opportunities that the Armed Forces offer to the UK’s overseas partners, and hope that these courses remain affordable enough to continue attracting applicants from emerging economies.

111. The Armed Forces can enhance the UK’s reputation in the eyes of foreign publics by undertaking relief operations after natural disasters, such as the work that they did in the Philippines following the typhoon of November 2013.³⁰¹ Professor Nye noted that when the US used its naval resources to provide relief in Indonesia after the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami, the “attractiveness” rating of the US, which had fallen dramatically after the invasion of Iraq in 2003, returned to about half of where it had been.³⁰² Dr Andrew Murrison MP told us that the Armed Forces do “a lot of humanitarian work”.³⁰³
112. The military makes soft power contributions in a number of further ways. Royal Navy ships sometimes host events overseas that seek to combine elements of trade fairs and networking opportunities, building links with overseas businesspeople and governments.³⁰⁴ Lt General Simon Mayall worked with local authorities in Kosovo to tackle organised crime.³⁰⁵ Forces can provide a global public service by enhancing environmental security, for example when they use explosives to burn off petroleum spills, and when military submarines perform sub-icecap sampling.³⁰⁶ Troop ceremonial is good for tourism; it is “what makes us different and what we do better than

²⁹⁷ Henry Jackson Society.

²⁹⁸ Government written evidence.

²⁹⁹ Q375; Government written evidence; Sir Roger Gifford, Q240.

³⁰⁰ Government written evidence.

³⁰¹ Professor Nye, Q180; Professor Rawnsley; Durham Global Security Institute; Dr Andrew Murrison MP, Q378.

³⁰² Q180.

³⁰³ Q378.

³⁰⁴ Dr Andrew Murrison MP, Q382.

³⁰⁵ Q55.

³⁰⁶ Durham Global Security Institute.

any other country”, according to Hugo Swire MP, who also noted its role in impressing visiting dignitaries.³⁰⁷ And in the view of the Durham Global Security Institute, the Armed Forces enhance the UK’s reputation by “being exemplars of what a modern professional army should be”, particularly in the military’s “relationship with democracy, its attitude towards domestic and international law, and [its] respect for human rights”.³⁰⁸

113. The Committee feels that the time is ripe for a thoroughgoing Government review of how the UK’s military resources support the country’s soft power projection. An internal review might look at the opportunities for military involvement in crisis responses, defence engagement³⁰⁹, military support for UK trade delegations, humanitarian relief, and policing environmental security.³¹⁰ **There will be significant crossover between the roles that the Armed Forces, DFID and the FCO assume in unstable and post-conflict contexts worldwide. We therefore recommend that the Government should review how well DFID, the MOD and the FCO cooperated in Afghanistan, with a view to providing lessons for any future post-conflict reconstruction efforts. They should publish the results of their review as a Command Paper within a year of the withdrawal from Afghanistan.** The review should focus in particular on how well DFID’s work and strategy coordinated with those of the MOD and FCO. The Government conducted a similar review following the UK’s withdrawal from Iraq; a paper that they commissioned on ‘lessons learned’ from Iraq by retired Brigadier Ben Barry has not been published.³¹¹
114. This review might make suggestions about how the Government can build on existing examples of cooperation between the Departments, such as the International Defence Engagement Strategy, the Building Stability Overseas Strategy³¹², and the Conflict Pool.³¹³ It could also look at whether “silo funding” of Departments has caused operational difficulties abroad.³¹⁴ Lt General Simon Mayall thought that “other nations may be better at being able actively to use their military without ending up with an unseemly toing and froing between Departments and the Treasury over the funding of operations”. Better funding coordination was “quite clearly in the British national interest, and I mean that in the wider sense, not just selfish national interest”, he argued.³¹⁵ We agree with the observation by Steve McCarthy that coordination is vital not just for efficiency but because “the recipient

³⁰⁷ Q383.

³⁰⁸ Durham Global Security Institute.

³⁰⁹ MOD and FCO (2013) *International Defence Engagement Strategy*, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/73171/defence_engagement_strategy.pdf. See also Steve McCarthy, Lt General Simon Mayall, Q43; Steve McCarthy, Q48; Lt General Simon Mayall, Q49, Q50; Steve McCarthy, Q57, Q61; Government written evidence; Humanitarian Intervention Centre.

³¹⁰ Durham Global Security Institute.

³¹¹ Richard Norton-Taylor.

³¹² Dr Andrew Murrison MP, Q375; FCO, DFID, and MOD (2011) *Building Stability Overseas Strategy*, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67475/Building-stability-overseas-strategy.pdf.

³¹³ Lt General Simon Mayall, Q49; FCO (2013) *Conflict Pool*, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conflict-pool>.

³¹⁴ Lt General Simon Mayall, Q60.

³¹⁵ Q60.

countries of our involvement” do not see the MOD, DFID, the FCO or the Home Office, “they see HMG, the UK”.³¹⁶

115. Some aid organisations now insist on a separation in the field from the military, known as ‘humanitarian space’.³¹⁷ **We acknowledge the concerns raised by some witnesses that the perceived blurring of boundaries between humanitarian organisations and armed forces can create political and security difficulties for aid workers. But the level of separation involved in ‘humanitarian space’ runs counter both to the idea that the Armed Forces involve themselves more closely in post-conflict and peacetime activities, and to the new imperative for the UK to use all the assets at its disposal in a joined-up way to gain influence in a changing world. Generally, such barriers should not be allowed to halt cooperation between military and civilian actors where cooperation is necessary. At the same time, servicemen and servicewomen deserve greater recognition for the important work that they do in post-conflict reconstruction.**³¹⁸ We therefore welcome the MOD’s active desire to “break down the cultural barriers that often exist between defence and the various NGOs ... in the way that we approach humanitarian situations”.³¹⁹
116. Furthermore, the seismic shifts in the international order that this Report has already discussed, as well as the three major wars in which the UK has had recent involvement, require a root-and-branch review of our defence and security capabilities. If the Government truly intend the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) to be not “quite as fundamental” as the 2010 SDSR, as Dr Andrew Murrison MP told us, we believe that this is misguided.³²⁰ **We recommend that the Government undertake a thorough analysis of the contribution that soft and smart power might make to the UK’s security as part of the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review. They should look in particular at the role that the military plays in projecting soft power and at its humanitarian work.**
117. For instance, though recent developments in the nature of warfare have had significant consequences for defence policy, there are signs that the military has been slow to react.³²¹ Established training methods persist, meaning that soldiers are poorly equipped for new forms of conflict.³²² **Because their work is now so dependent on understanding the cultural and political contexts of countries in which they operate, and because the work of the military is linked inextricably to broader efforts to improve the UK’s reputation overseas, military attachés should be fully integrated into mainstream Embassy work under the purview of Ambassadors.**

³¹⁶ Q54.

³¹⁷ Q378. See also Government (Rt Hon Justine Greening MP, Secretary of State for DFID) supplementary written evidence; Collinson S. And Elhawary S. (2012) *Humanitarian Space: a Review of Trends and Issues*, April, <http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7643.pdf>.

³¹⁸ Dr Andrew Murrison MP, Q379.

³¹⁹ Dr Andrew Murrison MP, Q379.

³²⁰ Q383.

³²¹ VICTUS.

³²² VICTUS. See House of Commons Defence Committee, *Towards the Next Defence and Security Review, Part 1* (7th Report, Session 2013–14, HC Paper 197), <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmdfence/197/197.pdf>; Professor Kaldor.

We therefore welcome the MOD's plans to enhance the Foreign Office element of primary officers' career streams, and the reconfiguration "of the defence attaché post so that it is seen less and less as an end of career post before you retire and more something that is inculcated throughout an officer's working life". We further welcome the MOD's acknowledgement that this career trajectory "presupposes that we can inculcate language training and cultural awareness in people at a young age".³²³

118. Upstream prevention of conflict will also be in the national interest, and constitutes another aspect of using the Armed Forces in a soft power way. Dr Andrew Murrison MP maintained that while

"We need to be ever so slightly wary about suggesting that we will not be required to do what you and I might recognise as war fighting in the foreseeable future ... I think we have to make plans for a pacific future in which our military is engaged in upstream conflict prevention and with partner nations. Indeed, we do that already. We are in the van of that among nations. I am thinking particularly of the international defence engagement strategy that you will know was launched in February 2013. I am thinking of Future Force 2020³²², the reconfiguration of the British Army, which is very much about adaptable forces focused on regions of the world where we think we need to exert influence and where we need to skill our people in order to engage in those parts of the world".³²⁴

119. **The importance of hard power (military force) in knitting together with soft power as part of a smart power strategy should, therefore, be more fully grasped. The Armed Forces, as they face the demands of a still faster-changing role in the new context, should be properly resourced to meet these challenges.** We argued in Chapter three that the British military's experience in arenas such as Northern Ireland and Sierra Leone equips it with the expertise to understand when soft, hard or smart power tactics will work best. Because of the changing nature of warfare, the Armed Forces will need to call on the full array of their approaches and assets more and more often. Richard Norton-Taylor quoted a speech by

"General Sir Peter Wall, the head of the army ... to the Royal United Services Institute conference on Land Warfare in June 2013. He said: 'We've experience[d] the difficulty in conducting "hearts and minds" campaigns in cultures inimical to our own ... We should empower local forces to deal with local situations, preferably taking account of regional considerations. This approach calls for bilateral relationships whether ahead of, during, or after periods of conflict because, like it or not, we seem to be in a period of enduring confrontation with extremism'".³²⁵

Ensuring the UK's international aid commitments support the UK's soft power

120. The disbursement of aid helps the UK to connect with recipient individuals, with the governments with which it collaborates, and with publics overseas when it contributes to projecting a vision of the UK as a helpful and generous nation that can provide expertise in effective international

³²³ Dr Andrew Murrison MP, Q377.

³²⁴ Q369.

³²⁵ Richard Norton-Taylor.

development. Adam Smith International stressed the complementarities between the UK's provision of assistance to developing countries and 'harder' exercises of UK power such as military force. Such assistance "can have a major impact that is out of all proportion to its cost and ... can help achieve transformational change", bringing a "return on investment ... [that] can be very high indeed", they suggested.³²⁶ The Brazilian Ambassador, HE Mr Roberto Jaguaribe, underlined the benefits that accrue to the UK through its international development spending. "For the UK, the policy that is being followed of increasing official development aid obviously generates positive reverberations, and I think many countries follow on that path", he told us.³²⁷

121. Adam Smith International further claimed that the UK has a comparative advantage in development assistance because DFID "is widely considered within the international development community to be the leading provider of high quality advice to government in the developing world and the delivery of development programmes in those countries".³²⁸ They suggested that this "qualitative view of British excellence in development is underpinned in quantitative terms by the UK's commitment to spend 0.7 per cent of [GNI]³²⁹ on aid".³³⁰ Lord Hannay of Chiswick, former UK Permanent Representative to the EEC and the UN, submitted that the commitment had made "both an indirect and a direct contribution to Britain's soft power. The indirect role has been reflected in the co-chairing by the Prime Minister of the UN panel set up to plot the way ahead on the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals [MDGs]; and by the contrast with a number of other developed countries who have fallen behind on their commitment to the 0.7 per cent target".³³¹ The All Party Parliamentary Group on Global Health told us that "The leading role played by the UK in international development not only gains it influence with recipient countries ... but also standing among all"; they likewise cited the invitation to the Prime Minister to co-chair the High Level Panel on the MDGs.³³²
122. Professor Andrew Coyle of the International Centre for Prison Studies provided a specific example of how development assistance could increase the UK's reputation, and help it to influence international norms. He outlined how, with the support of the FCO and DFID, his organisation had been able to help the UK make a significant contribution to prison reform in a number of countries, including through the increasingly widespread adoption of its manual *A Human Rights Approach to Prison Management*, now translated into 16 languages, promoted by the FCO and regarded as a standard by the UN and other international organisations.³³³ "In so doing it has increased the standing of the United Kingdom in encouraging adherence to international standards, in improving good governance and in pursuing a

³²⁶ Adam Smith International.

³²⁷ Q197.

³²⁸ See British Council.

³²⁹ See note by the House of Commons Library (2013) *The 0.7% Aid Target*, June, <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/briefing-papers/SN03714/the-07-aid-target>.

³³⁰ Adam Smith International.

³³¹ Lord Hannay of Chiswick; see also Lord Hannay of Chiswick, Q307.

³³² APPG on Global Health.

³³³ See Coyle A. (2009) *A Human Rights Approach to Prison Management*, http://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/prisonstudies.org/files/resources/downloads/handbook_2nd_ed_eng_8.pdf, p3; International Centre for Prison Studies.

number of specific objectives, such as international abolition of the death penalty”, he suggested. The British Council told the Committee that “Trust and attractiveness can be built through aid projects that focus on good governance, education reform and the sharing of the UK’s values, for example through our capacity building work in the justice system in Pakistan”.³³⁴

123. The BBC World Service has created debate programmes designed to improve accountability and foster dialogue, often with DFID funding, in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Egypt and the Palestinian Territories.³³⁵ In this way, the UK influences global values and standards. According to Professor James Gow (cited by the BBC), the BBC is the “easiest form of humanitarian assistance that can be provided after an emergency, giving people the best possible shot at truth, knowledge, and understanding”.³³⁶ Dr Robin Niblett argued that the World Service “helps promote the sort of transparency that empowers populations at the expense of entrenched and inefficient authority”.³³⁷
124. Where development assistance is effective, conditions in the recipient countries improve at the same time as the UK’s reputation, as the aid giver, increases. Thus, **the promotion of British values through the funding of international development projects can yield significant soft power gains.**³³⁸ Soft power is most likely to expand when aid spending works with, rather than against, the grain of local values. Sir Jeremy Greenstock reported that “the attractiveness of the UK in cultural or presentational terms is increased ... by consideration for other cultures”.³³⁹ **The Government should improve their communications around the UK’s involvement in Africa and other developing regions and countries, for example by promoting the UK as a partner (including a commercial partner), not simply as an aid-giver.**³⁴⁰ We agree with Lord Hannay of Chiswick that “we should be doing more to work with those major emerging nations like Brazil, China and India which are beginning to become aid donors themselves and who have much valuable experience to impart. Such partnerships are likely to make a genuinely valuable contribution to our soft power with both donors and recipients”.³⁴¹
125. Done well, assisting countries with their economic development can bring further advantages to the UK. Lord Hannay of Chiswick wrote that “our ODA [Official Development Assistance] remains needed and appreciated in a wide range of developing countries whose future prosperity will contribute to our own”.³⁴² The All Party Parliamentary Group on Global Health pointed out that many countries that have received UK aid “are now rapidly growing into major economic players for the 21st century”; these future powers might

³³⁴ British Council.

³³⁵ BBC.

³³⁶ BBC.

³³⁷ Dr Robin Niblett.

³³⁸ See Professor Rawnsley.

³³⁹ Sir Jeremy Greenstock. See also Durham Global Security Institute; Henry Jackson Society.

³⁴⁰ See Jonathan Glennie, Q127.

³⁴¹ Lord Hannay of Chiswick.

³⁴² Lord Hannay of Chiswick.

be better disposed towards the UK.³⁴³ The supplementary written evidence provided by International Alert considered aid spending as working towards an “unwritten goal” of contributing to an “increasingly and sustainably prosperous, peaceful and liberal world”.³⁴⁴ BP described how UK aid had contributed to improving education, health, sanitation and other public services in many of the world’s poorest countries. This investment in human capital is “fundamental for a functioning economy”, they claimed.³⁴⁵ But for Gilly Lord, UK businesses could do more to understand their impact on the countries in which they work. She said, “what we need to get much better at is reporting a much wider impact. If a company is doing business in Tanzania, yes, we need to ask what profits they might earn, but we also need to ask what they are doing for the local community, what they are doing for the environment and whether they are having a positive or negative impact”.³⁴⁶

126. The UK might find that it needs to work with regions like Africa because it faces competition from emerging economies such as China. Dr John Barry, Shell’s Country Chair for Abu Dhabi, claimed that the UK’s reputation and values should give it advantages when working with Africa:

“I found myself wondering why the Chinese have made such inroads into Africa, which ought to be our natural playing ground and indeed was for many years. If we think about how we can fix that, we bring different things to what the Chinese bring. We bring sustainability. We bring transparency. There is a role for building into the Government’s narrative, through the Commonwealth perhaps, the reason why it would be better to be with the British. We should not be ashamed of doing that, in a non-arrogant fashion of course”.³⁴⁷

127. There is a clear overlap between commerce, international development, and the benefits that aid spending bring to British soft power. We therefore suggest that DFID engage more closely with the FCO and other bodies such as the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) in developing a shared understanding of where their work contributes to the national interest.³⁴⁸ **The Government should attempt better coordination of the activities that UK agencies undertake ‘on the ground’ in each post and market. The Committee feels that DFID is too divorced from other arms of Government and UK Embassies.**³⁴⁹
128. The Government must respect DFID’s autonomy and should not seek to undermine DFID’s work and reputation for impartiality or weaken its central commitment to the defeat of poverty.³⁵⁰ But **DFID could, for example, make an explicit commitment in its annual business plan outlining how it might better promote itself as an enabler of soft power and as a**

³⁴³ APPG on Global Health.

³⁴⁴ International Alert.

³⁴⁵ BP.

³⁴⁶ Q235. See also David Stanley, Q235.

³⁴⁷ Q228. See also Sir Antony Acland, Lord Jay of Ewelme, Q301.

³⁴⁸ See Nick Baird, Q117.

³⁴⁹ See, for example, National Museum Directors’ Council; Jack Straw MP; Lord Hannay of Chiswick, Q307; Steve McCarthy, Q54; Ian Birrell, Q138; Dr Andrew Murrison MP, Q379.

³⁵⁰ See Professor Rawnsley.

promoter of British industry and commerce.³⁵¹ **The Government should also consider soft power gains when reviewing DFID’s activities. Humanitarian assistance and post-conflict reconstruction, for instance, might yield greater soft power gains than other forms of support, and this should be part of the picture when DFID’s work is evaluated.**³⁵²

129. The Government must also weigh up how their development spending contributes to the promotion of core British values.³⁵³ International Alert discussed the disbursement of aid to Rwanda. “To some”, they suggested,

“Rwanda’s government is a repressive, undemocratic regime bent on maintaining the dominance of a single party and a single ethnic group, and as such undeserving of the UK’s support. To others, Rwanda’s leadership is very carefully managing a process which it hopes and plans will lay the foundations of a stable and democratic country, based on a realistic assessment that it is too early to liberalise fully. There is no way of knowing for sure, which of these scenarios is most accurate”.³⁵⁴

International Alert advised that the UK “must carefully judge how to respond, and do so with all due care and diligence. This means inter alia that if it wishes to support progress in Rwanda it must deploy not funds merely, but also politically astute civil servants and diplomats able to engage with the government and civil society there and interpret events and processes as they evolve, tailoring [the] UK’s engagement”.³⁵⁵

130. Yet, despite these difficulties, International Alert suggested that the “risks due to this uncertainty—which is reflected in similar and different ways in all fragile contexts where the UK might wish to support development progress—seem worth taking, provided it exercises all due diligence and care in the choices it makes, and monitors and adapts its approaches along the way. This is expert, labour-intensive work”, they cautioned.³⁵⁶
131. **We consider that as well as its focus on when UK development assistance can achieve the most for the people it is intended to support, DFID should give consideration to the degree to which its work can support the promotion of British values. It should do so both because such a focus would support the UK’s soft power, and because British values such as democracy and the rule of law promote the stability of the countries involved and the wellbeing of their people.** By encouraging and promoting stability, British aid should also help to prevent future conflict within and between states.
132. A careful approach is needed to ensure that UK aid is spent in a way that both benefits people overseas and contributes to British soft power.³⁵⁷ However, “Diligence and care are not best served by understaffed

³⁵¹ See BP; DFID (2014) *DFID Drafts in UK Accountancy Skills to Boost International Development*, 13 January, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/DFID-drafts-in-uk-accountancy-skills-to-boost-international-development>.

³⁵² See Professor Rooney.

³⁵³ See Jonathan Glennie, Q148.

³⁵⁴ International Alert supplementary written evidence.

³⁵⁵ International Alert supplementary written evidence.

³⁵⁶ International Alert supplementary written evidence.

³⁵⁷ Professor Nye, Q179.

government departments, which suggests that DFID's drive to reduce transaction costs and the FCO's drive to 'do more with less' may be counter-productive", International Alert concluded.³⁵⁸ **The Government should ensure that Departments are sufficiently resourced to deliver British aid in a way that supports the UK's soft power, because false economies here will result in aid spending that fails to deliver benefits for the UK in the long run. The Government should also ensure that DFID does more to improve the transparency and accountability of the overseas projects that it supports, of consultants whom DFID employs directly, and of consultants employed by the NGOs that DFID funds. In addition, DFID should be more open about the projects that it has paid for whose objectives have not been achieved.**

CSOs and NGOs—soft power projection outside Government

133. Extra-governmental bodies play a crucial role in connecting the UK to people in other countries. Civil society organisations (CSOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are a crucial source of soft power (see Chapter two).³⁵⁹ Jonathan McClory wrote that "civil society is extremely diverse, including a range of organisations from charities, NGOs, the religious community, through to cultural institutions and ... trade unions. Some are obviously more international facing than others, but the whole of civil society is [a] crucial source of soft power".³⁶⁰ Religious communities bring people together across borders, and political groupings, trade unions and other associations sustain international bonds.³⁶¹ Many leading global charities formed and are based in the UK, which is "well recognised as a global hub for non-governmental organisations working in development, humanitarian aid and peacebuilding".³⁶² Former diplomat Lord Williams of Baglan noted that a good number of the UK's NGOs, such as Oxfam and Amnesty International, had an explicitly global outlook from the time of their foundation.³⁶³ According to the British Council, the UK has far more internationally focused NGOs than other European countries. These organisations add to the country's reputation and bolster its links with other countries: "The advocacy work of Amnesty International, the life-saving development work of Oxfam and Save the Children and the numerous other NGOs that strive to build a better world give the UK a massive boost in credibility and trust".³⁶⁴

How British institutions and values add to the UK's influence

134. The Government called the monarchy "a unique soft power and diplomatic asset".³⁶⁵ HM The Queen has made over 260 official visits to over 116

³⁵⁸ International Alert supplementary written evidence.

³⁵⁹ Jonathan McClory.

³⁶⁰ Jonathan McCory.

³⁶¹ Jonathan McClory; Research Councils UK; UK Trade Facilitation; Demos; Uday Dholakia, Q93.

³⁶² British Council; Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University; Jonathan Glennie, Q145.

³⁶³ Q28.

³⁶⁴ British Council supplementary written evidence; see also Raleigh International.

³⁶⁵ Government written evidence. See also Asia House; Wygene Chong; Sir Jeremy Greenstock; Sir John Major, Q343; Sir Peter Marshall; Professor Nye, Q176; UK Trade Facilitation; VisitBritain; Tara Sonenshine, Q36; Conrad Bird, Q328; Sir Martin Davidson, Q63; Professor Krige; Walpole British Luxury.

different countries “as an unsurpassed Ambassador for the UK overseas”.³⁶⁶ Her visits to West Germany in 1965 and Japan in 1975 promoted reconciliation; she has given encouragement to nations after profound change, such as through her visits to Russia in 1994 and to South Africa in 1995; and her historic State Visit to the Republic of Ireland in 2011 provided an opportunity to celebrate peace and reconciliation as well as the UK-Ireland relationship.³⁶⁷ Hugh Elliott, Director of Communication and Engagement for the FCO, told us that “visits by members of the Royal Family are instrumental in extending the UK’s influence overseas”.³⁶⁸ Dr John Barry’ felt that it was no coincidence that an important contract for Shell was announced on the first day of Sheikh Khalifa’s state visit to the UK. The Royal Family, he concluded, are “incredibly important in maintaining relationships at the top level” in many countries that the UK does business with.³⁶⁹ The monarchy also exerts tremendous influence throughout the Commonwealth, not least because HM The Queen is the Head of State of 16 Commonwealth Realms.

135. Events to mark the Diamond Jubilee weekend in 2012 at over 100 UK diplomatic posts attracted 50,000 guests and resulted in media coverage reaching over one billion people, the Government estimated.³⁷⁰ In their view, the Royal Wedding in 2011 and the Jubilee celebrations were important in “generating renewed respect and admiration for the Monarchy and strengthening the bonds of trust and friendship between the UK and our international partners”.³⁷¹ The twin celebrations attracted thousands of visitors to the UK³⁷², while the Royal Wedding drew a global audience of an estimated two billion people in over 180 countries.³⁷³ VisitBritain now seeks to turn global media interest in the Royal Family into further tourism opportunities, with marketing that showcases the UK’s heritage sites with royal connections, and “since the birth of Prince George, Britain’s family friendly offer”.³⁷⁴
136. HM The Queen is a powerful symbol of the long-term continuity of the country. The British Council felt that “The value of the UK’s stability, history, pomp and ceremony as a soft power asset is difficult to quantify” because “the importance of history, roots, of belonging is intangible”.³⁷⁵ According to the Government, the Head of State embodies British ideals of “peace, friendship, freedom and tolerance”.³⁷⁶ The Council argued that HM The Queen was viewed internationally as “one of life’s few constants”, an “inspiration to those countries emerging from periods of instability and conflict”.³⁷⁷ She is one of the world’s most respected and recognised figures:

³⁶⁶ Government written evidence.

³⁶⁷ Government written evidence.

³⁶⁸ Q1.

³⁶⁹ Q230.

³⁷⁰ Government written evidence.

³⁷¹ Government written evidence.

³⁷² Government written evidence.

³⁷³ British Council supplementary written evidence.

³⁷⁴ VisitBritain.

³⁷⁵ British Council supplementary written evidence.

³⁷⁶ Government written evidence.

³⁷⁷ British Council supplementary written evidence.

as Sir John Major pointed out, “When people refer to the Queen almost anywhere in the world they mean our Queen”.³⁷⁸

137. Of course, other British institutions also establish international connections. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) in the UK answers requests from the legislatures of other Commonwealth countries for British parliamentarians to engage with and help to strengthen those countries’ institutions; the Committee commends the effectiveness with which the organisation has developed its work in democracy building. The importance of such engagement derives from the fact that the individual parliamentarians who participate are particularly likely to influence the policy and development of their countries. CPA UK claimed that they are able to undertake this work because Commonwealth countries—and other states, such as Japan—share the Westminster parliamentary system and English language, “enabling parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth to share best practice within the same organisational and procedural framework”. Indeed, their submission underlined how “Westminster continues to be seen as the mother of parliaments and a universal gold standard of parliamentary best practice”.³⁷⁹
138. CPA UK stressed in particular the bilateral links that exist between the UK and several important emerging economies—such as India and many African countries—through the Commonwealth. In some cases, CPA UK argued, these nations lack strength in their democratic institutions; they described how CPA UK seeks to work with these countries to reinforce good governance and parliamentary democracy, promoting stability, human rights and the rule of law.³⁸⁰ For the UK to be seen as authoritative in such matters adds substantively to its soft power. The Westminster Parliament continues to be a major destination for parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from overseas—principally from the Commonwealth, but increasingly from other countries too, including the emergent democracies. Many of these visits are coordinated by the Overseas Offices of the two Houses of Parliament. The two Houses also fund the CPA UK and the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union which arrange inward and outward visits of member delegations, and are increasingly engaging in parliamentary strengthening activities. The FCO, and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (funded by the FCO), are also active in this area.³⁸¹
139. Through such connections, and through broadcasting and reporting, the Houses of Parliament represent a highly visible ‘face’ of the UK.³⁸² The diversity of Members of Parliament and the leadership of political parties (according to ethnicity, gender, religion, class background), as well as the style and tone of televised political debate, are also important influences on how people overseas view democracy in the UK. Some countries look to the UK for advice on strengthening their civic institutions and as a model for their own polities. Hugo Swire MP informed us that the UK is “working in the international fora to try to get Burma to accelerate the speeding up of its

³⁷⁸ Q343.

³⁷⁹ Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK.

³⁸⁰ Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK.

³⁸¹ Hugo Swire MP, Q376.

³⁸² Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK; Government (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) further supplementary written evidence.

constitution. The Speaker [of the House of Commons] has been there. We have had its clerks over here learning how to draft legislation. This country is emerging from the dark shadows of an autocracy into what we hope will be a democracy”.³⁸³

140. The British Council picked up on the global influence of the UK’s political ideals: “The freedoms and security we take for granted are hugely attractive to people living in less open and tolerant places. Other countries look to the UK for advice and support on how to strengthen their civic institutions and build a safer, more prosperous future”.³⁸⁴ Lord Soley wrote that the UK’s reputation in this area “provides a solid foundation from which the UK can exert considerable ‘soft power,’ promoting and developing the principles of good governance, democracy and human rights across the world”.³⁸⁵
141. The UK’s regional governments also play a role in projecting British soft power and helping countries develop their own institutions. According to CPA UK’s evidence, the devolved administrations have developed particularly strong bilateral relationships (Scotland with Malawi, for instance).³⁸⁶ The Welsh Government’s submission also underlined how devolved administrations can develop relationships with countries and regions that contribute to the UK’s overall soft power and influence. They gave examples of how the Welsh Government have established relationships with regional counterparts in the EU, both bilaterally and through its membership of regional groupings. Wales also has a strong relationship with the Mbale region of Uganda, where the Welsh Government have worked to promote a positive approach to LGBT rights. Their evidence also cites Wales’s more than 20-year relationship with Lesotho.³⁸⁷

Making the UK’s voice heard through international networks

Deriving soft power from the UK’s networks and alliances

142. Jonathan McClory told us that “The future of international influence rests in transnational networks ... The ability to build and mobilise networks of state and non-state actors towards the advancement of an objective is what will separate successful and unsuccessful states in the future of foreign policy”. Being a central actor across multiple networks allows a country to shape the preferences, debates, procedures, rules, and ultimately outcomes of decisions that can only be taken multilaterally.³⁸⁸ States are able to derive power from being at the hub of a hub-and-spokes network, or by bridging or exploiting holes in networks to influence communication between other actors. Therefore, “a state can wield global power by engaging and acting together with other states, not merely acting against them”.³⁸⁹

³⁸³ Q376.

³⁸⁴ British Council supplementary written evidence.

³⁸⁵ Lord Soley.

³⁸⁶ Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK.

³⁸⁷ Welsh Government.

³⁸⁸ Jonathan McClory; see also Dr Robin Niblett; Lord Hannay of Chiswick.

³⁸⁹ Nye J. S. Jr. (2011) *The Future of Power*, p18. See also HMG, A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The National Security Strategy, Cm 7953 October 2010, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61936/national-security-strategy.pdf, p3, p4, p9, p15.

143. The UK is one such ‘hub’. It is a very well networked state: only France and the United States are members of more international organisations.³⁹⁰ Jonathan McClory counted eighty multilateral organisations in which the UK is a participant.³⁹¹ The many intersecting networks of which it is a member mean that it can draw “international clout from its status as a Permanent Member of the Security Council and its membership of other international organisations ... The EU and the Commonwealth in particular are bodies with considerable soft power strengths. Both are reliant on soft power levers to exert influence in international affairs”, wrote the British Council.³⁹² Dr Robin Niblett concurred that “A key advantage for the UK is that it remains one of the most networked countries in the world, with an important institutional position in the EU, G20, G8, NATO, UN Security Council, IMF, World Bank and the Commonwealth”³⁹³, while the Rt Hon Maria Miller MP (Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport) cited the UK’s membership of UNESCO.³⁹⁴ Dr Niblett felt that “Britain’s proactive role within the key institutions and relationships that helped promote its interests over the past sixty [years] is a central pillar of its soft power”.³⁹⁵ The Government agreed that “The UK lies at the centre of an increasingly networked world”.³⁹⁶ Sir Jeremy Greenstock suggested that the UK’s “capacity in international forums to help solve problems, find compromises and negotiate texts is seen as constructive”.³⁹⁷
144. **Building on the UK’s networked position will mean that the Government can work to shape the milieu of the international networks and global ‘system’ in which it plays a part, and not just relations within that system.**³⁹⁸ The UK can exert influence on the ‘settings’ of the international system—on global governance, information infrastructure and intellectual property, accountancy standards, development best practice, and so on. The Government will find it better to shape the system in the UK’s interests than struggle to work within a system organised to the benefit of other countries.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁰ See Dr Robin Niblett.

³⁹¹ Jonathan McClory.

³⁹² British Council supplementary written evidence.

³⁹³ Dr Robin Niblett.

³⁹⁴ Q332.

³⁹⁵ Dr Robin Niblett; see also Lord Hannay of Chiswick.

³⁹⁶ Government written evidence.

³⁹⁷ Sir Jeremy Greenstock.

³⁹⁸ Indra Adnan; Lord Hannay of Chiswick. See also Miskimmon et al. (2013) *op. cit.*, p2; p176. Professor Roselle suggested that one way to conceive of soft power was “as the ability to create consensus around shared meaning. If people believe, for example, that the promotion and protection of human rights is important, desirable, and right or proper, it is more difficult to legitimize actions perceived to be in conflict with that consensus”. She underlined, however, that creating a “shared consensus ... can be much more difficult than using hard power to force another to do something, but there is reason to believe that the results can be more lasting. Soft power resources may set the stage for shared understandings and this enhances other types of interactions, including opportunities in enterprise, and coordination of shared human goals such as the alleviation of human suffering”.

³⁹⁹ Dr Christina Rowley proposed that soft power was structural, and as such was “the ability to set agendas, to frame issues, to determine discourse and narratives”. She offered a challenge: “Does the UK wish to pursue soft power instrumentally and self-interestedly for its advantages over rivals (which ... will most likely fail), or for the mutually beneficial relationships and ‘growing together’ of interests and agendas that occurs when co-operation is valued as an end in itself?”. The Royal Commonwealth Society’s submission made a similar argument. The Commonwealth, they proposed, was “an important venue in which member states can construct shared understandings on certain values and principles”. As such, they suggested, the

145. By being centrally involved in international organisations, the Government may ensure that English remains the dominant language in international mediation, and that British norms—for example, in setting judicious international trade and accountancy standards—are shared widely.⁴⁰⁰ UK Trade Facilitation told us that the UK is one of the “most respected countries in the world” when it comes to “international trade facilitation”.⁴⁰¹ Yet the success of the English language and British commercial standards must not lead to complacency. While it is important to protect the global role of English, as we discuss below it will be to the country’s advantage for more citizens to learn foreign languages.⁴⁰² Furthermore, **the underrepresentation of British officials in international institutions such as the EU and UN could well prove detrimental to the UK’s long-term influence.**⁴⁰³
146. Important as the UK’s historical alliances are, power is shifting and huge new markets are rising in parts of the world where the UK must re-establish its reputation and persuade people that they wish to deal with and buy from the British. The UK therefore needs to build other strong networks and take new opportunities. **The UK must engage more actively and flexibly with the networks of the future that represent key emerging powers, such as ASEAN, the African Union, the Arab League, the Pacific Alliance and the new Latin American groupings now taking shape.**⁴⁰⁴ While the balance of power is no longer tilted to ‘the West’ in the twentieth-century sense, **we consider that the UK is in a uniquely strong position to seize the opportunities that its global history offers and present itself as able and keen to forge bonds with countries and communities across the globe.**
147. In sum, **the strategic imperatives of a transformed global order demand that the UK aim to be the best-networked state in the world. To answer one-time US Secretary of State Dean Acheson’s challenge—that the UK had “lost an Empire and not yet found a role”—we submit that the country’s history, experience and global reach now present it with an enviable opportunity to work with others in shaping the world. This role will require sometimes difficult engagement with partners old and new, but it is a role that the Government should embrace unequivocally and enthusiastically.**

Commonwealth helped to uphold the values that member states agreed to be important and relevant in the modern world. Likewise, Lord Hannay of Chiswick wrote that “It should ... be possible over time to strengthen the systems of democratic government, the rule of law, the freedom of the press and respect for human rights as common rules shared by all members of the Commonwealth and promoted by them more widely”.

⁴⁰⁰ See British Council supplementary written evidence; Dr Daniel Arthur, International Policy Dynamics; ICAEW; Gilly Lord, Q218, Q221, Q223, Q228.

⁴⁰¹ UK Trade Facilitation.

⁴⁰² Adam Smith International; Asia House; British Academy; British Council; British Council supplementary written evidence; Demos; Research Councils UK; VICTUS.

⁴⁰³ Lord Hannay of Chiswick, Q299; Graham Mather (President, European Policy Forum), Ian Bond (Director of Foreign Policy, Centre for European Reform), Q175.

⁴⁰⁴ Asia House; Hugo Swire MP, Q374.

The United Nations, NATO, G8 and G20

148. “Britain’s membership of the United Nations, and in particular its status as one of the five permanent members of the Security Council has been, and remains, an important source of soft power”, wrote Lord Hannay of Chiswick. He added a caveat: “But the soft power benefits which accrue to Britain from the UN and from its large family of global agencies depend crucially on how effective these institutions are at fulfilling their mandates. This is particularly true of the UN Security Council’s role in ensuring international peace and security and in exercising its responsibility to protect those citizens whose governments are unwilling or unable to protect them themselves”. His conclusion was that, now that “the strains imposed on our military by operations in Afghanistan” are abating, the UK should “play a more active role in UN peacekeeping, in particular by contributing to the more sophisticated elements now required of modern peacekeeping operations”.⁴⁰⁵ This could include contributions to civilian and military policing, for example.
149. The Henry Jackson Society described how NATO depended on soft power as well as the threat of force: “The UK’s alliance with the US is rooted in cultural affinity and genuine capability, but it has a broader effect via NATO, where there remains a core partnership with serious non-military effects in our ability to shape global governance. London hosting the 2014 NATO Summit is proof of both the importance for the UK and NATO itself of the British military’s place”.⁴⁰⁶
150. In the case of the G8, Dr Robin Niblett proposed that the UK could promote its own standards and values within the organisation. It could “commit to raising the voice of this Western caucus inside the broader and still quite unfocused G20. It could build on a successful G8 Presidency in 2013⁴⁰⁷, for example, in order to promote within the broader G20 the practical value of increased standards of transparency in governance and taxation”, he proposed.⁴⁰⁸ We agree with this assessment, though we caution that though currently “unfocused”, over the coming decade the G20 will continue to develop in stature as a key international discussion forum that will outstrip the G8.

The Commonwealth

151. The international norms that the Commonwealth aims to cultivate derive ultimately from values that still form a “core part” of the UK’s identity.⁴⁰⁹ But today the organisation adds to British soft power for two major, and relatively new reasons. First, because it operates extensively at the level of people, below the radar of governmental and official contacts. This is of rapidly increasing significance in a world of personal and informal networks, where millions of individuals, groups and organisations are in daily and intimate contact. The rise of the internet has reinvigorated networks like the

⁴⁰⁵ Lord Hannay of Chiswick.

⁴⁰⁶ Henry Jackson Society.

⁴⁰⁷ See HM Government, ‘UK Presidency of G8 2013’, <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/g8-2013>.

⁴⁰⁸ Dr Robin Niblett.

⁴⁰⁹ Royal Commonwealth Society.

Commonwealth, which, like the web, uses English as a working language. Second, the modern Commonwealth, embracing some of the fastest-growing economies in the world and not as obviously Anglo-centric as it was in the past, works as a forum in which the UK is very open to being challenged. The Royal Commonwealth Society told us:

“The fact that the UK’s core values are contained within the Commonwealth Charter is not so much a reflection of the UK’s influence over the Commonwealth, but more a reflection of the complex interdependence that has historically existed between these 54 states. The UK’s values have indeed shaped the understandings at the core of the institution, but they have equally been shaped by them”.⁴¹⁰

152. When it works at its best, the Commonwealth functions as a space of mutual learning, where “each state’s voice has the same weight”.⁴¹¹ For instance, it allows countries to air disagreements publicly without resorting to hard power measures—as we saw recently with Canada’s decision not to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Sri Lanka because Canada disagreed with the Sri Lankan government’s actions during that country’s civil war.⁴¹² The Commonwealth is adept at highlighting when a country breaks the shared norms⁴¹³, and therefore reinforces what the Commonwealth “family” understands to be desirable. In time, this consensual process generates shared understandings of global issues, and how to behave in resolving such issues.⁴¹⁴ Thus, because “soft power can be said to exist in a situation where other states ‘want what you want’”, the Commonwealth provides such a venue.⁴¹⁵
153. Sir John Major suggested that Commonwealth links provided significant diplomatic opportunities to the UK. He said that the organisation was important for “several reasons”. Firstly, “The world sees the UK as having influence because of the huge spread of the Commonwealth in every corner of the globe”.⁴¹⁶ Secondly, the Commonwealth can add strength to the UK’s arm (as to that of other member states). Sir John told us that the UK’s policy to erect a safe haven for Iraqi Kurds during the first Gulf War “was born in No. 10, taken to a European Union meeting that morning, endorsed there and, while we were getting it endorsed in Europe, the Foreign Office was contacting every member of the Commonwealth so that the idea of safe havens was approved in the United Nations, with the support of the European Union and the Commonwealth. That was a practical area where we used the Commonwealth to advance a policy that we thought was right”. He continued: “The other extent to which it is an asset is that we often find allies. Big countries are often looked at suspiciously. They are looking after their own interests, but if there are small countries that have the same interests in international bodies that is often quite an influential addition ... It is hard to quantify but, yes, it is an asset. Diplomatically, in my experience,

⁴¹⁰ Royal Commonwealth Society.

⁴¹¹ Royal Commonwealth Society.

⁴¹² Paul Arkwright (Director of Multilateral Policy, FCO), Q155.

⁴¹³ See for example BBC (2009) ‘Fiji Suspended From Commonwealth’, 1 September, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/8231717.stm>.

⁴¹⁴ Baroness Prashar, Q154.

⁴¹⁵ Royal Commonwealth Society.

⁴¹⁶ Q355.

most of the members of the Commonwealth are pretty easy to work with and many of them instinctively have the same view that we have".⁴¹⁷

154. Our evidence suggested that trade between a pair of Commonwealth countries is likely to be a third higher than trade between any pair of Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth countries; the Commonwealth contains some of the world's most rapidly-expanding economies, including two of the BRICS.⁴¹⁸ Similar legal systems, shared business networks, the use of the English language and other factors produce what the Royal Commonwealth Society termed the "Commonwealth advantage". Their submission argued that some of the biggest leaps in UK exports—of both goods and services—between 2010 and 2012 were to Commonwealth countries: 33.5 per cent to India, 31.2 per cent to South Africa, 30 per cent to Australia, and 18.3 per cent to Canada. However, they suggested that still more could be done. To our knowledge, the only body that works to promote trade between Commonwealth countries is the Commonwealth Business Council. There is currently no formal mechanism through which the Commonwealth promotes trade or investment. **Since it is a clear source of advantage to UK interests, the Government could investigate how to give more support to intra-Commonwealth trade.**⁴¹⁹
155. The British Council took a dim view of those who underplay the importance of the Commonwealth to the UK's soft power: "The Commonwealth is ... a critical component of the UK's soft power, it brings countries together and celebrates and promotes shared values and experiences. Those in the UK that dismiss it fail to recognise the value placed in it by the governments of other member countries or the soft power benefits to the UK of the education, cultural and sporting links that it promotes".⁴²⁰ Lord Hannay of Chiswick agreed that the Commonwealth was "an important potential source of soft power", though stressed that it was "often under-utilised". One way that it could further contribute to soft power would be for the network "over time to strengthen the systems of democratic government, the rule of law, the freedom of the press and respect for human rights as common rules shared by all members of the Commonwealth", he wrote.⁴²¹
156. Research by the Royal Commonwealth Society found that among British citizens, the Commonwealth was seen to have the least value to the UK when compared to the UN, G8, NATO and EU. In addition, nearly half of respondents could not name any activities undertaken by the Commonwealth.⁴²² We therefore welcome the Foreign Secretary's desire to "put the C back into the FCO".⁴²³ However, it is our opinion that Hugo Swire MP and Dr Andrew Murrison MP failed to recognise the true network and commercial value of the Commonwealth in their evidence to us.⁴²⁴ As

⁴¹⁷ Q355.

⁴¹⁸ Royal Commonwealth Society; Hugo Swire MP, Q374. Jim O'Neill's original acronym (BRICs) excluded any African nations; the BRIC countries began holding summits in 2006 and included South Africa from 2010 (making the BRICs the BRICS).

⁴¹⁹ Royal Commonwealth Society; Institute of Export.

⁴²⁰ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁴²¹ Lord Hannay of Chiswick.

⁴²² Royal Commonwealth Society.

⁴²³ Hugo Swire MP, Q368.

⁴²⁴ QQ368–383.

such, we feel that **the Government need to put greater focus on the important potential in the Commonwealth. The Minister of State charged with responsibility for Commonwealth matters should have that task as his or her main role, and should be seen to do so, rather than just having care for Commonwealth relationships included amongst a list of numerous duties.** To do so would not only support the UK's international relations: embracing the UK's connections with Commonwealth nations would, we believe, also send a positive message to the UK's diaspora communities from Commonwealth nations (which would, in turn, rebound to the UK's benefit internationally).

157. The Committee is in agreement with Mr Swire that to ensure effective Commonwealth membership, the UK will have to “tread a very careful line by not stepping over the mark and being seen to instruct or dominate the Commonwealth”. But **the UK must not be too timid about engaging energetically with the Commonwealth.**⁴²⁵ **Hyper-connectivity and the ‘rise of the rest’ are conspiring to give the Commonwealth every opportunity to become a vital network of the 21st century. The UK would be foolish not to recognise this development.**
158. Mr Swire also urged realism: he said that the idea that the Commonwealth could replace the EU as a trading bloc was “patent nonsense; the strength of the Commonwealth is in addition to the EU. We live in a world of multifora membership. We have ASEAN and the Pacific Alliance. Every country is a member of many different organisations and the Commonwealth has to earn its place among them. It has no absolute right”.⁴²⁶
159. While this realism was understandable, we felt that it missed the point. **Our evidence suggested that the new significance for the UK of the modern Commonwealth, offering high-growth and high-savings markets, as well as a gateway to many of the great emerging powers of Asia, Africa and Latin America, is not quite understood in Whitehall. We note that the education, business, training and cultural sectors have taken the lead in Commonwealth networking. In particular, the UK's increasingly successful exporters of all kinds of services have forged ahead with this engagement—a highly promising trend in a world of fast-expanding knowledge-based exchanges.**⁴²⁷
160. **We recommend that the Government should follow this lead both in inspirational word and in deed: not just inside the FCO, but in all the lead Departments with a substantial international interface (including DFID, MOD, DCMS, the Department for Education, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and others). The Government should foster and encourage Commonwealth linkages with much more vigour than before, while recognising the challenges which currently confront Commonwealth bodies.**

The European Union and the UK's soft power potential

161. How does the UK's membership of the EU interact with its soft power projection? Lord Hannay of Chiswick wrote that the UK's membership of

⁴²⁵ Professor Nye, Q182; Hugo Swire MP, Q374.

⁴²⁶ Q374; Lord Hannay of Chiswick; Michael Fallon MP, Q342.

⁴²⁷ Adam Smith International; ICAEW; Royal Commonwealth Society.

the European Union has “greatly expanded Britain’s soft power, both within the borders of the Union and beyond them. We have been able to promote successfully the establishment of the largest single market in the world and to shape its legislation and regulation. We have championed major steps towards freer and fairer world trade, with the European Union an indispensable player in successive global trade negotiations and now negotiating free trade agreements with the United States and Japan”.⁴²⁸ Jonathan McClory said that “Of the eighty multilateral organisations in which the UK is a participant, the EU is [one of the most important], if not the most important, to the UK’s influence. Because the European Union has the potential to affect the full spectrum of British foreign policy goals, from prosperity to security, it should be seen as the UK’s most important multi-lateral membership—despite the tone of current domestic political debates”.⁴²⁹

162. Sir John Major was also of the opinion that membership of the EU assists the standing of the UK and the pursuit of its interests overseas. There were a number of reasons for this: “We are seen as a big country in a bigger grouping and an influential country in a big grouping. We are seen as one of those who determine European Union policy. We are seen as someone who plays a lead part in some European policies—the anti-piracy in Somalia policy, for example. We are seen as the entry point for European Union investment as well”.⁴³⁰

163. Professor Nye detected similar benefits:

“From Britain’s strategic position, I would think [EU membership] gives you a second arrow in your quiver: you can do things directly as Britain and things through the European Union. In some countries sometimes it may turn out that the European arrow will look a little less threatening and other times it may be that the British arrow looks a little less threatening. ...In a country, perhaps an ex-British colony, where there may be some residual resentments about our fears of neo-colonialism and so on, the European arrow may work. In other areas, say, another ex-British colony, where there are very strong pro-British views, the British arrow might be better. From your point of view, I would think being able to use both makes sense. One of the problems for the United States is that, as a large power, it is often suspected and we cannot switch back and forth as you could”.⁴³¹

164. Lord Hannay of Chiswick’s evidence was concerned about the future. He told us that “there remains a major positive agenda for [EU] reform still to be accomplished”, but that “Should Britain withdraw from the European Union or come to play a purely marginal role in the shaping of its policies it is difficult to see any of these soft power benefits being retained”. The European Economics and Financial Centre was in agreement. Their contention was that “the UK economy is best served by remaining in the EU. Foreign direct investment comes to the UK in order to export to the EU. The UK market by itself is not large enough for foreign investors”.⁴³²

⁴²⁸ Lord Hannay of Chiswick. See also Ian Bond, Q166.

⁴²⁹ Jonathan McClory.

⁴³⁰ Q353.

⁴³¹ Q182.

⁴³² European Economics and Financial Centre.

Sir John Major suggested that the US wished the UK to remain in the EU “because we can have an Anglo-Saxon influence on the European Union and be a counterpoint to some of the protectionist tendencies that exist there”.⁴³³

165. Dr Robin Niblett provided perhaps the strongest warning on soft power grounds against the UK’s departure from the EU. He counselled that “The biggest risk to Britain’s soft power in the near-term is if it detaches itself completely from its closest and deepest institutional network: the EU. This would risk the UK becoming ... a consumer of global public goods, standards and norms, rather than a shaper of the international environment”, he suggested. He proposed that if the UK Government “can navigate its way through its EU referendum maze, then [the UK’s] position as a major European economy with strong global ties could enable it to serve as one of the most powerful voices within the EU for deepening the EU’s international engagement. This could involve driving the EU’s current and future trade liberalisation agreements, such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, or arguing the case for more forceful EU involvement in managing the security risks of its neighbourhood”.⁴³⁴
166. We acknowledge that the arguments around the UK’s place in the EU are complex and multifaceted: we examined the issue only as it related to the UK’s soft power. The balance of evidence that we received argued that membership of the EU offers the UK a useful and important arrow in the quiver to employ in international relations.
167. Sir John Major told us that while “Like everybody else, we are occasionally outvoted [in EU negotiations] and we have to accept things we do not like”, he “would argue very strongly that we are not being pushed around in Europe”. He added: “There have been great developments in the European Union since it started: the single market, which was a UK-led operation; enlargement, which was a UK-German operation; and the Euro, in which we stood aside. I do not notice a great degree of us being kicked around or bullied in any of that”.⁴³⁵ Sir John further stressed that although “we are occasionally outvoted ... something quite dramatic has changed”:
- “During the periods Margaret [Thatcher MP] was Prime Minister and I was Prime Minister the British were very often entirely on their own in their arguments as the European Union grew and developed towards 15 members. We now have [28] members and any British Government these days, certainly the present coalition, has allies that Margaret Thatcher and I could only have dreamed of having. They are no longer alone. They have allies in eastern Europe. They have allies in northern Europe”.⁴³⁶
168. Sir John revealed that because of these new alliances, he was “much more positive and optimistic about the prospects of being able to obtain some renegotiation than most people and I have done rather more negotiating with Europe than most people ... I do not think Germany, for example, would remotely wish the British to be forced out of Europe leaving them

⁴³³ Q351.

⁴³⁴ Dr Robin Niblett.

⁴³⁵ Q352.

⁴³⁶ Q353.

surrounded as a free-trading nation by a larger number of protectionist nations”.⁴³⁷

169. **Given the importance of the wide-ranging debate regarding the UK’s membership of the EU, we feel that all political parties should ensure that their policy choices take heed of the UK’s long-term global influence. While recognising that the balance of evidence we received argued that membership of the EU offers the UK a useful and important arrow in the quiver to employ in international relations, we consider that the Government should enhance the UK’s input to the reform and modernisation of the EU. We see major opportunities for the UK to work with many allies, at both the governmental and popular levels, throughout the European Union to strengthen and adapt the Union’s 21st-century role. Such an approach would support British interests and help adapt the European Union’s own position to new global challenges. However, the gains all round will also depend on the success of the EU in addressing present challenges, such as divisions within the Euro zone and unacceptably high youth unemployment.**⁴³⁸

Soft power, trade promotion and national prosperity

170. The above section explored the ideal international positioning that the UK should adopt in a changing world, and the ways in which the Government and other institutions and organisations connect with individuals and publics overseas. We now consider the attractiveness of the UK’s commercial, educational, cultural, sporting and media assets, how they work to forge international links, and the soft power and economic benefits that they bring to the UK and its people.
171. The UK’s attractiveness and international connections provide opportunities for British businesses to export their products and services, but the UK’s economic strength and the companies behind it also help to forge connections and enhance the UK’s soft power by supporting its international recognition and reputation. For the British Council, “The UK’s global influence draws on its reputation as a place of excellence, creativity, ingenuity, a world leader in finance, the Law, science, research, the arts and creative industries”.⁴³⁹ Walpole British Luxury, which represents 180 British luxury brands, told us that their members rely on the UK’s reputation for innovation, creativity, tradition and quality, and, in a beneficial cycle, they also contribute to this positive reputation.⁴⁴⁰ Luxury brands are “ambassadors” that “often communicate contemporary national values more effectively and in a more relevant way (to consumers in key overseas markets) than governments”, they argued.⁴⁴¹
172. We received much evidence about the attractiveness of London, and the City of London, as a commercial and financial hub. We heard that the standing of the UK’s financial and professional services, despite having taken a hit since 2008, was still high—and that such services form the UK’s leading export

⁴³⁷ Q353.

⁴³⁸ See European Commission, ‘Youth Employment’, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1036>.

⁴³⁹ British Council.

⁴⁴⁰ Walpole British Luxury; UK China Visa Alliance.

⁴⁴¹ Walpole British Luxury.

sector, with a trade surplus larger than the combined surplus of all other net exporting industries in the UK.⁴⁴² Being a world leader adds to the UK's reputation.

173. The City of London Corporation reported that the UK represented “a hallmark of quality and reliability in a wide range of sectors, from manufacturing and engineering, to finance, infrastructure, education, and legal and professional services”.⁴⁴³ Mr Stanley, former CEO of Penspen, singled out the British engineering profession as particularly highly regarded around the world.⁴⁴⁴ The UK also has a good reputation for the expertise of its workforce, we heard. David Stanley reported that “Even though we establish engineering operations around the world ... and use a lot of indigenous engineers in that work, it has to be led by British engineers. ... [British engineers] have a wider, more lateral thinking process. We have a better adaptation to the client's requirements”.⁴⁴⁵ The benefits that this reputation brings, said Stephen Pattison, Vice-President, Public Affairs of ARM Holdings, means that “we need more young people going into engineering”.⁴⁴⁶
174. Gilly Lord of PricewaterhouseCoopers, told us that being seen as authoritative in the foundation of standards and ethics for professions such as accountancy and law gives the UK a level of authority in these areas that adds to the UK's international standing.⁴⁴⁷ The UK accountancy profession's reputation is highly important for Ms Lord's business, which is “about selling advice, people and services, so it is intrinsically linked to soft power”.⁴⁴⁸ Ms Lord's professional body, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), has about 140,000 members, more than 20,000 of whom are based overseas.⁴⁴⁹ Sir Jeremy Greenstock felt that the UK's “general professional competence is admired”, though he added the caveat that this is “only against the background of widespread incompetence elsewhere”.⁴⁵⁰
175. The UK is also a world leader in the legal profession.⁴⁵¹ According to the Humanitarian Intervention Centre, the UK's “highly sophisticated and developed legal system” is respected around the world, and supported by the country's hefty output of “world-leading legal thought and practice”. In the Centre's view, this legal prowess “affords the UK a high degree of legitimacy and credibility in the international arena which in turn gives its diplomacy great weight, efficacy and the power [to] encourage cooperation and to build consensus”.⁴⁵² The legal profession in the UK handles a great deal of

⁴⁴² Gilly Lord, Q218; City of London Corporation.

⁴⁴³ City of London Corporation.

⁴⁴⁴ Q222.

⁴⁴⁵ Q226.

⁴⁴⁶ Q225.

⁴⁴⁷ Q218; British Academy; ICAEW; Dr Daniel Arthur, International Policy Dynamics.

⁴⁴⁸ Q221.

⁴⁴⁹ Gilly Lord, Q233.

⁴⁵⁰ Sir Jeremy Greenstock.

⁴⁵¹ British Council; Sir Jeremy Greenstock; National Asian Business Association.

⁴⁵² Humanitarian Intervention Centre.

- international business.⁴⁵³ Sir Roger Gifford, then Lord Mayor of London, told us that the UK's legal tradition has "produced an international contract law that is essentially English law and is viewed the world over as a gold standard".⁴⁵⁴ It has also exported the common law system to many countries, including across the Commonwealth, meaning that the UK's influence is deeply embedded into a number of national constitutions.⁴⁵⁵
176. Dr Robin Niblett claimed that UK-based financial, accounting and legal services represent elements of the UK's soft power because "They place UK firms at the heart of global corporate deal-making and negotiation, helping define the norms and rules through which international commerce is undertaken".⁴⁵⁶
177. The appeal of the UK as a financial centre in particular rests on other British soft power assets, including the English language, the stability of the UK political system, and the fact that the country provides an attractive environment in which to live and work.⁴⁵⁷ The UK's economy has a transparent legal and tax base, we heard.⁴⁵⁸ Uday Dholakia, Chairman of the National Asian Business Association (NABA), maintained that one of the UK's most important unique selling propositions was its regulatory system: "If you buy a British product or service abroad, you know it is legitimate, it is transparent and there is a redress complaints procedure".⁴⁵⁹ London, along with New York, Singapore and Hong Kong, is seen as a safe haven for funds.⁴⁶⁰ The capital's cultural assets combine with its concentration of financial, legal and other key services and international institutions to form a unique offer to investors and entrepreneurs.⁴⁶¹ Others reinforced the point that the UK's values added to its attractiveness as a country in which it was possible to do business. Professor Colin Riordan, Vice-President of Universities UK and Chair of the UK Higher Education International Unit, explained to us that the UK "is seen as a safe country with a rule of law that you can rely on. We are also seen as very good value".⁴⁶² Stephen Pattison suggested that "the rule of law and the patent protection arrangements in the UK ... are the sorts of things that will attract business into the UK".⁴⁶³
178. Sir John Major underlined the link between the UK's political system, its commercial attractiveness, and the implicit trust that many people from other countries place in the British:

⁴⁵³ Professor Cox, Q26; John Micklethwait, Q39; Wygene Chong; Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University; Dr Jamie Gaskarth; Gillespie and Webb; Government written evidence; Humanitarian Intervention Centre; Dr Daniel Arthur, International Policy Dynamics; Sir John Major, Q343; Professor Rawnsley; Royal Commonwealth Society; Lord Soley; Jack Straw MP; UK Trade Facilitation; Walpole British Luxury; Dr Cristina Archetti; Sir Martin Davidson, Q63; Sir Roger Gifford, Q236.

⁴⁵⁴ Q236.

⁴⁵⁵ Sir Roger Gifford, Q239, Q242; Durham Global Security Institute; PACT.

⁴⁵⁶ Dr Robin Niblett.

⁴⁵⁷ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁴⁵⁸ British Council supplementary written evidence; Sir Roger Gifford, Q236.

⁴⁵⁹ Q99.

⁴⁶⁰ Sir Roger Gifford, Q236.

⁴⁶¹ British Council supplementary written evidence; Sir Roger Gifford, Q236.

⁴⁶² Professor Riordan, Q247.

⁴⁶³ Q220; see also John Dickie, Q246.

“We are seen as an exceedingly stable society. We are also seen as one of the, if not the, least corrupt nations in the world, and I do not just mean our business system. I mean our political system, our business system, our way of life. I hope I am not seeing this through tainted British eyes—I do not think I am—but people trust us. They may often disagree with us, but they believe we are to be trusted and they believe we deal honestly with them. The value of that to people who wish to trade or treat with us in any way is almost incalculable”.⁴⁶⁴

179. The UK’s willingness to tackle corruption also formed part of Dr John Barry’s evidence to the Committee:

“In a world that is more connected—one can think of the Arab Spring and the demands for transparency, which are growing in places that were never there before—the UK can bring a lot. Some aspects such as transparency, ethics, and the Bribery Act [2010], if well sold, play to our strengths and are easy”.⁴⁶⁵

180. Lord Leach of Fairford, Chairman of Open Europe, underlined how a commitment to certain values and standards made a key difference in an important emerging market, China:

“A business colleague recently met a member of the standing committee of the Chinese politburo, who expressed the view that Sino-British relations were far more than a matter of trade figures. The UK was the only country to have refrained from protectionist measures against China. Since the industrial revolution, the British have designed most of the rules of international engagement, from sports to standards of governance. It was the home of the English language. It had a strong role in education, science and technology, and in services, especially the financial sector, it was a—perhaps the—world leader. Without ports or harbours—there are not so many ships nowadays—we were the world’s shipping hub because of our advanced impartial legal system. This, he said, added up to significant soft power, placing us as the nation that is always worth consulting on multinational issues”.⁴⁶⁶

181. Walpole British Luxury made much of the UK’s ‘openness’ to other countries: “We try to be an open and fair society, which in itself contributes in no small part to our soft power appeal”.⁴⁶⁷ The British Council agreed that the UK’s willingness to engage with others was crucial: “Sharing our way of life, showing solidarity with the citizens of the world, caring enough to want to help and knowing to ask how we can help, are all reasons the UK is taken seriously, respected and listened to internationally”.⁴⁶⁸ It is a key advantage for the UK that many people in the outside world share its values and ideals, and respect its institutions.⁴⁶⁹

182. Dealing with China and other emerging economies in the developing world will therefore require UK companies to play to their strengths in providing

⁴⁶⁴ Q347.

⁴⁶⁵ Q221. See also Mark Pyman (Director, Defence and Security Programme, Transparency International UK), Q134, Q139, Q148.

⁴⁶⁶ Q165.

⁴⁶⁷ Walpole British Luxury. See also Professor Nye, Q178; Indra Adnan.

⁴⁶⁸ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁴⁶⁹ Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK.

transparent and non-corrupt corporate governance.⁴⁷⁰ UKTI will have a role to play in promoting British business and regulatory regimes (such as intellectual property legislation) as fair and largely non-corrupt, and in advancing the idea that corruption and human rights abuses are a barrier to business.⁴⁷¹ **UKTI, and other Government bodies charged with promoting UK companies abroad, should emphasise the reliability and trustworthiness of British businesspeople as one of the significant advantages of trading with the UK.**

183. The Lord Mayor of London, as a primary representative of the City of London, performs several functions that contribute to the UK's soft power. We learnt that the Lord Mayor undertakes "door-opening" trade promotion work, in collaboration with UKTI, involving delegations to about 30 countries a year.⁴⁷² The Lord Mayor and City of London Corporation work to promote inward investment and support overseas firms to establish or expand their representation in London and the rest of the UK, in association with UKTI and the UK's diplomatic network.⁴⁷³ The City has also identified an opportunity to set up a centre for Islamic finance by working with Malaysia to develop a "gold standard" for this type of finance. While the size of the market is small, establishing this industry would demonstrate the UK's openness.⁴⁷⁴
184. The BBC also claims to act as a "National Champion" for the wider economy, travelling on trade missions with small and medium-sized enterprises and using its brand to help them punch above their weight.⁴⁷⁵ The BBC told us that its global activities build the reputation of the UK's creative industries; indirectly benefit the UK economy through providing an international platform for UK talent and creativity; and enhance the UK's reputation as a source of desirable products and as an attractive place to visit, study and do business.⁴⁷⁶ In the financial year 2012–13 BBC Worldwide achieved headline sales of £312.3 million.⁴⁷⁷ PACT, the Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television, told us that "Arguably the success that the sector has generated has reaped huge benefits for the UK and has been driven by the BBC Worldwide, the independent sector and others".⁴⁷⁸ The BBC's evidence claimed that part of their success in supporting British commerce and tourism derived from the BBC's "even-handed global perspective", which meant that the corporation could be both impartial and "an attractor to Britain", reflecting "British knowledge, British expertise, British culture and British values".⁴⁷⁹
185. As the UK's international trade promotion body, UKTI forms part of the UK's soft power assets, helping to build positive cross-border connections.

⁴⁷⁰ See Stephen Pattison, David Stanley, Q229.

⁴⁷¹ See Uday Dholakia, Q107; Michael Fallon MP, Q338, Q339.

⁴⁷² Lord Mayor of London supplementary written evidence; Sir Roger Gifford, Q241; City of London Corporation.

⁴⁷³ City of London Corporation.

⁴⁷⁴ Sir Roger Gifford, Q243.

⁴⁷⁵ BBC.

⁴⁷⁶ BBC.

⁴⁷⁷ BBC.

⁴⁷⁸ PACT.

⁴⁷⁹ Peter Horrocks, Q68.

The Government described how UKTI works with the FCO and BIS to help promote international trade and investment, supporting UK exporting businesses by providing high-level political and economic analysis and access to decision-makers around the world; identifying new business opportunities; sharing intelligence and managing risk through knowledge of the local political and economic environment; using inward and outward high-level visits to lobby on behalf of UK interests and trade opportunities; supporting UK trade missions around the world; and coordinating Government relationships with key businesses to help remove barriers to international trade and investment.⁴⁸⁰

186. The Committee heard an array of opinions, some positive, some negative, about the effectiveness of UKTI in promoting British business.⁴⁸¹ The impression that we have gathered is that UKTI's budgets are too fragmented, its decision-making structures too complex, and its resources too stretched, for the organisation to have the impact that the country needs.⁴⁸² UK Trade Facilitation argued that the work undertaken by UKTI was "fundamental to the overseas expansion of UK companies", but said that "Like other government agencies ... its resources have been slashed and its effectiveness blunted".⁴⁸³ In addition, there seems to be a lack of coordination between the FCO, UKTI and BIS on promoting the UK's commercial opportunities overseas⁴⁸⁴, despite the frequent emphasis from the current Prime Minister on the importance of the 'global race' in which the UK is engaged.⁴⁸⁵ **It is the Committee's opinion that the Government must take positive steps to link soft power deployment and support for the country's exports, its enterprise, and its innovation.**
187. We heard a number of suggestions about how to improve the international performance of bodies that promote UK businesses. Witnesses demanded better support from the British Chambers of Commerce, which, they claimed, compare unfavourably with counterparts abroad, particularly those in Germany.⁴⁸⁶ Uday Dholakia said, "I feel really depressed when I go abroad and see that my competitors have all the data from the French chamber, the German chamber, and US Department of Commerce and the only access I have is to [a] report from UKTI".⁴⁸⁷ In the same evidence session, Peter Callaghan, Director General of the Commonwealth Business Council, reported that when it comes to the formation of international consortia following trade missions, which further enhance cross-border linkages: "the

⁴⁸⁰ Government written evidence.

⁴⁸¹ See Uday Dholakia, Q99; David Stanley, Q232; David Stanley, Dr John Barry, Q233; Richard Scudamore, Q285.

⁴⁸² See Uday Dholakia, Q99; David Maisey (Director, Institute of Export), Peter Callaghan, Q105; David Stanley, Q232; David Stanley, Dr John Barry, Q233.

⁴⁸³ UK Trade Facilitation.

⁴⁸⁴ Hugo Swire MP, Q376.

⁴⁸⁵ See, for example, HM Government (2012) 'Prime Minister's CBI Speech', 19 November, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-ministers-cbi-speech>; Cabinet Office and Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street (2013) 'Plan for Britain's Success: Speech by the Prime Minister', 10 June, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/plan-for-britains-success-speech-by-the-prime-minister>; see also Hugo Swire MP, Q371.

⁴⁸⁶ Uday Dholakia, Q100; Peter Callaghan, Q101; Peter Callaghan, David Maisey, Q102; Uday Dholakia, Q103; David Maisey, Peter Callaghan, Q105; Peter Callaghan, Q106; Uday Dholakia, David Maisey, Q111.

⁴⁸⁷ Q100.

Germans ... the Chinese and the Japanese are much better than we are. They form consortiums willingly, and that is soft power”.⁴⁸⁸

188. Nick Baird CMG CVO, then Chief Executive Officer of UKTI, related how Germany has “an extremely good and interesting model” of export support,

“particularly for supporting SMEs [small and medium-sized enterprises] ... You go to your local chamber, and it provides a complete one-stop-shop service to an SME, whether it be the trade finance, insurance, how you get your IP [intellectual property], or how you find an appropriate distributor. It is all done in one place and is very much linked into a global network. If you are an SME and you want to export in the UK, you think, ‘Where do I go?’. Some of them may know UKTI, but we do not provide a complete one-stop-shop service. We do not do documentation for exporting, for example, which is done in the chambers [of commerce]”.⁴⁸⁹

189. Some witnesses felt that UKTI offered support mostly to the sales missions of large and already well-established UK firms, not SMEs.⁴⁹⁰ David Stanley claimed that UKTI’s “focus is very much on the big business opportunities that there are, and its support to SMEs is much less”.⁴⁹¹ The Lord Mayor of London told us that

“When it comes to the trade side, we have also had the comment everywhere that British companies could do more and that there could be more of them. There are always one or two large ones. There is always Arup, Balfour Beatty, maybe Atkins and one or two others, but we have 10, 15 or 20 companies that do a lot of activity, whereas the Germans have 50 companies [that] do a lot of activity”.⁴⁹²

190. The Committee is not in a position to advocate adopting the German model of funding for Chambers of Commerce, which is based on compulsory subscription to local chambers.⁴⁹³ However, we are pleased that the Government are seeking to “replicate” this model as far as possible, through “the transference of much of what UKTI has historically done to chambers of commerce ... so that our chambers of commerce overseas will do a lot of the work, the gestation work ... That would leave UKTI to do the more strategic work on tariff reform, the big issues, the work that you need for FTAs [free trade agreements] and things like that. The follow through will therefore work better”, as Hugo Swire MP told the Committee.⁴⁹⁴ Such an

⁴⁸⁸ Q101.

⁴⁸⁹ Q120.

⁴⁹⁰ Q232. One submission suggested that the Government “should promote and do some of the marketing abroad for UK businesses, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises. SMEs do not have the resources and cannot afford the cost of travel to trade fairs in other countries. UK Embassies could introduce potential parties abroad who could partner with SMEs and do the marketing and sales on behalf of the UK SMEs in different countries abroad (on a commission basis)” (European Economics and Financial Centre).

⁴⁹¹ Q232.

⁴⁹² Q242. John Longworth, Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce, told the BBC Radio 4 Today Programme on 17 October 2013 that the German government in 2012 spent € 57 million on export support through German Chambers of Commerce.

⁴⁹³ Hugo Swire MP, Q371; Uday Dholakia, Q100. See also House of Lords Select Committee on Small and Medium Sized Enterprises, *Roads to Success: SME Exports* (Report of Session 2012–13, HL Paper 131), <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201213/ldselect/ldsmall/131/131.pdf>, p34; pp117–27.

⁴⁹⁴ Q371

approach would be similar to the American model, where according to Mr Baird,

“there is a strong chamber movement ... and a very small government effort. That is precisely the model that we are seeking to move towards ourselves: to retain a significant in-house activity, principally in support of major campaigns. That does not necessarily mean just large companies. It means ... high-value campaigns where you have large contractors, their supply chains, inward investment, bringing investment here, and outsourcing our SME advisory activity”.⁴⁹⁵

191. **We welcome the Government’s recognition of the importance of supporting exporting SMEs. A House of Lords Select Committee recently conducted an inquiry into this subject and we urge the Government to continue working on implementing its recommendations.**⁴⁹⁶
192. **We agree with the evidence that we heard from a number of witnesses that UKTI should encourage more follow-up work in the aftermath of trade missions.** This could include support for the formation of voluntary international trade consortia.⁴⁹⁷ UKTI need not lead such consortia directly, but could play a role in bringing together interested parties in order to build upon relationships established during trade missions: “to facilitate [and] encourage different firms to get together and know each other”, as one witness proposed.⁴⁹⁸ **Helping British businesses to export their goods and services to other countries and form supply chains and consortia is crucial for building up the UK’s soft power, as these international connections strengthen trust in the UK and its reputation for providing valuable outputs. It is also vital that the UK’s trade promotion bodies pull out all the stops to capitalise on the UK’s soft power and translate it into trade deals. We urge the Government to put every energy into this effort.**
193. In turn, we feel that UKTI, and other organisations working to promote British commercial interests abroad, must receive maximum support from UK Embassies overseas. This is undoubtedly already the case in many instances. But **Embassy staff should undergo training in seeking out opportunities for British SMEs as well as large businesses. The Government should also encourage the FCO actively to recruit more advisory staff from the private sector, and we approve of the FCO’s introduction of private sector secondments for Ambassadors going to post.**⁴⁹⁹ **What used to be purely commercial work should now be reinforced by linkages to new audiences in cultural, educational and broader spheres, to propel forward the whole UK ‘package’.**
194. Hugo Swire MP told us: “My view is that the people who own the UK abroad are the FCO and everyone should come under our compound as closely on our terms as possible. That is not universally popular but we are

⁴⁹⁵ Q122.

⁴⁹⁶ House of Lords Select Committee on Small and Medium Sized Enterprises, *Roads to Success: SME Exports* (Report of Session 2012–13, HL Paper 131), <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201213/ldselect/ldsmall/131/131.pdf>, p34; pp117–27.

⁴⁹⁷ Peter Callaghan, David Maisey, Q102.

⁴⁹⁸ Peter Callaghan, Q101, Q102.

⁴⁹⁹ Hugo Swire MP, Q368.

beginning to do that and so better co-ordinate where possible”.⁵⁰⁰ Dr Andrew Murrison MP said that such “collocation” was “clearly right”.⁵⁰¹ Maria Miller MP claimed that Embassies are “sales team[s] on the ground”.⁵⁰² **The Committee suggests that wherever feasible, UK Government bodies working to promote British commercial interests in a particular country should be brought under one roof, and under the direct purview of the Ambassador to ensure effective coordination of all the UK’s efforts ‘on the ground’.**

195. We heard that the Government are focusing their resources on key markets through programmes such as the Emerging Powers Initiative.⁵⁰³ As this initiative develops, it will need to take into account the very different circumstances of and stages of development now reached by economies which were formerly ‘emerging’. It will also need to recognise the distinct—and potentially advantageous—nature of relationships with ‘emerging’ powers that form part of the Commonwealth network. The Government will need to keep the performance of these markets under close review, and be prepared to change tack if economic circumstances demand and as the status and prospects of different emerging economies undergo rapid change.⁵⁰⁴ The Committee welcomes early Government moves towards such a review process.⁵⁰⁵ **Constructive engagement with economies of a range of sizes is good for trade, not least because global supply chains are now so complex, and involve so many partners.**⁵⁰⁶

Tourism

196. Tourism adds £115 billion to UK GDP annually and employs 2.6 million people; nine per cent of the UK economy on both measures.⁵⁰⁷ Overseas visitors make up a significant amount of this sum: they spent a record £18.7 billion in the UK in 2012, contributing £3.2 billion to public funds in taxation, and £21 billion in 2013, a 13 per cent increase.⁵⁰⁸ The Government claimed that their GREAT Britain campaign, which launched in 2011, has added £500 million in tourism revenues to the UK economy.⁵⁰⁹ In 2012, tourist visits to the UK increased by one per cent to 31 million; a recent House of Lords Select Committee Report found that the increase in tourism attributed to the London Olympic and Paralympic Games of that year were

⁵⁰⁰ Q376. Dr Andrew Murrison MP claimed that he did not recognise this “separateness”, however (Q375).

⁵⁰¹ Q375.

⁵⁰² Q335.

⁵⁰³ See Andrew Mitchell, Q12; Government (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) supplementary written evidence; Government (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) further supplementary written evidence.

⁵⁰⁴ Dr Robin Brown’s written evidence advised that “The growth of emerging powers creates new challenges for the UK. Firstly, there is the need to forge relationships where existing links are relatively weak in competition with other countries that see opportunities in the same regions. Secondly, emerging powers are building their own soft power assets, for instance universities, that can compete with those in the UK”.

⁵⁰⁵ Michael Fallon MP, Q334, Q337.

⁵⁰⁶ Peter Callaghan, Q101.

⁵⁰⁷ VisitBritain; British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁵⁰⁸ VisitBritain; Blitz R. (2014) ‘Foreign Visitors to UK Spend Record Amounts’, *Financial Times*, 13 February 2014, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/6b68441e-94c3-11e3-af71-00144feab7de.html#axzz2wDkoSV26>.

⁵⁰⁹ ‘GREAT Britain’ Campaign supplementary written evidence.

- “being sustained and improved”.⁵¹⁰ Newly released Office for National Statistics figures suggested that London saw a 20 per cent rise in visitor numbers in 2013, making it the most popular tourist destination in the world.⁵¹¹
197. VisitBritain cited the Premier League, the BBC, the monarchy and the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games as tourism pull factors.⁵¹² Museums and other collections also play a key role in attracting tourists to the UK: for example one in 10 overseas visitors to the UK, and one in four overseas visitors to London, visits the British Museum.⁵¹³ The National Museum Directors’ Council told us that overseas visits to national museums have increased by 95 per cent in the past decade, with over 19 million overseas visits between 2011 and 2012.⁵¹⁴ Visitors to museums from Africa, Asia, and south and central America increased from six per cent of overseas visits between 2010 and 2011 to 11 per cent between 2011 and 2012.⁵¹⁵
198. According to VisitBritain, visitors to the UK return home with an increased appreciation for the UK, and have a greater knowledge and understanding of the business opportunities that it provides. A “halo effect” transmits some of these soft power benefits to their family, friends and colleagues.⁵¹⁶ Those who have visited the UK are more likely to live, work and study in the UK according to figures from the 2012 Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index cited by VisitBritain.⁵¹⁷
199. For this virtuous cycle to persist, the visitor’s experience of the UK must be positive. The reception of visitors at airports, railway stations and ferry terminals contributes to the impression that visitors form of the UK.⁵¹⁸ Tara Sonenshine suggested that “most public diplomacy begins at the airport. That is your first contact ... Your first view of another country is, when you step off the plane on to their territory, will the person be warm and welcoming? Will I feel that I do not just get my stamp, but I am now viewed as an asset to your culture and society?”⁵¹⁹ Mark Harper MP, then Minister for Immigration, told us that the October 2013 data for Heathrow showed that 100 per cent of European Economic Area (EEA) passengers and 99.73 per cent of non-EEA passengers passed through border queues within the target times of 25 minutes and 45 minutes respectively. The average queuing time for EEA passengers at Heathrow was two minutes, and the national average was five minutes. For non-EEA passengers these figures were six minutes for Heathrow and seven minutes nationally.⁵²⁰

⁵¹⁰ VisitBritain; House of Lords Select Committee on Olympic and Paralympic Legacy, *Keeping the Flame Alive: the Olympic and Paralympic Legacy* (Report of Session 2013–14, HL Paper 78), <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldselect/ldolympic/78/78.pdf>, p16; p81.

⁵¹¹ Prynne J. (2014) ‘It’s Official: London is the Most Popular Destination for Tourists in the World’, *Evening Standard*, 16 January, <http://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/its-official-london-is-the-most-popular-destination-for-tourists-in-the-world-9063988.html>.

⁵¹² VisitBritain.

⁵¹³ British Museum; Dr Jonathan Williams, Q89.

⁵¹⁴ National Museum Directors’ Council.

⁵¹⁵ National Museum Directors’ Council.

⁵¹⁶ VisitBritain.

⁵¹⁷ VisitBritain.

⁵¹⁸ John Micklethwait, Q41.

⁵¹⁹ Q366.

⁵²⁰ Q270; Government (Home Office) supplementary written evidence.

Supporting the UK's excellence in education

200. The UK's education sector is a major contributor to the UK's soft power.⁵²¹ The higher education sector in particular enjoys a reputation for excellence in learning.⁵²² This reputation attracts high-quality students, teachers and academics from across the world, contributing to the strength of the education sector and to the UK's skills base, intellectual output and wider economy. We heard that education is the second most valuable global sector after healthcare, and that the UK is performing well. British education exports were worth £17.5 billion in 2011.⁵²³
201. According to Sir Martin Davidson there are around 0.5 million foreign students at all levels learning in the UK.⁵²⁴ Eighteen per cent of the UK higher education sector student base is international, and over 25 per cent of faculty are from countries outside the EU.⁵²⁵ The UK is the second most popular destination for international higher education students after the US, with 13 per cent of the international market.⁵²⁶ Lord Williams of Baglan reported that seven of the world's top 50 universities are British (more than twice as many as the rest of Europe); Professor Cox had counted about 17 British universities in the top 100 in 2012.⁵²⁷
202. Bringing learners and educators into the UK from abroad, and exporting students, teachers and educational institutions overseas, help to build social and cultural links and strengthen business and research ties.⁵²⁸ We learnt that international students in UK-based educational institutions “develop an awareness and respect for UK culture, governance, institutions and history” and gain exposure to “UK norms and cultural values”.⁵²⁹ Professor Riordan told us that a BIS report had found that 95 per cent of UK university international alumni are “positively orientated” towards the UK.⁵³⁰ Most international higher education students who leave the UK after study retain professional and personal links: 84 per cent, suggested one study.⁵³¹ British universities are therefore “centres for shaping the thoughts of the future elite in the world”.⁵³²
203. Students returning to their home countries can be the UK's “greatest ambassadors”.⁵³³ Many go on to hold influential posts, including government

⁵²¹ British Council; David Blackie.

⁵²² UUK and IU.

⁵²³ British Council supplementary written evidence; HM Government (2013) *International Education: Global Growth and Prosperity*, July, http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/229844/bis-13-1081-international-education-global-growth-and-prosperity.pdf.

⁵²⁴ Q63; Professor Riordan, Q248.

⁵²⁵ British Council; Professor Riordan Q259.

⁵²⁶ British Council; Richard Dowden; Professor Scott-Smith; Lord Hannay of Chiswick; UUK and IU.

⁵²⁷ Lord Williams of Baglan, Q28, Q32; Professor Michael Cox Q33.

⁵²⁸ HM Government (2013) *International Education: Global Growth and Prosperity*, July; Research Councils UK.

⁵²⁹ Dr Daniel Arthur, International Policy Dynamics. See also Professor Riordan, Q247.

⁵³⁰ Professor Riordan, Q247.

⁵³¹ UUK and IU.

⁵³² Agnès Poirier, Q214; Sir John Major, Q357.

⁵³³ Sir Martin Davidson, Q63; Professor Riordan, Q247; Dr Daniel Arthur, International Policy Dynamics; HM Government (2013) *International Education: Global Growth and Prosperity*, July; Independent Schools Council; Sir John Major, Q357.

- roles, in their home countries.⁵³⁴ This connection puts the UK and its businesses in a position to engage successfully with the leaders of the future, perhaps particularly in developing countries: what the Independent Schools Council called “a global influence over future professionals, business leaders and political leaders” based on their “trust in the UK”.⁵³⁵ Universities UK and the UK Higher Education International Unit (UUK and IU) cited the example of a PhD graduate from the University of Cambridge who held a director-level post in the central bank of China. He told a BIS study that when he was involved in negotiations with the Bank of England, he went into those negotiations “emotionally bonded” to the UK.⁵³⁶
204. Many people abroad view British independent schools as being of a very high standard, as John Micklethwait reported.⁵³⁷ Children at such schools bring in an estimated £750 million in school fees each year, as well as the value of their consumer spending and that of their visiting families, and many continue to purchase UK products as alumni.⁵³⁸ Seventy-seven per cent of international pupils at Independent Schools Council schools go on to universities in the UK (equating to 8,000 entrants per year).⁵³⁹ Harrow set up a third school in the Asia region in Hong Kong in 2012; many other UK independent schools have also established ‘daughter’ schools overseas.⁵⁴⁰ Their students are likely to form a lasting connection with the UK, even without crossing its borders.
205. The UK is also a leading exporter of transnational education: the delivery of education outside the country in which an awarding body is based. Between 2011 and 2012 some 570,000 higher education students underwent UK transnational education.⁵⁴¹ A decade after Nottingham University established its campus in Malaysia, more than 60 UK educational institutions have established ties with Malaysian counterparts.⁵⁴² The Government calculated that around 48,000 Malaysians have taken UK qualifications, of which around 14,000 studied in the UK.⁵⁴³ David Blackie, Director of International Education Connect Ltd, highlighted the UK’s international “offerings” of

⁵³⁴ Professor Riordan, Q247; Dr Daniel Arthur, International Policy Dynamics; HM Government (2013) *International Education: Global Growth and Prosperity*, July. UUK and IU cited a report by the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee published in March 2011 which listed 27 international heads of state at that time who had studied in the UK, many in UK universities, and an article by the *Times Higher Education supplement* in September 2013 highlighting 12 world leaders who had been educated at UK universities (UUK and IU).

⁵³⁵ Professor Riordan, Q247; Exporting Education UK; Independent Schools Council. For example, the Emir of Qatar was educated at Sherborne and Harrow in the UK (Independent Schools Council).

⁵³⁶ UUK and IU.

⁵³⁷ Q33; Independent Schools Council.

⁵³⁸ Independent Schools Council.

⁵³⁹ HM Government (2013) *International Education: Global Growth and Prosperity*, July; Independent Schools Council.

⁵⁴⁰ Independent Schools Council: “ISC schools are developing ‘daughter’ schools overseas as a response to demand for high quality British education and values: Dulwich College (Shanghai, Beijing, Suzhou, Seoul, Singapore), Harrow School (Bangkok, Beijing, Hong Kong), Haileybury (Almaty, Astana), Brighton College (Abu Dhabi, El Ain), ACS (Doha), Bromsgrove School (Bangkok), Epsom College (Malaysia), Malvern College (Qingdao), Marlborough College (Johor), North London Collegiate School (Jeju), Repton School (Dubai), Sherborne School (Qatar), Shrewsbury (Bangkok) and Wellington College (Tianjian, Shanghai)”.

⁵⁴¹ UUK and IU.

⁵⁴² Government written evidence.

⁵⁴³ Government (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) further supplementary written evidence.

electronic libraries, MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) and specialist online courses⁵⁴⁴; the Commonwealth of Learning, of which the UK is a funder, is concerned with the promotion of open and distance learning for development.⁵⁴⁵

206. Exporting Education UK raised a caveat, however. While the UK currently has an enviable reputation for education, the market for international students is intensely competitive.⁵⁴⁶ Asia House wrote that although British universities are “at the top of the world tree ... this will only remain true while our leading educational institutions are rigorous in defence of independent thinking and academic standards”.⁵⁴⁷ According to UUK and IU, the UK spends significantly less on tertiary education (including research) as a proportion of GDP than the OECD average. While the UK therefore “punches above its weight” there is no room for complacency. We agree that **there should be reinforced private and public investment and supportive policy-making to protect the UK education sector’s global position.**⁵⁴⁸

Scholarships and scholars—nurturing the two-way flow

207. The UK has a number of national scholarships programmes designed to help “build a strong, international network of friends of the UK who will rise to increasingly influential positions over the years”.⁵⁴⁹ Chevening scholarships, run by the FCO, are offered to 118 countries; Marshall scholarships, also awarded by the FCO, are available to US citizens; and Commonwealth scholarships are provided by DFID, BIS and the Scottish Government to Commonwealth countries. The Government called these scholarships “key features of British soft power diplomacy” because they exposed students to “British values, culture and diversity”. The Chevening scholarships, for example, have resulted in an “influential alumni network” of 42,000 students, with large alumni communities in China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Russia and South Korea; the Government intends significantly to expand the Chevening programme, particularly in emerging powers.⁵⁵⁰
208. The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) described how a survey of Commonwealth scholarship alumni found that 45 per cent of respondents had influenced government thinking in specific policy areas, and 25 per cent had held public office.⁵⁵¹ A 2012 survey of Marshall scholarship alumni had found that 18 per cent of respondents had held a political or public-related post. Scholarship alumni seemed to have a willingness to maintain their connections with the UK, with 45 per cent of Marshall scholarship survey respondents having made a donation to or financial investment in a UK institution.⁵⁵² ACU suggested that British Embassies

⁵⁴⁴ David Blackie.

⁵⁴⁵ See The Commonwealth of Learning website at: <http://www.col.org>.

⁵⁴⁶ Exporting Education UK.

⁵⁴⁷ Asia House.

⁵⁴⁸ UUK and IU.

⁵⁴⁹ Government written evidence.

⁵⁵⁰ Government written evidence.

⁵⁵¹ Association of Commonwealth Universities; see also Tara Sonenshine, Q360.

⁵⁵² Association of Commonwealth Universities.

were now equipped with better information on alumni.⁵⁵³ Hugo Swire MP hailed as crucial such moves to keep in touch with alumni and “bind them in”. He said that alumni “rise up in whatever sector of society—civil society, politics, sport or business—and you have them, so you need to keep them”.⁵⁵⁴ He also declared that he wanted “dramatically” to increase the number of Chevening scholarships, which have declined in recent years, to pre-2010 levels by bringing in more private funding.⁵⁵⁵

209. We were told that total Government investment in these scholarships is about £42 million per annum to support around 2,500 individuals—lower than countries such as Australia (AUD 334.2 million in 2012), France (€86 million in 2009), and Germany (with 17,674 individuals supported in 2011).⁵⁵⁶ Given that the UK cannot hope to compete with countries such as China, which is using vast resources to promote the study of Chinese language and culture (including by currently hosting 12,000 African students), the UK could act more strategically when offering education opportunities to potential future leaders.⁵⁵⁷ In 2011, 27 of the serving Heads of State from around the world had studied in the UK.⁵⁵⁸ **The FCO could sustain the important connections formed through education by working with universities and schools to scope out opportunities for the establishment of overseas campuses, and by funding new and targeted scholarships in key growth areas such as Africa.**⁵⁵⁹ Such an approach would help to “build up trust and influence and secure our market position in the ‘African lion’ economies of the 21st century”.⁵⁶⁰ **The Government should ensure that the Chevening, Commonwealth and Marshall awards offer a coherent package of engagement with the UK and its Embassies during the period of the scholarship and afterwards.**⁵⁶¹ We therefore strongly support Hugo Swire MP’s proposals to establish a coherent database of the career trajectory of scholarship recipients, and develop branded ties and scarves for alumni to reinforce the feeling of a community with a particularly close connection to the UK.⁵⁶²
210. Jonathan McClory felt that reducing funding for Chevening scholarships had been a serious error.⁵⁶³ **While we are pleased to hear that “the Chevening cuts are in the process of being reversed”, this is the minimum that the Government should do.**⁵⁶⁴ **Greater investment in**

⁵⁵³ Association of Commonwealth Universities.

⁵⁵⁴ Q373.

⁵⁵⁵ Q373.

⁵⁵⁶ Association of Commonwealth Universities.

⁵⁵⁷ British Council; British Council supplementary written evidence; Centre for World Cinemas, University of Leeds and B-Film: The Birmingham Centre for Film Studies; Ingenious Media; VisitBritain; Indra Adnan; British Academy; John Micklethwait, Q27; Lord Williams of Baglan, Professor Cox, Q30; Sir Martin Davidson, Q74, Q75.

⁵⁵⁸ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁵⁵⁹ Sir Martin Davidson Q76, Q89.

⁵⁶⁰ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁵⁶¹ See Association of Commonwealth Universities.

⁵⁶² Q373.

⁵⁶³ Q209. The Foreign Secretary, Rt Hon William Hague MP, committed in 2010 to cutting £10 million from the FCO’s programme of scholarships for the 2010–11 financial year. HC Deb, 29 Jun 2010, col 37WS, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm100629/wmstext/100629m0001.htm>.

⁵⁶⁴ Durham Global Security Institute; Jonathan McClory, Q209.

scholarships by other countries is threatening the UK's competitive position. The Committee feels that a relatively small amount of extra funding would bring the country into line to ensure that the brightest and best of the world's future leaders feel an affinity with the UK.

211. Lastly, we heard that in 2010, only around 23,000 UK students were studying for a degree abroad. This represented just 0.9 per cent of students, although the figure does not include those studying overseas for periods of less than one academic year, such as the 12,833 UK students who were taking part in study abroad as part of the EU's Erasmus student exchange scheme, or who were on a work placement. We heard from UUK and IU that the Government's industrial strategy on international education⁵⁶⁵ recognised the need to encourage such interactions through the development of an Outward Mobility Strategy to promote study and work abroad to UK students as part of their study programmes. "In order to maximise the soft power created through these interactions, full commitment to the aims of the strategy is needed from across government and the sector", UUK and IU argued.⁵⁶⁶ **We agree that study abroad provides soft power benefits to the UK, and that the Government should work with universities to increase the number of students who are studying in other countries.**

Working together: research collaboration

212. Academic and scientific collaboration represents one of the most effective forms of diplomacy, according to the ACU.⁵⁶⁷ Research is a global, rather than a national, undertaking: strong links with researchers around the world are essential for maintaining the UK's internationally renowned research base and the pull of its education sector.⁵⁶⁸ Research cooperation exposes researchers (academic, commercial or government) to like-minded people from other cultures, building trust and personal networks that can reinforce bilateral relationships, as well as facilitating knowledge transfer.⁵⁶⁹
213. Research Councils UK has established offices in China, the US and India.⁵⁷⁰ As part of the UK India Education and Research Initiative, the UK has set up over 600 new education and research partnerships with India since 2011.⁵⁷¹ UUK and IU told us that, as well as building relationships, collaboration is likely to have positive results for research impact, creating a virtuous circle that boosts the UK's research reputation, attracting further collaboration.⁵⁷²

⁵⁶⁵ See HM Government (2013) *International Education: Global Growth and Prosperity*, July, http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/229844/bis-13-1081-international-education-global-growth-and-prosperity.pdf.

⁵⁶⁶ UUK and IU.

⁵⁶⁷ Association of Commonwealth Universities.

⁵⁶⁸ British Academy.

⁵⁶⁹ Dr Robin Niblett; Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University.

⁵⁷⁰ Research Councils UK.

⁵⁷¹ Government written evidence.

⁵⁷² UUK and IU: "Forty-six per cent of UK-authored academic papers are co-authored with at least one non-UK researcher. This figure is higher than any of our major international competitors, bar France. Such international collaboration in research has a positive impact on the citation rate for that research. Internationally co-authored papers have a two-fold increase in citations compared to papers co-authored within an institution, significantly higher than the 1.4-fold increase seen for papers co-authored between researchers within one country".

214. Research from UK universities and research institutes aids the country's understanding of other societies and cultures, and cultivates the UK's reputation for openness. The Arts and Humanities Research Council and British Academy have supported 'area studies' research centres focused on China, the Arab world, eastern Europe, Russia and east Asia.⁵⁷³
215. UK universities also make an important contribution to the UK's soft power through their "reputation for quality, authority and expertise", according to Research Councils UK.⁵⁷⁴ Publications such as the *British Medical Journal*, *The Lancet* and *Nature* have contributed to the reputation of British science, as have respected institutions such as the Royal Societies and individuals like Sir Isaac Newton and Charles Darwin.⁵⁷⁵ The UK punches well above its weight in science: with one per cent of the world's population, the UK provides three per cent of global funding for research, 7.9 per cent of the world's scientific papers, 11.8 per cent of global citations, and 14.4 per cent of the world's most highly cited papers.⁵⁷⁶
216. Scientific cooperation can improve relations between countries and regions, making diplomacy easier. BIS has worked to bring its peer-review standards for research funding allocation to China and the Brazilian state of São Paulo to enable more joint research, using the UK's relationships and reputation in science and higher education to exert influence and change others' behaviour in a way that, they claimed, benefits both those countries and the UK.⁵⁷⁷ Scientific cooperation agreements can serve as symbols of international unity during trying periods. Such agreements include those between the US and China and the USSR during the Cold War. Institutions such as CERN (the European Organization for Nuclear Research) and the International Space Station foster and embody international cooperation; international agreements on science funding such as the EU's Horizon 2020 (with an €80 billion budget) also bring governments together.⁵⁷⁸ The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global Health argued that the UK's strong reputation in life sciences creates a level of prestige that "attracts further investment and talent and creates opportunities for significant political and commercial influence". For instance, the NHS's Moorfields Eye Hospital has a branch in Dubai's 'Healthcare City', which generated a profit of £390,000 between 2012 and 13.⁵⁷⁹
217. But the Royal Society argued that in several ways, the UK is failing to make the most of this potential. We suggest that **the Government should consider greater integration of science within their foreign policy strategy, objectives and formulation.**⁵⁸⁰ **For example, they should identify the ways in which science can inform diplomacy. The Government should also put considerable effort into assuming leadership roles in multilateral efforts to address science-related policy problems. To strengthen links between British scientists and**

⁵⁷³ Research Councils UK.

⁵⁷⁴ Research Councils UK.

⁵⁷⁵ Research Councils UK.

⁵⁷⁶ Royal Society.

⁵⁷⁷ Maddalaine Ansell (Head of the International Knowledge and Innovation Unit (Global), BIS), Q6.

⁵⁷⁸ Royal Society.

⁵⁷⁹ APPG on Global Health.

⁵⁸⁰ Royal Society.

their counterparts overseas, the Government should provide particular diplomatic assistance to scientists working in regions with weak governance. They should work to ensure that security concerns around nuclear physics and microbiology, for example, do not entirely limit progress or international cooperation in these areas. British Embassies should also more actively communicate scientific initiatives, and the FCO should give training in science policy to diplomatic staff.⁵⁸¹

English, language teaching and the UK's connectivity

218. English is “a critical element in the soft power of the UK” because of the unfettered access to the vast majority of the UK’s cultural assets afforded to overseas English speakers.⁵⁸² Most of the UK’s cultural outputs, such as its literature, music, films and television programmes, are accessible to a huge audience, creating opportunities for people to develop a relationship with the UK.⁵⁸³
219. The British Council told us that the long-term economic benefit to the UK of the English language has been estimated at £405 billion.⁵⁸⁴ The Lord Mayor of London considered that English is “the international language of finance”, maintaining London and New York’s position at the heart of the financial world.⁵⁸⁵ English is the universal language of global contractual business, putting British businesses at an advantage in networking, communicating and negotiating.⁵⁸⁶ Stephen Pattison of ARM Holdings felt that it was a “hugely beneficial advantage” to his firm to be able to operate in English all over the world.⁵⁸⁷ Nick Baird of UKTI also listed English as “a major comparative advantage”, and told us that UKTI’s research showed that the language was a big element in attracting inward investment.⁵⁸⁸ We also noted reports that growing numbers of major international businesses outside the Anglophone world are making English their official language, not least because it provides better global access, and—because English does not employ the status distinctions that characterise many Asian languages—it is said to encourage free and more innovative modes of thinking and operating.⁵⁸⁹
220. According to the British Council, 1.5 billion people around the world are currently learning English, and many look to the UK to provide them with teachers.⁵⁹⁰ Around 500,000 people globally learn English at the British Council’s teaching centres in 60 countries, and it reaches hundreds of millions more through websites, MP3 players, radio, television and social

⁵⁸¹ Royal Society.

⁵⁸² British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁵⁸³ Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK.

⁵⁸⁴ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁵⁸⁵ Q236.

⁵⁸⁶ Richard Scudamore, Q285; Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK.

⁵⁸⁷ Q219.

⁵⁸⁸ Q117; British Council.

⁵⁸⁹ ‘A Growing Number of Firms Worldwide are Adopting English as their Official Language’, *The Economist* (2014) 15 February, p61.

⁵⁹⁰ British Council supplementary written evidence; Sir Martin Davidson, Q63.

media.⁵⁹¹ The Council wrote that “Nothing builds trust more effectively or is wanted more consistently from the UK worldwide, than our expertise and help in the English language”.⁵⁹² The Council uses its English-teaching expertise to “open up” relationships with overseas Ministries of Education, enabling it “to work across state education sectors improving quality and building capacity in teaching, teacher training, curriculum development, assessment and other areas”, such as improving classroom teaching and teacher development in Borneo.⁵⁹³ The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills in 2011 estimated the value of the English language teaching industry annually to be worth £2.3 billion to the British economy.⁵⁹⁴ Nick Baird noted that the global opportunities for UK English language providers are huge and growing exponentially.⁵⁹⁵

221. One of the main reasons that international students are attracted to the UK’s schools and universities is because of their familiarity with the English language.⁵⁹⁶ The British Council manages and distributes UK-based examinations, providing annual export earnings of over £70 million to UK examination boards and professional bodies, and accredits over 550 UK schools, colleges and universities as providers of quality English language learning throughout the world.⁵⁹⁷ It brokers opportunities for the UK English language-teaching sector, arranges seminars on market opportunities, and publishes market reports.⁵⁹⁸ In developing and emerging economies, the British Council have used DFID funding to deliver training for 1,650 teacher training college tutors in Tanzania; and have partnered with Intel to provide English language learning materials on 100 million computers by 2020.⁵⁹⁹ The Council has initiated a programme to train 10,000 English teachers a year in partnership with Burma (Myanmar)’s Ministry of Education, and undertaken to train hundreds of Kazakhstani teachers in the UK each year.⁶⁰⁰
222. Gillespie and Webb cited the “pedagogic rigour and conduct of British Council exams” as demonstrating the UK’s commitment to the values that it wishes to promote.⁶⁰¹ Yet Research Councils UK told us that the providers of international examinations in British English faced stiff competition from alternative programmes in the US: “As the influence of American English grows, pressure is created on the UK [English language teaching] industry”. If the most popular examinations slant towards one variety of English, so will the teaching materials. This pressure is intensified both by the soft power of the US, and by the funding granted to research into language teaching and testing in the US.⁶⁰² Durham Global Security Institute reported that the British Council’s funding cuts—of £150 million, or 26 per cent of its grant

⁵⁹¹ British Council further supplementary written evidence.

⁵⁹² British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁵⁹³ British Council further supplementary written evidence.

⁵⁹⁴ Research Councils UK.

⁵⁹⁵ Q117.

⁵⁹⁶ British Council.

⁵⁹⁷ British Council further supplementary written evidence.

⁵⁹⁸ British Council further supplementary written evidence. The Council added “for example, our work has helped to double the business for Cambridge International Exams in Nigeria”.

⁵⁹⁹ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁶⁰⁰ British Council supplementary written evidence; Government written evidence.

⁶⁰¹ Gillespie and Webb.

⁶⁰² Research Councils UK.

income between 2010 and 2015⁶⁰³—will not help its efforts to promote English teaching. They said that “Cuts to the British Council and to the BBC [see below], both of which promote not just English, but also an understanding of British culture, history and policies, should be reversed if we aim to harness this soft power more effectively”.⁶⁰⁴ Jonathan McClory argued that cutting funding for the British Council was “a big mistake”.⁶⁰⁵

223. **The Committee is concerned that the Government are not supporting the teaching of British English as well as they might. The Government must ensure that the British Council is properly resourced.** The Committee recognises that its charitable status means that the British Council has to be selective about working with private education providers; we heard some complaints about how the British Council seems to compete with British businesses.⁶⁰⁶ **In order to ensure that its position does not disadvantage private-sector education providers, the Government should require the British Council to provide in its annual report a much more detailed appraisal of the work that it has done to support private sector British English education across the world.**⁶⁰⁷
224. Peter Callaghan told us that the UK “bridges the gap between the European world and other parts of the world” including Africa, North America and Asia.⁶⁰⁸ The UK’s convenient time zone, between the Far East and the Americas, adds to the strength of the UK’s services sector, and its financial centre in particular.⁶⁰⁹ The UK is able to do business and communicate with the world “on a global basis, where everything takes place eight hours before or eight hours after us”, as Richard Scudamore put it; this also helps live broadcasting of the UK’s sports and other events.⁶¹⁰ But the UK must not be complacent: London’s temporal advantage is shared by Frankfurt, Paris and Luxembourg.⁶¹¹
225. **The UK’s capacity to build connections is constrained by the small number of its citizens who are able to speak foreign languages.** The UK and its people cannot solely rely on English. Globally, one in four people might speak English, but three in every four do not.⁶¹² A lack of foreign language skills could diminish British people’s openness to cultural engagement, and creates the perception overseas that the country is unwelcoming. According to the Education and Employers Task Force, the loss of business as a result of poor language competency is costing the UK £7.3 billion per year, or 0.5 per cent of GDP.⁶¹³ **Given the transition**

⁶⁰³ House of Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee, *FCO Performances and Finances 2011–12* (5th Report, Session 2012–13, HC Paper 690), <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmfaaff/690/69012.htm>.

⁶⁰⁴ Durham Global Security Institute.

⁶⁰⁵ Q209.

⁶⁰⁶ British Council further supplementary written evidence; David Blackie; Levant Education Consulting.

⁶⁰⁷ See David Blackie; British Council supplementary written evidence. See British Council, ‘Annual Report, 2012–13’, <http://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/britishcouncil.uk2/files/annual-report-2012-13.pdf>.

⁶⁰⁸ Q94.

⁶⁰⁹ British Council supplementary written evidence; Dr Robin Niblett; Sir Roger Gifford, Q236.

⁶¹⁰ Q285.

⁶¹¹ Sir Roger Gifford, Q236.

⁶¹² British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁶¹³ British Council supplementary written evidence.

towards a more people-to-people, reciprocal form of international relations, remaining mono-lingual goes against the grain of how influence and engagement, and therefore power, now operate. Indeed, businesses in nine key economies (including India, China and Brazil) have said that they place a high value on intercultural and language skills.⁶¹⁴

226. **We therefore urge the Government to make every effort to redress the decline in language learning in UK schools and universities. The Government could also provide increased support for study-abroad programmes,** for instance by extending the British Council's Generation UK programme, which aims to enable 15,000 young people to undertake a fully funded study or work placement in China by 2016. The British Council plans to extend the scheme to India as well.⁶¹⁵

Visa and immigration policies and their impact on the UK's power and influence

227. The UK necessarily has visa and immigration regimes to regulate the ability of foreign nationals to come to the UK to live, to work, to learn, or as tourists. However the Government should be wary of introducing policies that, however inadvertently, undermine the attractiveness of the UK as a place to do business with; visit; and study, carry out research and learn English in. **In almost every one of our evidence sessions, witnesses told us that the Government's new visa policies⁶¹⁶ were harming the assets that build the UK's soft power.**⁶¹⁷ John Micklethwait was scathing about how these policies have affected UK commerce. He told us:

"I think that visas are just a crime ... It is economically suicidal. It is possibly one of the most bananas policies we could humanly have. All you need to do is to talk to businesspeople or, indeed, students in any other country who want to come and spend money here. ... It is completely useless in terms of recruiting people. You look at something like the recent visa kerfuffle in Brazil. We have just spent a huge amount of money sending government Ministers out there.⁶¹⁸ We then made it virtually impossible for Brazilians to come here, and whatever small plus

⁶¹⁴ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁶¹⁵ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁶¹⁶ The changes included a cap (of 21,700 in 2011) on the number of economic migrants from outside the EU, with the aim of bringing net migration down to 100,000 people a year by 2015; a tightening of the points-based system for skilled workers including a requirement that immigrants have a job offer and minimum salary; reforms to family visas including minimum income levels for those sponsoring a family member and a requirement that the family member speak English; and a review of student visas designed to prevent abuse of the student visa system, including a tighter inspection system for sponsoring colleges, and the requirement that students find a job with a minimum salary of £20,000 should they wish to stay in the UK after completing their studies. See Rt Hon Theresa May MP (2012) 'An Immigration System that Works in the National Interest', 12 December, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/home-secretary-speech-on-an-immigration-system-that-works-in-the-national-interest>.

⁶¹⁷ See, for example, Keith Nichol, Maddalaine Ansell, Q16; Professor Cox, Q30; John Micklethwait, Q31, Q35, Q39, Q41; Lord Williams of Baglan, Q32, Q38; Sir Martin Davidson, Q83; Sir Martin Davidson, Dr Jonathan Williams, Q89; Uday Dholakia, Q107; Peter Callaghan, Uday Dholakia, Q115; Ian Birrell, Q129, Q132, Q143, Q144; Sir John Major, Q357.

⁶¹⁸ See BBC News (2013) 'UK puts Brazil Visitor Visa Crackdown on Hold', 13 March, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-21759744>.

point there was with all the money going to Brazil was completely wiped out overnight”.⁶¹⁹

228. John Dickie, Strategy and Policy Director of London First, was in agreement about the damage being done to the UK’s trade: “We have seen something like 30 changes to the Immigration Rules since 2010 that make it very difficult for slightly smaller businesses to plan how they are going to bring highly skilled people in from abroad”.⁶²⁰ The Government should take into account the damaging impact that “unnecessarily complicated visa systems” can have on the success of the UK’s creative industries’ plans to do business with other countries.⁶²¹ While recognising the real complexity of the problems inherent in the handling of visa and immigration issues—and that completely unregulated immigration would be likely to have a detrimental effect on social cohesion, and therefore damage the UK’s image abroad—we **call on the Government to present and communicate their visa and immigration policies with a level of balance and in a tone that do not discourage those who would add to the UK’s prosperity from coming to the UK and supporting its businesses and trade. We do not believe that this is always the case at present.**
229. Likewise, we concur with VisitBritain that Government policy can enhance tourism by providing an efficient and intelligible system of visas and border controls. VisitBritain told us that: “with around 1.7 million visit visas issued each year it is important to have a high quality visa service enabling legitimate travellers to come to the UK. Almost £1 in every £6 spent in Britain by overseas residents is from those who require a visa to visit”.⁶²² We note the concerns raised by the UK China Visa Alliance about the difficulty for potential tourists in obtaining UK visas in a key market, China, and, like them, **we welcome the Government’s announcement that they intend to make UK visas more attractive to Chinese visitors** by putting in place a joint application form for UK and Schengen visas, and to improve visa access for citizens of some Gulf states.⁶²³ This should help to increase Chinese visitor numbers, as tourists from that country will more easily be able to visit the EU and UK on the same trip.⁶²⁴ **We now urge the Government to improve visa application processes—including access to visa processing facilities—for other key growth areas such as India and other Commonwealth nations, and to keep a close eye on competitors’ visa policies.** France, for example, has recently introduced a 48-hour fast-track visa application service for visitors from China.⁶²⁵ **The Government must make every effort to ensure that legitimate tourists can access UK visas quickly, easily and cheaply, as they contribute so much to both the UK’s economy and the UK’s international standing.**

⁶¹⁹ Q31.

⁶²⁰ Q246.

⁶²¹ Walpole British Luxury; National Museum Directors’ Council.

⁶²² VisitBritain; see also Sir Martin Davidson, Dr Jonathan Williams, Q89.

⁶²³ British Embassy Doha (2013) New Visa Waiver Scheme for Qatar, Oman, the UAE and Kuwait, 12 November, <https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/new-visa-waiver-scheme-for-qatar-oman-the-uae-and-kuwait>.

⁶²⁴ UK China Visa Alliance; UK China Visa Alliance supplementary written evidence; Graham Mather, Q167.

⁶²⁵ London First (2014) ‘France’s Fast-Track Chinese Visa is Direct Challenge to London’, 16 January, <http://londonfirst.co.uk/frances-fast-track-chinese-visa-is-direct-challenge-to-london/>.

230. The UK's "overall growth in international student numbers of 4,570 in 2011–12 is tiny compared to recent US figures of a growth of 41,000 students over the same period", we were told by the British Council.⁶²⁶ The UK is the second most popular destination for Indian nationals looking to study overseas, but since 2011 it has seen a 20 per cent drop in the number of students coming from India. Recently published Higher Education Statistics Agency figures suggested that the number of Indian first-year students beginning courses in the academic year 2012–13 fell by 25 per cent, following a 32 per cent drop the previous academic year, while the number of non-EU students entering UK universities fell by one per cent over the same period, the first such decline ever recorded.⁶²⁷ UUK and IU were concerned that the downturn followed years of strong growth. They warned that the trend was "significantly below" that required for the 15–20 per cent increase in international student numbers over the next five years that the Government's industrial strategy for international education considers "realistic".⁶²⁸
231. The evidence that the Committee received was emphatic that these falls in student numbers were due to UK visa policies and visa administration. Lord Williams of Baglan suggested that while "Universities are such a critical part of this country's infrastructure, nationally and internationally ... this cannot be sustained with the present visa regime. People will eventually go to their second and third choices if they cannot get in".⁶²⁹ Professor Riordan told the Committee that:
- "the changes to the visa regime since 2010 have had a distinct effect, in that our student numbers from overseas have been growing strongly for 16 years but this year⁶³⁰ have dipped by 0.4 per cent. We could have expected growth rates of five per cent, 10 per cent, 15 per cent or even higher, which our rivals are enjoying at the moment. There are a couple of specific reasons for that, such as the increased cost of visas and the complexity of getting a visa to come here".⁶³¹
232. Richard Dowden wrote that "In many countries in Africa would-be students have to spend over £1,000 to travel to another country to buy a visa to the UK".⁶³² We also heard that international applications to UK private schools have suffered as a result of visa restrictions: the Independent Schools Council told us that the UK's "stringent immigration laws" are "making the UK seem like an unwelcoming country to overseas students".⁶³³

⁶²⁶ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁶²⁷ John Morgan (2014) 'Overseas Student Total Falls "For First Time" as Indian Numbers Collapse', *Times Higher Education*, 16 January, <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/overseas-student-total-falls-for-first-time-as-indian-numbers-collapse/2010576.article>.

⁶²⁸ UUK and IU.

⁶²⁹ Q32.

⁶³⁰ According to Professor Riordan, "This drop relates to the last year for which figures were available at the time of the [evidence] session (academic year 2011–12). It reflects figures for the number of non-EU new entrants to higher education in that year, as measured by the Higher Education Statistics Authority" (Q247).

⁶³¹ Q247.

⁶³² Richard Dowden.

⁶³³ Independent Schools Council.

233. We agree with Universities UK and the International Unit that international students “should not be caught up in efforts to reduce immigration. Visa procedures should be implemented in a way that is consistent with the government’s aim for a 15–20 per cent increase [in international student admissions] over the next five years”.⁶³⁴ We acknowledge the arguments made by the Home Office about why students should continue to be included in migration figures—that the United Nations’ “definition of net migration includes all migrants changing their place of residence for 12 months or more”; that the most recent figures available appear to show that 16 per cent of people given settlement in the UK in 2011 had arrived originally as students; and that competitors such as the US also count students as migrants.⁶³⁵
234. Yet we feel that counting students as part of overall migration figures is not only destructive of the UK’s attractiveness and international links, but is disingenuous. For example, the UN definition represents only one potential definition of net migration. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) does not include students in net migration figures until they have spent 36 months in a country. The House of Commons Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee recently concluded that “While [the UN definition] may be helpful in terms of national reporting of migration trends, it is a less helpful measure in respect of domestic immigration policy, as it has the potential to distort the true picture of net migration in the United Kingdom”.⁶³⁶ The same Committee Report found that “Australia, Canada, the United States and New Zealand have each reviewed their respective visa regimes for students in recent years to make their countries a more attractive study destination for the international student market. In the US, for example, while the US Census Bureau include students in their overall figures, the Department of Homeland Security excludes them for migration policy purposes, treating them like business visitors and tourists as ‘non-immigrant admissions’”. This is not quite the picture that the then Immigration Minister, Mark Harper MP, drew for us when he claimed that the US “count[s] [students] as migrants”.⁶³⁷
235. **We therefore believe that the Government should remove students from net migration targets, and publish data on how previous progress on migration targets would have looked had the Government not counted students in previous years. The Government must work harder to ensure that their efforts to cut migration by those who would not add to the UK’s wellbeing do not prevent those whose presence would further the UK’s domestic and international interests from seeing the UK as welcoming. We note that we are the sixth Select Committee to recommend in this Parliament that the Government remove international students from the net migration target, and that the Chairs of the other five Commons and Lords Committees to do so wrote to the Prime Minister in January 2013 to**

⁶³⁴ UUK and IU.

⁶³⁵ Government (Home Office) supplementary written evidence.

⁶³⁶ House of Commons Business, Innovation and Skills Committee, ‘Overseas Students and Net Migration’ (4th Report, Session 2012–13, HC Paper 425), <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmbis/425/425.pdf>, p10.

⁶³⁷ Q272.

stress their belief that this degree of consensus between committees of both Houses was unprecedented.⁶³⁸

236. We also heard evidence that UK academic institutions have been “put at a competitive disadvantage through a visa system that makes it more difficult to hire academic staff from overseas”. “Such appointees are (by definition) internationally mobile and highly sought after”, UUK and IU told us, “and are less likely to choose to work in the UK if they feel that they would be unwelcome”.⁶³⁹ Evidence suggested that the ability for cultural institutions such as museums to “invite leading artists, curators, researchers and administrators to visit and work with their institutions” was also affected by stringent visa policies.⁶⁴⁰ Again, **we urge the Government to consider the effects that their visa and immigration policies might have on the UK’s well-established reputation for academic and cultural cooperation.** We further propose that **the Government should acknowledge the effects that tighter visa regulations might have on UK scientists’ ability to undertake international research collaboration.** “Such policies shut out talented scientists, hinder opportunities to build scientific relations between countries, and often hold up progress in UK-based research”, the Royal Society told us.⁶⁴¹
237. As well as doing damage to the UK’s trade, tourism, international education industry and cross-border connections, a devastatingly large proportion of our witnesses told us that the messages about immigration recently sent out by the UK’s policies have undermined the country’s reputation for openness—and thereby injured yet another aspect of its soft power.⁶⁴² Uday Dholakia argued that the British are perceived “as being anti-investment, anti-business, anti-trade, with our regulations on visas and people coming into our universities”.⁶⁴³ Sir Martin Davidson told us that “You only have to look at how the Indian press reacted to the idea of a visa bond⁶⁴⁴ to see how extremely negative the overseas perceptions are of this country from the way

⁶³⁸ The Committees are: the House of Commons Select Committee on Home Affairs (*The Work of the UK Border Agency (December 2011–March 2012)*, 16 July 2012 and *The Work of the UK Border Agency (April–June 2012)*, 31 October 2012); the House of Commons Select Committee on Public Accounts (*Immigration: The Points Based System–Student Route*, 12 July 2012); the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology (*Higher Education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects*, 17 July 2012); House of Commons Select Committee on Business, Innovation and Skills (*Overseas Students and Net Migration*, 4 September 2012); the House of Lords European Union Sub-Committee F: Home Affairs, Health and Education (*The EU’s Global Approach to Migration and Mobility*, 18 December 2012). The letter to the Prime Minister of 30 January 2013 can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/business-innovation-and-skills/Letter%20to%20the%20PM%2020130130.pdf>.

⁶³⁹ UUK and IU.

⁶⁴⁰ Walpole British Luxury; National Museum Directors’ Council.

⁶⁴¹ Royal Society.

⁶⁴² Mary Rance, John Dickie, Q246; Professor Riordan, Q247; John Dickie, Q253; Mary Rance, Q254; Professor Rawnsley; UUK and IU; Walpole British Luxury; Agnès Poirier, Q214; Sir Martin Davidson, Q63, Q83; British Council; Professor Cox, Q30; John Micklethwait, Q31; Peter Callaghan, Uday Dholakia, Q115; Richard Scudamore, Q290; Keith Nichol, Maddalaine Ansell, Q16; HE Mr Carlos dos Santos, Q153.

⁶⁴³ Q107; see also UUK and IU.

⁶⁴⁴ The ‘visa bond’ was a planned ‘security bond’ for overseas visitors that the Home Office deemed to be at ‘high risk’ of remaining in the UK once their visas had expired. Under the scheme, visitors would have had to pay £3,000, to be returned to them at the end of their visit. See BBC News (2013) ‘Visitor Bond Scheme to be Scrapped by Government’, 3 November, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-24793092>.

that we deal with visa applications. I cannot think of any senior discussion I have had over the last couple of years that has not started from the position of visas”.⁶⁴⁵ Professor Riordan suggested that “a perception has been created in the overseas press that we are not open for business for students and we are not welcoming to them. Irrespective of the reality of that, those are the types of headlines that you see consistently in India, China and other areas around the world”.⁶⁴⁶ The British Council echoed that “the message being received overseas is that the UK is closed for business”.⁶⁴⁷ John Micklethwait told us that the UK’s visa policies were “bitterly resented”.⁶⁴⁸

238. The evidence we received regarding the impact of the UK’s immigration policies on its soft power showed that policy needs to be better coordinated between Departments. Jonathan McClory found that publics overseas receive “strangely conflicting messages around Britain being ‘open for business’ to the world, whilst at the same time delivering very heavy anti-immigration rhetoric”.⁶⁴⁹ He cited an example from October 2013, when a story that damaged the UK’s international reputation was picked up by global media: “on the front page of CNN’s news website the featured story was about the Home Office’s ‘racist’ vans ... a lot of people internationally would look at CNN.com and that was bang in the middle as the main-page story”.⁶⁵⁰ Indra Adnan noted that “Britain has become the home of many of the citizens of its former colonies” and was concerned that “Britain’s ambivalence about the value of its immigrants allows the default story to arise—that Britain’s interest in the globe was singular and selfish and holds no love of the world and its diversity at core”.⁶⁵¹

Soft power and diaspora communities

239. Diaspora communities living in the UK can contribute to British soft power. The Foreign Secretary, the Rt Hon William Hague MP, recently wrote that the UK is fortunate to have “links to almost every other nation on earth through our history and diverse society”.⁶⁵² Diasporas represent an important source of information about the UK to overseas communities. NABA claimed that “One of the most powerful inside tracks in terms of soft power for new markets rests among British citizens who have family, culture, religious, entertainment, arts, and trade and investment links with new markets. Tap into this synergy and [the] UK will have a powerful comparative advantage”.⁶⁵³
240. We heard from the Government how DFID is working with the UK’s Pakistani diaspora, including journalists, to increase awareness and understanding of UK aid to Pakistan and to identify areas for shared

⁶⁴⁵ Q83.

⁶⁴⁶ Q247.

⁶⁴⁷ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁶⁴⁸ Q31.

⁶⁴⁹ Jonathan McClory.

⁶⁵⁰ Q208. See BBC News (2013) “‘Go Home’ Vans: Liberty Targets Home Office Campaign”, 6 August, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-23589448>; Q208.

⁶⁵¹ Indra Adnan.

⁶⁵² Holden J. (2013) *Influence and Attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century*, for the British Council and Demos.

⁶⁵³ National Asian Business Association.

outreach activities to encourage support for development work. They described how senior DFID officials engage with community groups by attending diaspora outreach events in the UK, and told us that the Department is exploring further opportunities to increase diaspora support for development in Pakistan, for example through donations and volunteering.⁶⁵⁴

241. The BBC noted that it broadcasts to large diaspora community audiences in the UK, including 300,000 users of content in languages other than English. These readers, listeners or viewers may have considerable impact on political outcomes in other countries.⁶⁵⁵ Professor Annabelle Sreberny of the School of Oriental and African Studies considered that the more that these communities “feel ‘included in’ to British culture and feel that our media channels, our public debates and our policies support their everyday lives, the greater the likelihood that shared values of tolerance, empathy and understanding will flower and be ‘exported’ by these transnational communities”.⁶⁵⁶ Gillespie and Webb pointed out the important role played by “successive waves of exiled, refugee, dissident, migrant and transnational intellectuals and writers who have helped to establish and renew the BBC’s reputation”, arguing that “their diasporic voices and the intimacy they create with audiences in imparting trusted information and news is critical to the [BBC World Service’s] soft power”.⁶⁵⁷
242. Diaspora communities also act as a living embodiment of the country’s reputation for embracing diversity. The British Council underlined how “The UK population is widely regarded as diverse, tolerant and accepting of difference—vital attributes in a globally connected world”.⁶⁵⁸ Sir Martin Davidson stressed that “Our acceptance of difference, our tolerance of different views, our diversity: all are seen as important aspects of the way we organise our society”.⁶⁵⁹ John Micklethwait considered that “The fact that London is so cosmopolitan is another reason why people want to come to this country”.⁶⁶⁰ Gilly Lord told us that she “would love Britain to be known for its diversity ... the fact that we have this amazing multiethnic population, which should make us able to do business all over the world really successfully”.⁶⁶¹
243. NABA stated, however, that the BBC lacks non-executives or senior policy input from British Asian communities, and that between 2000 and 2010 the total proportion of black and minority ethnic people employed by BBC News rose from 8.2 per cent to only 9.7 per cent. In the same period, they said, only three people of colour reached senior management positions, out of 90 posts.⁶⁶² Data that we received from the FCO suggested that of its 159 British Ambassadors, High Commissioners, Heads of International

⁶⁵⁴ Government written evidence.

⁶⁵⁵ BBC.

⁶⁵⁶ Professor Sreberny.

⁶⁵⁷ Gillespie and Webb. The National Asian Business Association agreed that the British media were “key to utilising soft power and can boost trade links between the UK and abroad”.

⁶⁵⁸ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁶⁵⁹ Q63.

⁶⁶⁰ Q33.

⁶⁶¹ Q230.

⁶⁶² National Asian Business Association.

Organisations and Governors of Overseas Territories, 129 were male and just 30 (19 per cent) were female. Of FCO officers who made a voluntary declaration about their ethnicity, three per cent declared that they were from a BME (black and minority ethnic) background.⁶⁶³ **A focus on strengthening diversity in positions of influence is an important way to enhance the UK's reputation for being meritocratic and open.**⁶⁶⁴ **Any lack of diversity risks squandering any soft power benefits that might accrue if representatives of communities that are in the minority in the UK, but which link to huge and powerful communities beyond the UK's shores, were more visible in British institutions and media. We also believe that improving the UK's record on gender equality in the boardrooms and corridors of power is of utmost importance, and could add to the UK's reputation in regions where the role of women is expanding.**

244. Indra Adnan highlighted the opportunity that the UK has to “build on its identity as a global-centric nation: having moved out into the world in its past, it has now welcomed the world back into its own borders”.⁶⁶⁵ **Yet we feel that there is a real risk that anti-immigration rhetoric will lead immigrant communities in the UK to feel less welcome and less a part of the UK, with injurious consequences for the unity of the nation. This can only undermine the message of friendliness and diversity that the UK hopes to project.**

Culture, influence, soft power and trust

The British Council

245. Research commissioned by the British Council showed that those who had engaged in cultural activity with the UK had a higher level of trust in its people and Government than those who had not, with a particularly high level generated by Council-run cultural activities.⁶⁶⁶ The numbers of people whom the Council connect with on behalf of the UK are large: in 2012 it “reached” over 553 million people worldwide; attracted 12.7 million people to its exhibitions, fairs and festivals; and worked with 2.37 million examination candidates, 55.9 million website users and 143.8 million viewers, listeners and readers.⁶⁶⁷
246. Our witnesses were, overall, effusive in their praise for the British Council’s “leadership in promoting soft power”.⁶⁶⁸ It was described as “among the most important soft power assets of the UK”, a “brilliant” global soft power player, and “world class”.⁶⁶⁹ The Lord Mayor of London applauded the

⁶⁶³ Government (Rt Hon Hugo Swire MP, FCO), supplementary written evidence.

⁶⁶⁴ See Lord Jay of Ewelme, Q293.

⁶⁶⁵ Indra Adnan.

⁶⁶⁶ British Council supplementary written evidence; British Council (2012) *Trust Pays: How International Cultural Relationships Build Trust in the UK and Underpin the Success of the UK Economy*, <http://www.britishcouncil.org/trustresearch2012.pdf>, p3.

⁶⁶⁷ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁶⁶⁸ Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University; Jack Straw MP; Lord Hannay of Chiswick, Q305; Professor Riordan, Q257; HE Mr Kim Traavik, Q189.

⁶⁶⁹ Gillespie and Webb; Derek Wyatt; Sir Jeremy Greenstock.

Council for doing an excellent job, with UKTI, in “opening doors for British business”.⁶⁷⁰

247. The British Council sees itself as building international “trust” in the people and institutions of the UK, thereby supporting the country’s prosperity and security; connecting “millions of people and thousands of institutions” to the UK; encouraging people to visit, study in and do business with the UK; attracting future leaders to engage with the UK; and “sharing the UK’s most attractive assets: the English language, the arts, education and our ways of living and organising society”.⁶⁷¹ It promotes “a better understanding of British culture”.⁶⁷²
248. The British Council also provides global public goods. In Burma (Myanmar), a quarter of a million people use British Council libraries for uncensored access to the internet, enabling them to “experience UK and international culture and freedom of expression in a safe, open environment”.⁶⁷³ Maria Miller MP told us that during her trip to China in December 2013, she had met with human rights organisations and social enterprise organisations partly funded by the British Council.⁶⁷⁴ The Council works in Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Turkey and other high-growth countries; fragile and post-conflict states like Libya, South Sudan, Iraq and Afghanistan; “marginalised environments” like Burma (Myanmar) and Zimbabwe, where it builds “capacity and international connections for those who want access to the wider world”; and in Europe, the US, Japan, and the Commonwealth where it strives “to maintain, renew and enrich traditional ties”.⁶⁷⁵ It works with state and public education systems, and supports governance and economic development to strengthen societies.⁶⁷⁶
249. The Council adds to the UK’s international visibility and recognition: there are British Council offices in over 100 countries. According to Gillespie and Webb, the Council’s offices and libraries around the world “have been one of the most visible material markers of Britain abroad”.⁶⁷⁷

Cultural activity

250. The Foreign Secretary, the Rt Hon William Hague MP, wrote recently that the UK “remains a modern day cultural superpower”.⁶⁷⁸ The UK was ranked third in the world for cultural resources by the World Economic Forum in 2011.⁶⁷⁹ The international work of the country’s national and regional museums, galleries, libraries and collections contributes to the UK’s soft power by creating “channels of communication” and conveying “different perspectives which may not be achieved through more conventional forms of

⁶⁷⁰ Lord Mayor of London supplementary written evidence.

⁶⁷¹ British Council; British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁶⁷² Dr Robin Niblett.

⁶⁷³ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁶⁷⁴ Maria Miller MP, Q338.

⁶⁷⁵ British Council.

⁶⁷⁶ British Council.

⁶⁷⁷ British Council; Gillespie and Webb.

⁶⁷⁸ Holden J. (2013) *Influence and Attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century*, for the British Council and Demos.

⁶⁷⁹ National Museum Directors’ Council.

- diplomacy”.⁶⁸⁰ The pathways through which these impacts may arise include “Loans, academic study, acquisitions ... special exhibitions [and] staff exchanges”, all of which might underpin international connections.⁶⁸¹
251. For example in 2013 the British Council worked with the British Museum to tour the *Pompeii Live* exhibition to around 50 countries and over 1,000 cinemas.⁶⁸² In 2014, the UK/Russia Year of Culture will see a major *Cosmonauts* exhibition hosted at the Science Museum, made possible by partnerships with Russian museums and government bodies.⁶⁸³ The V&A recently toured two exhibitions to Moscow, while its partnership with the Kremlin Museums saw two Russian exhibitions brought to London.⁶⁸⁴ And the British Museum delivered a Leadership Training Programme for government museum and heritage professionals in India.⁶⁸⁵ All of these exhibitions and programmes involved substantial international cooperation, creating cross-border bonds.
252. Cultural bodies such as museums help to forge links between the UK and developing countries. The Scottish Government has funded collaborations between National Museums Scotland and the National Museum of Malawi, leading to exchanges of artefacts, staff, knowledge and skills training, while in April 2012 the V&A partnered with British Council Libya to mount the first exhibition in Benghazi following the revolution there.⁶⁸⁶ The British Museum worked on the long-term redevelopment of a museum in Basra as part of the post-conflict regeneration effort in Iraq.⁶⁸⁷ British cultural institutions are, in such ways, able to maintain relationships where diplomatic ties are weak or strained, or have been broken off.⁶⁸⁸ We heard that the 2005 British Museum exhibition *Forgotten Empire: the world of Ancient Persia* was the venue for the first contact between the British Government and the Ahmadinejad administration in Iran; the Museum’s loan of the Cyrus Cylinder to the national museum in Tehran “achieved a level of communication between the public sphere in [the UK] and Iran that is very, very difficult in other aspects of public life”.⁶⁸⁹
253. The British Museum claimed that its international work “helps to define Britain and its leading cultural organisations as both outward-looking and as facilitators of international dialogue and exchange”.⁶⁹⁰ According to the British Academy, culture can benefit the UK’s soft power in the long term by creating “perceptions of excellence, creativity and distinctiveness, leading to admiration and to some degree a desire to emulate”.⁶⁹¹
254. However, the National Museum Directors’ Council (NMDC) warned us that “An impact of the recent public funding cuts may be that, as the cuts

⁶⁸⁰ National Museum Directors’ Council.

⁶⁸¹ National Museum Directors’ Council.

⁶⁸² Sir Martin Davidson, Q88; Dr Jonathan Williams, Q88.

⁶⁸³ National Museum Directors’ Council.

⁶⁸⁴ National Museum Directors’ Council.

⁶⁸⁵ British Museum; Dr Jonathan Williams, Q82.

⁶⁸⁶ National Museum Directors’ Council.

⁶⁸⁷ National Museum Directors’ Council; British Museum.

⁶⁸⁸ British Museum; Dr Jonathan Williams, Q85.

⁶⁸⁹ British Museum; Jack Straw MP; Government written evidence.

⁶⁹⁰ British Museum.

⁶⁹¹ British Academy.

take effect, museums have to be more selective about the international work they undertake focusing more on less challenging or commercial activity".⁶⁹² The Museums Association found that between 2012 and 2013, 49 per cent of museums that responded to its survey had experienced cuts to their income.⁶⁹³ In 2013 DCMS announced a five per cent budget reduction for 2015–16.⁶⁹⁴ NMDC argued for more seed funding of cultural activities such as loans, academic study, acquisitions, peer support, special exhibitions, research, staff exchanges and maintenance of the permanent galleries.⁶⁹⁵

255. **The Committee acknowledges that in straitened economic times, the Government will have spending priorities other than the funding of the UK's cultural institutions. Yet now that the economy is returning to growth, we urge the Government to reconsider funding cuts to publicly subsidised collections. We suggest that the Government focus in particular on funding cultural exchanges with a demonstrable soft power value, along the lines of the Cyrus Cylinder tour to Iran.⁶⁹⁶ We further propose that the Government use GREAT Campaign funding and advertising resources to promote specific cultural activities that are likely to increase inbound tourism.⁶⁹⁷**

Creative industries

256. Beyond its historic collections, other UK cultural assets have a wide appeal that adds to the country's international recognition and reputation. International tours of the UK's orchestras and theatrical, opera and dance companies are highly popular, according to the British Council.⁶⁹⁸ The UK's architects, artists and designers are much in demand, with Lord Foster of Thames Bank, Dame Zaha Hadid, Thomas Heatherwick CBE and other leading figures transforming cityscapes and public spaces worldwide.⁶⁹⁹ The UK's influence in the world of fashion is also significant, with British designers playing leading roles in the great fashion houses.⁷⁰⁰ In most of the global creative content markets for music, film, TV, publishing and games, the UK is a major player.⁷⁰¹ The Bond film franchise and TV series *Downton Abbey* are enjoyed across the globe, while UK-based film-makers saw considerable success in the 2014 Academy Awards.⁷⁰² As Sir John Major pointed out to us, British albums top the charts in countries around the world, with global album sales of British artists taking a record 13.3 per cent

⁶⁹² National Museum Directors' Council.

⁶⁹³ Museums Association (2013) *Cuts Survey 2013*, October, <http://www.museumsassociation.org/download?id=1019920>.

⁶⁹⁴ DCMS (2013) *British Museum Spending Round Letter*, July, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210523/british-museum-letter.pdf.

⁶⁹⁵ National Museum Directors' Council.

⁶⁹⁶ Dr Jonathan Williams, Q85; Maria Miller MP, Q329; Government written evidence.

⁶⁹⁷ See National Museum Directors' Council.

⁶⁹⁸ British Council supplementary written evidence; Government written evidence; Humanitarian Intervention Centre; Sir John Major, Q343; Professor Sreberny.

⁶⁹⁹ British Council supplementary written evidence; Professor Sreberny.

⁷⁰⁰ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁷⁰¹ Ingenious Media.

⁷⁰² Sir John Major, Q343; Centre for World Cinemas, University of Leeds and B-Film: The Birmingham Centre for Film Studies.

of the worldwide total for 2012.⁷⁰³ The UK's creative industries boost the UK's profile everywhere, especially among the global middle class with its discretionary spending power, appetite for media and cultural content, and increasing social influence.⁷⁰⁴

257. The British Council suggested that “there has been a tendency for the UK to export its creativity rather than harness it—British ingenuity can be found at the heart of the success of Apple, Marvel and all the other [US] soft power pop culture powerhouses”.⁷⁰⁵ The Council noted that other countries offer significant government support to their cultural and creative industries. Through tax credits and other incentives, Hollywood “is more heavily subsidised than the UK's national arts institutions”, the Council claimed.⁷⁰⁶ French journalist Agnès Poirier explained to the Committee how the National Centre for Cinema “is an institution that works very well in France”. This is not because the Centre is “heavily subsidised”, she explained. It “does not rely on taxpayers; it does not rely on the state budget. It relies on regulations and on some taxes and levies; for instance, on every single cinema ticket sold”. She added that “TV broadcasters have to invest a percentage of their turnover, and the Centre manages the redistribution of those revenues. It has a budget of €700 million a year”. She concluded that “French cinema is one of France's big assets, but behind this there is policy” that “sustains an industry of 400,000 people in France, but [which] works on both an economic and artistic level”.⁷⁰⁷ In the UK, Peter Horrocks suggested that the Government could “create the conditions” for creativity.⁷⁰⁸ **We recommend that the Government should consider analysing tax incentives so that support for British creative industries is in line with the UK's competitors.**
258. Ingenious Media praised the British Council's Creative Economy Unit and Young Creative Entrepreneur programme, which “celebrates and connects emerging innovative and entrepreneurial leaders in the creative and cultural industries around the world”.⁷⁰⁹ Ingenious Media expressed disappointment that this Unit appeared to be under-resourced compared with the Council's more traditional activities.⁷¹⁰
259. **We welcome the British Council's efforts to nurture creative industries. Because of their role in developing the innovators of the future, we would also underline the importance of teaching design and technology in British schools. In order to promote a business environment in which the creative industries might thrive, we further recommend that the Government ensure a regulatory environment that encourages creative industries to headquarter in the UK.**⁷¹¹

⁷⁰³ Sir John Major, Q343; British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁷⁰⁴ Ingenious Media.

⁷⁰⁵ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁷⁰⁶ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁷⁰⁷ Q215.

⁷⁰⁸ Q90.

⁷⁰⁹ Ingenious Media; <http://creativeconomy.britishcouncil.org/creative-entrepreneurship/young-creative-entrepreneur-programme/>.

⁷¹⁰ Ingenious Media.

⁷¹¹ See Stephen Pattison, Q221.

Communications, soft power and the media

260. The BBC is, in its own words, “one of Britain’s leading global cultural assets”.⁷¹² It is able “to project positive values about the UK around the world, and enables the UK to accrue soft power, both geopolitically and economically” through providing global public goods.⁷¹³ These include “accurate, impartial objective journalism, free of national or commercial interest”, which contributes to “the most trusted objective international news services”.⁷¹⁴ Its work also enables “the open exchange of ideas, information, and values among nations and so helps to foster mutual understanding”.⁷¹⁵ **Given the diversity of the BBC’s international services⁷¹⁶, there is scope for a coordinated and cohesive approach.**
261. Gillespie and Webb argued that the work of the BBC World Service (BBCWS) was “absolutely vital” to the UK’s soft power, while Richard Dowden called the BBCWS “Britain’s strongest tool of soft power”.⁷¹⁷ According to Professor Rana Mitter (cited by the BBC), the World Service brand continues to be one of the best-known communications brands around the world—“No other international broadcaster comes close”.⁷¹⁸
262. We heard from the BBC that because of its independence, the corporation is consistently rated the most trusted and best-known international news provider.⁷¹⁹ In the view of Professor Ngairé Woods (cited by the BBC), its “incredible gift” was “impartial information—that is what people thirst for”.⁷²⁰ The BBC noted “a marked difference in the values that are projected by international media such as CCTV [China Central Television], Press TV [based in Tehran], Russia Today, Al Jazeera [based in Doha] and Al-Arabiya [based in Dubai] and those of the BBC”. But they warned how in African countries such as Kenya, Uganda, and Benin, BBC deals have been cancelled because of more lucrative offers from Voice of America, CCTV, and Deutsche Welle.⁷²¹
263. Dr Iginio Gagliardone of the University of Oxford argued that China’s expansion into the African media market forced “actors who have traditionally tried to exert their influence on a regional and global scale, such as the UK, to rethink their strategies of engagement with foreign audiences”.

⁷¹² BBC.

⁷¹³ BBC.

⁷¹⁴ BBC.

⁷¹⁵ BBC.

⁷¹⁶ The BBC’s international services include: the BBC World Service (“the world’s leading international multimedia broadcaster providing impartial news and analysis in English and 27 other languages”), which reaches 192 million people around the world; BBC World News, a commercially-funded TV channel; bbc.com, which alongside BBCNews.com delivers news, business, features and analysis, and which saw more than 1 billion page views in a single month in 2013; and BBC Worldwide, the BBC’s main commercial arm which develops brands and licenses merchandise, and operates TV and digital services including 44 channels available in over 406 million households across the world. The first three of these (the BBC World Service, BBC World News and bbc.com) together reach 170 countries, with a weekly audience of over a quarter of a billion people—one in every 28 people (BBC; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2013/global-audience-estimate.html>).

⁷¹⁷ Gillespie and Webb; Richard Dowden.

⁷¹⁸ BBC.

⁷¹⁹ BBC.

⁷²⁰ BBC.

⁷²¹ BBC.

This means that the BBC, for example, should “spell out its values more clearly, to further uphold the principles of impartiality and independent reporting that have gained it many fans all over the globe, and especially in Africa”. Dr Gagliardone proposed that the British Government should offer clearer guides to companies engaging in work related to media and communications abroad, preventing UK-based companies from engaging in activities that may be detrimental to freedom of expression and privacy (for example, selling software that can be used for filtering or monitoring content). “This will help countries such as the UK maintain a moral high ground and contribute to achieving the goals of liberty and equality they uphold”, he concluded.⁷²²

264. Providing such a public service creates reputational benefit for the UK. Kofi Annan has called the BBC “Britain’s greatest gift to the world”.⁷²³ Only one in six people live in a country with free media.⁷²⁴ In Egypt, the BBC’s audience quadrupled during the Arab Spring and has remained high, while during the wave of protests in Brazil in June 2013 BBC Brasil saw record figures for access to its digital content.⁷²⁵ In the same month, audiences for BBC Arabic hit 33 million, while figures for Persian TV rose 90 per cent in the preceding year “despite censorship, deliberate jamming of satellites and the continued harassment of BBC journalists”.⁷²⁶ The World Service plays a significant role in post-conflict and fragile states, the corporation said, by providing impartial and trusted news.⁷²⁷
265. Through its international development arm, BBC Media Action, and the BBC College of Journalism, the BBC supports capacity-building programmes for journalists and media organisations in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and parts of Eastern Europe. It set up Iraq’s only independent radio station providing public service broadcasting, and is now working with the state broadcaster of Burma (Myanmar) to improve its quality of content.⁷²⁸
266. Though it takes a specifically non-British approach to broadcasting and finds strength in its operational independence from Government, the values underpinning the BBC reflect, however indirectly, the values that people overseas associate with the UK. As such, the BBC projects a positive image of the UK to the rest of the world. Peter Horrocks reported that “we absolutely reflect British values, and British values of fairness and impartiality are absolutely the bedrock”.⁷²⁹ According to Professor Mitter the BBC’s content “positions Britain as a country which handles information in a sophisticated and productive way”.⁷³⁰ The BBC, along with the British Council, argued that its communication efforts with people overseas could maintain British connections and influence even when intergovernmental

⁷²² Dr Iginio Gagliardone.

⁷²³ Peter Horrocks, Q64.

⁷²⁴ BBC.

⁷²⁵ BBC.

⁷²⁶ BBC Media Centre (2013) *Record Audience Figures as Quarter of a Billion People Tune Into BBC’s Global News Services*, 25 June, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2013/global-audience-estimate.html>.

⁷²⁷ BBC.

⁷²⁸ BBC.

⁷²⁹ Q67.

⁷³⁰ BBC.

relations are strained.⁷³¹ Professor Mitter has said that “If Britain didn’t have the BBC World Service, it would want to create it”.⁷³² China and Russia, among other countries, are going to great lengths to create rival international media sources—an oblique acknowledgement of the BBC’s contribution to soft power.⁷³³

267. Despite these soft power benefits, the World Service has seen its funding cut by £2.2 million for the 2012–13 financial year.⁷³⁴ The FCO grant to the British Council was cut by 6.98 per cent in the 2011–12 financial year. Jonathan McClory described this as an example of Government actions that have a “negative” effect on soft power.⁷³⁵ We heard that the UK is disinvesting from the World Service just when rising powers are investing in international broadcasting and public diplomacy initiatives to project their strategic narratives onto a world stage.⁷³⁶ Professor Rawnsley asked why,

“At a time when governments around the world are expanding their international broadcasting—China in particular is engaged in an aggressive investment programme to expand its reach across the globe—the British are cutting back and closing language services ... To abandon such relationships in the mistaken belief that they are antiquated and no longer required in order to save money is a mistake”, he warned.⁷³⁷

268. Professor Nye cautioned that while “the BBC World Service has an extraordinary position in terms of credibility”, his impression was “that the new financial arrangements may mean that the BBC, and particularly the World Service, is going to be a little less well endowed and protected than it was in the past”.⁷³⁸ Yet if the World Service loses its status as a source trusted above other traditional media outlets—and above the free-for-all of social media—it will struggle to regain it in a media-saturated world.⁷³⁹ **While we understand that the BBC World Service’s budget has been protected in the move to licence-fee funding, we are concerned that this protection might be more difficult to maintain in the face of future budget pressures and challenges to the principle of the licence fee.**⁷⁴⁰ Based on the weight of the evidence that we have received, we are concerned that the Government are not currently doing enough to support the BBC World Service, and we urge the BBC and the Government to ensure between them that the BBC World Service’s budget is not reduced any further in real terms, and the opportunities for coordination across multiple platforms to deliver content are taken.

⁷³¹ BBC.

⁷³² BBC.

⁷³³ BBC.

⁷³⁴ See BBC News (2013) *BBC World Service in government funding cut*, 11 June. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-22853598>.

⁷³⁵ Q209.

⁷³⁶ Gillespie and Webb.

⁷³⁷ Professor Rawnsley.

⁷³⁸ Q176.

⁷³⁹ See Dr Daniel Arthur, International Policy Dynamics; Henry Jackson Society; Dr Robin Niblett; Lord Hannay of Chiswick.

⁷⁴⁰ BBC World Service (2013) *A Licence Fee Funded Service*, June, http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/consult/wsol/wsol_positioning.pdf, p11.

269. The long-term importance for the UK's soft power of sustaining the World Service in a crowded environment means that it may not be sufficient simply to rely on funding from the licence fee without reviewing other possibilities.⁷⁴¹ Sir John Major told the Committee that:

“the BBC World Service is a huge asset. People believe it and they listen to it, but, unfortunately, that is only about one in 30 people around the world. When you see the huge investment that has been made by other countries—China most obviously, but also there is America, and Al Jazeera and the Gulf—it would very much be in the British interest for the BBC World Service to be dramatically increased ... it can do good; it is doing good; it can do more good; it should and it needs funding to do it”.⁷⁴²

270. In evidence to us, Hugo Swire MP said: “Do I have an in-principle objection to the World Service taking on some kind of sponsorship of broadcasting? Inherently, no, I do not”. But he stressed that “it is not my call and these matters are best addressed to the Chairman of the BBC Trust”.⁷⁴³ **The Committee feels that the Government should consider a range of funding options for the BBC World Service—including drawing on commercial sources for income⁷⁴⁴—to ensure that its reach and influence do not diminish in a newly competitive global media market.**

271. **We stress that any reorganisation of the BBC World Service should be commercially self-sustaining, but that the suitability of any proposals must be judged against their potential to help or harm the global influence of the BBC World Service and the UK as a whole. Should the BBC Trust or the Government deem any commercialisation to be detrimental to the UK's influence, we urge the Government to seek other means of providing increased support to the World Service, perhaps from central taxation. However, we should never forget that the BBC's independence from Government is an essential part of its credibility, so that the case for more direct funding from Government is not always valid. The Government must avoid at all costs following the example of other states where nationally funded radio and TV stations (often resourced on a lavish scale) are seen as mere instruments of propaganda.**

272. The BBC Trust in December 2013 agreed that, following the transfer to licence-fee funding for the World Service, “funding through a grant from the Department for International Development for ‘democratic governance’ programmes (through BBC Media Action or directly) could continue”.⁷⁴⁵ **The Committee supports the use of DFID funding to assist the BBC's**

⁷⁴¹ Hugo Swire MP, Q380.

⁷⁴² Q357.

⁷⁴³ Q381.

⁷⁴⁴ On 18 December 2013, the BBC Trust agreed that, from 1 April 2014, “a limited amount of advertising and sponsored content that is not news and current affairs could be broadcast on BBC World Service” BBC Trust (2013) *Minutes of the BBC Trust Meeting*, 18 December, http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/about/minutes/2013/18_dec.pdf.

⁷⁴⁵ BBC Trust (2013) *Minutes of the BBC Trust Meeting*, 18 December, http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/about/minutes/2013/18_dec.pdf.

development work, and we urge further consideration of how this type of support can be expanded.⁷⁴⁶

273. Witnesses singled out two media outlets other than the BBC for their global reputation: the *Financial Times* and *The Economist*, which, according to Professor Cox, “have no significant competitors”.⁷⁴⁷ The Editor-in-Chief of *The Economist*, John Micklethwait, pointed out that with high-performance web connectivity and the rise of tablet computers, his subscribers—wherever in the world they were—could access *The Economist* in print, on a tablet, or in audio form.⁷⁴⁸ The *Financial Times* is available across the world on the day of publication and is “read with admiration” everywhere, according to Sir John Major.⁷⁴⁹
274. Professor Rawnsley highlighted the importance of press freedom. He argued that to maintain the UK’s soft power capacity, the Government needed to act responsibly, and according to the “principles and traditions of democracy, free speech, human rights, rule by law and transparency”. He felt that “Recent cases in which the government has been accused of violating privacy and press freedom undermine the UK’s soft power potential”, however.⁷⁵⁰

Sport and soft power

275. Sport has an almost universal appeal that crosses language and cultural barriers, which makes it, in the British Council’s eyes, “the most accessible and exportable of the UK’s soft power assets”.⁷⁵¹ The UK was the founder and codifier of many popular international sports.⁷⁵² Richard Scudamore, Chief Executive of the Premier League, told us that now that hyper-connected international audiences “can see everything, people choose to gravitate towards the best. We are lucky that we are producing the best. This has huge impact on how positive people feel about us”.⁷⁵³ UK Sport identified several mechanisms through which sport enhances the UK’s soft power: through UK athletes achieving world-class success, which showcases the UK as being able and willing to invest in its athletes, equipment, structures and expertise; through the UK influencing sport and sporting participation, including playing a leading role in shaping decisions taken by international sport organisations; and through hosting major sporting events in the UK.⁷⁵⁴
276. We heard how the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games showcased many attractive features of the UK, including cutting-edge technology; innovation in infrastructure; management and organisational skills; helpful volunteers; and enthusiastic audiences. The Games championed the rights of disabled people to participate as equals in society. And the opening and

⁷⁴⁶ The 2010 Spending Review placed a 16 per cent savings target on the World Service by April 2014 (when grant-in-aid funding comes to an end), amounting to an annual saving of £46 million.

⁷⁴⁷ Q39.

⁷⁴⁸ Q24.

⁷⁴⁹ Lord Williams of Baglan, Q28; Sir John Major, Q343.

⁷⁵⁰ Professor Rawnsley.

⁷⁵¹ British Council supplementary written evidence; Lord Moynihan, Q276.

⁷⁵² UK Sport.

⁷⁵³ Richard Scudamore, Q277.

⁷⁵⁴ UK Sport.

closing ceremonies displayed the best of the UK's creative and design industries.⁷⁵⁵ These aspects depicted the UK as “a nation that belongs alongside the other major countries on the world stage”.⁷⁵⁶

277. We received mixed evidence about the extent to which audiences overseas engaged with this depiction of the UK. UK Sport cited a recent study that explored international perceptions of 16 countries and their influence on the world before and after 2012: the UK saw the biggest increase in positive ratings, climbing to third place in the table.⁷⁵⁷ More than two thirds of users of the BBC's 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games website found that the BBC's coverage of the Games improved their perception of London and the UK, with more than 80 per cent of them saying they were interested in visiting London or the UK as a result, we were told.⁷⁵⁸
278. However, Professor Anholt concluded that the Games did not improve the country's reputation internationally, because the UK's reputation “was already just about as good as it could be”, and the Games were not capable of causing the UK to be “even temporarily more highly regarded than the United States”.⁷⁵⁹ Attitudes to countries are also deeply ingrained: the more familiar something is, the more difficult it is for attitudes towards it to shift.⁷⁶⁰ But according to Professor Anholt, hosting the Games was “certainly a good thing for us to do”, because “a reputation is not something you own but something you rent, and that rent must continue to be paid”. By regularly carrying out operations such as hosting the Games, he said, the UK pays its “rent” and teaches the populations of emerging economies who are less familiar with the UK “that Britain is a rather special place and they should know something about it”.⁷⁶¹
279. UK sporting, transport and security experts are now working alongside authorities in the next summer Games host nation, Brazil, and over 37 UK firms have won a total of £130 million through 62 sports contracts there.⁷⁶² A House of Lords Select Committee recently concluded that the UK can now “develop further its expertise and its reputation for delivering major events and providing a whole host of related services”.⁷⁶³ The Minister for Business and Enterprise at BIS, the Rt Hon Michael Fallon MP, told us that the delivery of the 2012 Games had “opened almost every door” in Brazil.⁷⁶⁴ Maria Miller MP reported that the Games had contributed to an increase in British inbound tourism.⁷⁶⁵

⁷⁵⁵ Richard Scudamore, Q284; Centre for World Cinemas, University of Leeds and B-Film: The Birmingham Centre for Film Studies; Professor Cox, Q40; Ingenious Media; PACT.

⁷⁵⁶ UK Sport; Government written evidence; VisitBritain.

⁷⁵⁷ UK Sport; BBC (2013) BBC poll: *Germany most popular country in the world*, 23 May, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22624104>.

⁷⁵⁸ BBC.

⁷⁵⁹ Q205.

⁷⁶⁰ Professor Anholt supplementary written evidence.

⁷⁶¹ Q205.

⁷⁶² Government written evidence.

⁷⁶³ House of Lords Select Committee on Olympic and Paralympic Legacy, *Keeping the Flame Alive: the Olympic and Paralympic Legacy* (Report of Session 2013–14, HL Paper 78), <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldselect/ldolympic/78/78.pdf>, p54.

⁷⁶⁴ Q334.

⁷⁶⁵ Q341.

280. Elite British sportsmen and women often have huge global followings, according to the British Council, enhancing the UK's recognition around the world.⁷⁶⁶ While the UK is closely associated with Wimbledon, the British Open, Formula 1 (where eight of the 11 teams are based in the UK) and cricket, the global following of the Premier League in particular is "staggering".⁷⁶⁷ Richard Scudamore told us that many surveys rank the Premier League alongside the monarchy and the BBC as "the most admired British institutions and the institutions that make people feel better about the UK", and pointed out that the League was ranked the first such institution in India and China.⁷⁶⁸ The League broadcasts over 200,000 hours of coverage into 212 countries, generating £800 million per year in international revenue. Chelsea FC has supporters' club branches in Mongolia, Japan, Chile, Nigeria, Brazil, Singapore, Russia, Uzbekistan and Iran.⁷⁶⁹
281. Sport contributes to British commercial success in other ways. David Collier, Chief Executive of the England and Wales Cricket Board, described how including sporting teams on trade missions helped to open doors overseas, while Richard Scudamore argued that the League's involvement with such missions helped the Government "create a better feel, really, about the UK".⁷⁷⁰
282. The UK's international sport development has "provided the basis for friendly collaboration and ... generated good will towards the UK and its institutions".⁷⁷¹ The British Embassy in Kabul supported the development of Afghanistan's national football league to help reinforce a shared national identity, promote ties between communities and build Afghan confidence in the government and political process.⁷⁷² The Premier League has worked with police from Rio de Janeiro, Jakarta and Kolkata on social inclusion schemes. Richard Scudamore painted for us "A whole canvas ... where we think we are making a positive contribution to how people view the UK".⁷⁷³
283. **The soft power benefits originating from sport convince us that now the London Olympic and Paralympic Games have concluded, the UK should work to find a way to retain the "glow" attached to British sport institutions.**⁷⁷⁴ The Government should use the status and attractiveness that the UK gained in 2012 to exert influence in sport and beyond, but should recognise that maintaining any soft power gains won from the Games could be a long-term and costly exercise.⁷⁷⁵ UK Sport proposed that "There is a great opportunity for the FCO and UKTI to build on the relationships already established with Ministries of youth, sport, education and gender as well as with global fora, such as the Commonwealth Secretariat".⁷⁷⁶ The need to capitalise on this opportunity is particularly

⁷⁶⁶ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁷⁶⁷ British Council supplementary written evidence; Sir Martin Davidson, Q63; Richard Scudamore, Q277.

⁷⁶⁸ Q291.

⁷⁶⁹ Richard Scudamore, Q275, Q277; British Council supplementary written evidence; VisitBritain.

⁷⁷⁰ David Collier, Q274, Q282; Richard Scudamore, Q275.

⁷⁷¹ UK Sport; Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University.

⁷⁷² Government written evidence.

⁷⁷³ Q275.

⁷⁷⁴ UK Sport.

⁷⁷⁵ Professor Anholt, Q205; see also Professor Anholt supplementary written evidence.

⁷⁷⁶ UK Sport.

urgent because in July and August of this year (2014), Glasgow will host the Commonwealth Games. **We suggest that the Government continue to publicise the success of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games wherever possible—particularly through UKTI and the GREAT Campaign—while promoting the upcoming Glasgow Commonwealth Games. In addition, UKTI should strongly promote the UK as a reserve of expertise in the design and delivery of megaprojects like the London 2012 Games and the 2014 Commonwealth Games.**⁷⁷⁷

Conclusion

284. We have described in this Chapter the impressive array of soft power assets and opportunities for future development through which the UK can have a significant impact on the global scene, both in support of its own interests and those of the rest of the world. Like the Molière character⁷⁷⁸ who had been speaking prose without knowing it, some of the elements in the British soft power scene might hitherto have gone unrecognised. They have been supported by hardworking individuals and organisations that perhaps did not realise their position on the front line of defence of the UK's overseas interests. Nor did they realise that the curtain had gone up on their activities, revealing a new and much bigger and more informed audience than ever before.
285. The various attributes described above contribute to how the rest of the world views the UK. At its best, the country possesses a world-beating array of assets. It is seen variously as being on the right side of modern history; possessing benevolence; representing a force for good; being culturally attractive and a source of innovation, higher learning and human development; playing the role of a useful, well-connected nation; and positioning itself as an outward-looking and welcoming country with strong, identifiable values and a commitment to the rule of law.
286. Many of the UK's assets have shown a willingness to combine forces in efforts to create a more attractive British presence overseas. The country's thick cobweb of long-standing, productive ties enables these attributes to add up to more than the sum of their parts. For instance, UK universities support commercial science, British scientific prestige brings in talent and investment, national museums contribute to international development, and the BBC gives support to museums.⁷⁷⁹ Existing ties across the Commonwealth lay the ground for the overseas activities of UK business, culture and sporting institutions.
287. Though soft power is an elusive commodity that defies being coerced to specific ends (see Chapter three), the Government must not be complacent. If they make the right decisions, the Government can build up and benefit from the UK's enormous wealth of soft power assets. But though soft power takes time and effort to accrue, just a few poor decisions can undermine it. 'Health within is health without'—in an age of hyper-connectivity, there are stronger links between domestic and foreign policy than at any time in the past.

⁷⁷⁷ See Government written evidence; Nick Baird, Q117; House of Lords Select Committee on Olympic and Paralympic Legacy, *Keeping the Flame Alive: the Olympic and Paralympic Legacy* (Report of Session 2013–14, HL Paper 78),

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldselect/ldolympic/78/78.pdf>, pp16–17.

⁷⁷⁸ 'Molière' (1952) *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, Cambridge: Pitt Press Series, pp21–22.

⁷⁷⁹ National Museum Directors' Council.

CHAPTER 5: THE COORDINATION AND REINFORCEMENT OF THE UK'S SOFT POWER

288. The previous Chapter of this Report itemised the immense store of soft power assets and instruments at the disposal of the UK, ranging from its economic and technical skills and undoubted diplomatic prowess, to its most revered customs, characteristics, values, and institutions, including the monarchy itself. Yet John Micklethwait claimed to be “staggered by the fact that there was not really any sense of how big were what might be described as Britain’s soft power industries”.⁷⁸⁰ Professor Anholt was critical that the UK’s soft power ‘instruments’ were “just left lying around the place” rather than being brought together, inspired and informed.⁷⁸¹ Keith Nichol, Head of Cultural Diplomacy at DCMS told the Committee that “We have probably about 1,400 arts and cultural organisations active in all sorts of countries but, until very recently, we had no coherent sense of where they are going or what they are doing”. Encouragingly, he added “what we are trying to do now ... is to start to map that activity and to see where it is possible to align it with wider HMG and UK interests”.⁷⁸² **It is clear that the UK has strong soft power assets: in their response to this Report, we urge the Government to provide a strong focus on the specific aspects of the UK’s soft and smart power that they will seek to develop in reaction to the arguments made in this Report, how they will do so, and to what timetable. The response should examine the challenges faced by the UK’s non-governmental soft power assets and what the Government can do to assist and support them. It should also clearly delineate precisely which of our recommendations they support and will implement, and if they do not accept any of our recommendations, it should explain why not.**⁷⁸³
289. We pose below the fundamental question of whether the Government can themselves do more to upgrade and reinforce the UK’s soft power, both to protect the nation and to further its central interests and purposes in a world of challenges and opportunities. We also consider whether Government policies can be reconfigured more effectively: might they be better articulated and win greater impact than they do at present? On the basis of a large volume of written evidence, and of our extensive hearings with witnesses, we believe that Government policies can answer these twin challenges. We acknowledge here that much good work is ongoing, but we argue that much more can be done.

⁷⁸⁰ Q31.

⁷⁸¹ Professor Anholt.

⁷⁸² Q21.

⁷⁸³ The Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy in 2012 outlined its belief that the National Security Strategy “mentions many different forms of ‘soft power’ but could do more to spell out the different roles of organisations such as the BBC World Service and British Council. We believe that greater clarity over exactly what we are seeking, and why, could enable resources to be better targeted”. Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy, *First Review of the National Security Strategy 2010* (1st Report, Session 2010–12, HL Paper 265, HC Paper 1384), <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt201012/jtselect/jtnatsec/265/265.pdf>, p14.

Supporting a strong strategic narrative

290. The Committee heard that “If Britain is serious about wanting to mobilise its soft power globally” it needs to have a public debate, combined with rigorous strategic analysis, over what sort of state the UK wants to be”.⁷⁸⁴ Professor Cox asked, “What is the story we want to tell about our own history? It is an extraordinarily important part of power. What is our narrative about ourselves?”⁷⁸⁵ According to Indra Adnan, “Every country must find its place in the world by creating a narrative that binds the past and present in a way that confidently serves the emerging reality of rapid globalisation”.⁷⁸⁶ Dr James Pamment also saw the need for “a compelling narrative explaining Britain’s place and intentions in the international system”.⁷⁸⁷ Strategic narratives are “a means for political actors to construct a shared meaning of the past, present and future of politics in order to shape the behavior of other actors”, Professor Roselle explained. She told us that “a compelling narrative can be a soft power resource, as people may be drawn to certain actors, events, and explanations that describe the history of a country, or the specifics of a policy, for example”.⁷⁸⁸
291. A national narrative can also play a crucial part in bringing together and inspiring the contributions made by a country’s soft power actors: Dr Pamment told us that a narrative was “a form of storytelling that sums up the overarching national strategy in ways that soft power institutions can draw upon and rearticulate in their own unique ways”.⁷⁸⁹ The “basic values of the UK brand”, such as the rule of law and respect for human rights, constitute a national narrative and “provide a dynamic framework to loosely (but firmly) guide all national actors’ discourse and behavior”, argued Dr Cristina Archetti, Associate Professor in Politics and Media, University of Salford, adding that the Government have “a role in upholding such [a] dynamic framework”.⁷⁹⁰
292. Professor Anholt contended that “The only way that ‘soft’ power can become an effective force” is if the UK’s soft power assets “are inspired and informed by a shared, long-term, national strategy”. In his view, “Such a grand strategy is what the United Kingdom lacks. Its absence is the reason why our instruments of soft power do so very well on their own account yet achieve only a small part of what they *could* achieve for the country and its standing, if only they were really working together”. He considered that “the most dependably attractive focus for any national strategy is a moral one: the aim is to prove the *utility* of the country to humanity and to the planet, rather than brag about its assets or achievements (which, in the case of the UK, are sufficiently appreciated that further bragging is more likely to annoy than impress). To put it simply, people in other countries are much more interested in what the UK can do for *them* than in what it manages to do for itself”. For Professor Anholt, countries must learn “how to corral their soft and hard powers around a shared, national, grand strategy, so that their

⁷⁸⁴ Dr Jamie Gaskarth.

⁷⁸⁵ Q37.

⁷⁸⁶ Indra Adnan.

⁷⁸⁷ Dr James Pamment.

⁷⁸⁸ Professor Roselle.

⁷⁸⁹ Dr James Pamment.

⁷⁹⁰ Dr Cristina Archetti.

impacts can be combined and thus multiplied”. However, “This is the task which the UK has failed to seize or even to acknowledge in living memory, despite the fact that becoming a paragon of soft power is our country’s only remaining strategic option”, he warned.⁷⁹¹

293. A ‘strategic narrative’ projects a past, present and future that is persuasive and attractive to others who then ‘buy in’ to efforts to realise that future. Furthermore, the story needs to keep up with the times and be re-articulated in constantly refreshed terms. In a now almost totally transformed international scene, full of unfamiliar and bewildering new aspects, it is vital that the UK maintain its sense of purpose and direction: the British need to feel confident in knowing who we are and what our role is in a transformed and turbulent world. **The Government must present, and keep updating, a strong narrative about the UK’s changing position; a story about what values the UK stands for and where it should be heading,** because as Professor Nye put it, “the point is that it is not just whose army wins, it is also whose story wins in an information age”.⁷⁹² **We consider that the UK’s soft power will only achieve real momentum if the UK maintains this sense of purpose. Attractiveness will only convert into positive achievements if the UK and those who engage with it have a grasp of the contribution that the UK can make—it will amount to little if the UK is believed merely to be seeking admiration and economic gain. The Government must take responsibility for providing a clear vision for the country, which will help those across Whitehall who influence foreign policy to understand what is holding the UK back, or could hold it back in the future.**
294. We heard concern from our witnesses that the strength of a strategic narrative about the UK and what it stands for would be undermined by the dissolution of the Union.⁷⁹³ In giving evidence to the Committee, Sir John Major told us that from country to country he had seen the issue of Scottish independence “Increasingly” being raised: “It has come up in the Far East and it has come up in a number of countries, simply because they would perceive a country that was damaged and diminished if a chunk of it voluntarily chose to leave the United Kingdom”.⁷⁹⁴ Onlookers “would see a country beginning to fracture”.⁷⁹⁵ He worried that “we would have had a political fracture of a most dramatic nature. That makes people wonder about the stability. If Scotland were to go, what would happen to Wales? What would happen to Northern Ireland? These are acute worries”.⁷⁹⁶ Further, he warned that if Scotland were to secede, “Apart from an extremely talented chunk of the United Kingdom disappearing, we would be diminished. That would put at risk our role in many international bodies. Our voice would be weakened. As to whether we would retain our seat on the UN Security Council, very possibly for a while but at some stage that is bound to be reformed. ...I think were we to lose in Scotland it may be open to doubt when that change comes whether we would retain our position. ...We would find ourselves weakened in the IMF. We would find ourselves

⁷⁹¹ Professor Anholt.

⁷⁹² Q176; Dr Cristina Archetti.

⁷⁹³ Indra Adnan.

⁷⁹⁴ Q346.

⁷⁹⁵ Q345.

⁷⁹⁶ Q347.

weakened in the G8, the G20. In every international gathering that there is the voice of Britain would not be growing stronger, as it should as the economy improves. It would be growing weaker”.⁷⁹⁷

295. The debate over Scottish independence represents a vitally important constitutional discussion that goes far wider than the remit of this inquiry. We note, however, that **the UK’s aim and claim to continue to play a major role in world affairs would be undermined by Scottish separation, because even a debate about whether the UK should continue to be a member of the UN Security Council, for example, would do damage to its reputation.**⁷⁹⁸ **Dismembering the UK is not consistent with promoting the country abroad as a strong, stable and successful state; nor is it consistent with promoting the sense of internal social cohesion that is so important to presenting a positive view of the UK on the international stage.**⁷⁹⁹ **This damage would be to the disadvantage of the Scottish people, as much as to the UK as a whole.** A number of our witnesses discussed the importance of the UK projecting “a loose collection of narratives to reflect the character of its regions”.⁸⁰⁰

The Government’s internal coordination

296. We feel that promoting the creation of a unifying strategic narrative about the UK, and enabling the UK’s soft power actors to draw upon it in a coordinated way, is a key role for the Government. However, we heard evidence that the Government are not sufficiently coordinated themselves to be able to provide a strong lead.
297. The Committee has heard contradictory explanations about who in Government takes charge of protecting and promoting the UK’s soft power. Dr Andrew Murrison MP, Minister of State for International Security Strategy at the MOD, told us that it fell within the remit of the FCO⁸⁰¹; officials from the FCO informed us that responsibility for soft power lay ultimately with the National Security Council, chaired by the Prime Minister.⁸⁰² We could not determine which of these assertions was the more accurate, as the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary were unable to give evidence to the Committee. The Government’s flagship nation branding programme, the GREAT Campaign, is also influential across the UK’s public diplomacy efforts. And the Ministry of Defence’s key soft power initiative, the ‘International Defence Engagement Strategy’, is a joint FCO-MOD initiative, which includes the DFID as a board member.⁸⁰³ We have heard that the Cabinet Office is looking into “the way all Departments that

⁷⁹⁷ Q347.

⁷⁹⁸ See Sir John Major, Q346.

⁷⁹⁹ See Lord Williams of Baglan, Q38.

⁸⁰⁰ Professor Cox, Q37; Professor Roselle; Dr Christina Rowley; Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK; Welsh Government; Professor Scott-Smith; Dr Daniel Arthur, International Policy Dynamics; National Museum Directors’ Council.

⁸⁰¹ Q382.

⁸⁰² Hugh Elliott, Andrew Mitchell, Q12. See also Andrew Murrison MP, Hugo Swire MP, Q383.

⁸⁰³ MOD and FCO (2013) *International Defence Engagement Strategy*, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/73171/defence_engagement_strategy.pdf, p5.

are relevant to national security at least bring things together”.⁸⁰⁴ **The Committee urges the Government to publish, as part of their response to this Report, an evidence-based explanation that demonstrates how the sharing of soft power promotion between the NSC, the GREAT Campaign, the FCO, the MOD, DCMS and DFID has been a success.**

298. Because many Departments now play a role in soft power⁸⁰⁵, the Committee acknowledges that the GREAT Campaign is best coordinated from the centre—from either the Cabinet Office or Number 10. The campaign is led by an official, Conrad Bird, who is based in Number 10 but is seconded from the Foreign Office, and who reports to a Cabinet Office official, Alex Aiken.⁸⁰⁶ Yet the Chair of the GREAT Campaign programme board is the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Maria Miller MP⁸⁰⁷, meaning that some of the campaign’s strategic direction derives from DCMS. DCMS plays a central role in UK public diplomacy, but so too do BIS, the FCO, DFID and the MOD, to name just four. Maria Miller MP reported that members of the programme board include representatives of “UKTI, BIS and a whole host of organisations, including our tourism organisation VisitBritain”; we also heard that the FCO is represented by senior officials, and that representatives of VisitEngland, the British Council, UK Visas and Immigration and the Treasury attend, “along with other representatives such as London & Partners”.⁸⁰⁸ **While we welcome the role of the GREAT Campaign in bringing together those involved in the UK’s international marketing, we feel that the Government should do more to build on the campaign’s successes.**⁸⁰⁹ **We have some concern about the lack of clarity about where the buck stops. We propose that the Government make publicly available their justification for how the structure of the GREAT Campaign brings added value.**⁸¹⁰

Poor internal coordination leads to poor external communication

299. **We urge Government decision-makers to consider adverse consequences for the UK’s soft power when devising policies that might be domestically popular, but could damage the UK’s reputation.**⁸¹¹ The Committee disagrees with the Minister for Business and

⁸⁰⁴ Steve McCarthy, Q61.

⁸⁰⁵ See Lord Jay of Ewelme, Q292, Q294.

⁸⁰⁶ See Alex Aiken, Conrad Bird, Q310.

⁸⁰⁷ Maria Miller MP, Q330.

⁸⁰⁸ Q330; Conrad Bird, Q314.

⁸⁰⁹ Alex Aiken, Conrad Bird, Q313, Q314, Q320; Conrad Bird, Q321, Q324.

⁸¹⁰ We have received written evidence from the GREAT Campaign stating that they use methodologies approved by the National Audit Office and “recognised as standard across the tourism industry” (‘Great Britain’ Campaign, supplementary written evidence). In their oral evidence, Conrad Bird and Alex Aiken discussed evaluation methods that used focus groups and surveys (Q320; Q321; Q324). However, the Committee did not receive evidence showing how exposure to the GREAT Campaign directly influenced the attitudes or behaviour of people from within or outside the UK, or a full explanation of the methodologies used to measure and evaluate such influence. See also Professor Rawnsley; Gillespie and Webb; Dr Daniel Arthur, International Policy Dynamics; Centre for Cultural Relations, University of Edinburgh; British Academy; Behavioural Dynamics Institute; Dr Ali Fisher; Research Councils UK.

⁸¹¹ See Professor Cox, Q30; John Micklethwait, Q31.

Enterprise that “There is no confusion within government”.⁸¹² John Dickie told us that “there is a fundamental lack of joined-upness in government” because they “simultaneously want to tell the world that we are open for business [and] that we have too many people coming here and we have a net migration target. ...So the mood music is at best confused”. He was concerned by “a lack of co-automated messaging policy by the Government”.⁸¹³ The British Council also saw a lack of coordination on immigration: “much greater effort should be made to ensure the efforts of the Foreign Office, BIS and the Prime Minister himself are not undermined by poor communications”.⁸¹⁴ For the reasons that we outlined in Chapter four, **it is important for the UK’s international attractiveness and influence that the Government avoid expressing confusing views on immigration.** We fully understand the conflicting pressures on Government, and the need for careful control of immigration to escape the blunders of the past.⁸¹⁵ **But the Government must ensure greater consistency between the development and communication of their policies on immigration and their plans to make the UK attractive to visitors, students, workers and investors, with all the soft power benefits that openness brings. The Government have demonstrated a worrying lack of coordination in the development and communication of certain policies, with detrimental results for British soft power.**

300. Some of our witnesses argued for a soft power “strategy”, department or minister.⁸¹⁶ Like Professor Cox, we do not believe that the establishment of a soft power ministry would answer the need for better coordination of the UK’s soft power and external reputation.⁸¹⁷ A Public Diplomacy Board established by the previous Government “lapsed” in 2010.⁸¹⁸ **We suggest that bureaucratic coordination through the establishment of a Government committee on the UK’s soft power would lack the drive and purpose that the issue requires. An understanding of how soft power is generated, and how the UK should behave if it is to be attractive and influential should become mainstream in Whitehall thinking, not hived off to a Cabinet sub-committee.**
301. Policy coordination is different from bureaucratic coordination, however. There needs to be ‘joined-up writing’ in terms of the policies exercised by Departments. So while there should not be a bureaucratic soft power strategy—or the establishment of a soft power ministry—there does need to be a strategic vision, given vitality by those at the very top of Government and permeating Whitehall. There needs to be a ‘theme’ for Departments to

⁸¹² Q341.

⁸¹³ Q253.

⁸¹⁴ British Council supplementary written evidence.

⁸¹⁵ Mark Harper MP, Q260; Government (Home Office) supplementary written evidence; Hugo Swire MP, Q370.

⁸¹⁶ Professor Anholt; Dr Robin Brown; Dr Daniel Arthur, International Policy Dynamics; Professor Nye, Q182; Dr James Pamment; Professor Rawnsley; Indra Adnan.

⁸¹⁷ Professor Cox told us that “This may make [soft power] very amorphous, but it is not just a utilitarian concept, whereby you have a department of soft power and a Minister of Soft Power, as opposed to a Minister of Defence, for example. It does not quite work like that ... It is rather more amorphous, like jelly”. (Q27) Indra Adnan; Hugo Swire MP, Q383.

⁸¹⁸ Hugh Elliott, Q11. See also Hugh Elliott, Q10; Professor Anholt, Q210; Dr Robin Brown.

improvise upon: a strategic narrative (see paragraphs 290 to 293 above).⁸¹⁹ If, instead of a formal strategy, a central voice set a strong theme and energised it with a proper vision, he or she could set the tone, allowing creativity to bloom. This differs from top-down coordination, which, when excessive, can stifle innovation.⁸²⁰ As Emile Simpson put it in his written evidence, “What is a narrative? The narrative is a story that aspires to communicate state policy goals in a way that make sense—that is persuasive”.⁸²¹ One advantage of such an approach would be that the clarity of the story should flush out cases where some Departments’ policies countered others’ efforts. **We feel that there needs to be a long-term strategic narrative about the international role of the UK, promulgated from the centre of Government. Innovative and imaginative Departments would interpret this narrative, with the freedom to use their initiative but with a clear understanding of how their responses fitted into the broader theme.**

302. The Government view the National Security Council (NSC) as the body that coordinates soft power.⁸²² However, we are not convinced that soft power features on the NSC’s agenda—the NSC’s three sub-committees consider ‘threats, hazards, resilience and contingencies’, ‘nuclear deterrence and security’ and ‘the UK’s relationship with emerging international powers’.⁸²³ A proposal for the National Security Council to develop a soft power strategy appears to have “lapsed”, according to Dr Robin Brown, who told us that “Under the pressure of the Olympics it appears that any general attempt to coordinate UK public diplomacy has been abandoned”.⁸²⁴ **If it does not have the capacity regularly to discuss the UK’s broad international**

⁸¹⁹ Professor Roselle reminded us that the American diplomat Richard Holbrooke once commented that “Diplomacy is not like chess. ... It’s more like jazz—a constant improvisation on a theme”. Professor Roselle. See also Hugo Swire MP, Q383.

⁸²⁰ Cf. Lord Williams of Baglan, Professor Cox, Q30. Some evidence highlighted how strategies that aim to promote soft power can be problematic. Professor Rawnsley wrote that “any programme that begins with the objective of designing a ‘programme to enhance ... soft power’ will encounter difficulties. Soft power is a natural by-product of one’s values, principles, and behaviour (at home and abroad). It cannot be strategised”. Professor Rawnsley; cf. Behavioural Dynamics Institute.

⁸²¹ Emile Simpson.

⁸²² The 2012–15 and 2013–15 FCO Business Plans both contained a commitment to “develop a long-term programme to enhance UK ‘soft power’, co-ordinated by the National Security Council” (FCO (2012) *Business Plan 2012–15*, 31 May, http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/282786/business-plan-12-annexes.pdf, p8; FCO (2013) *Business Plan 2013–15*, June, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/282912/FCO_departmental_business_plan_-_7_June_2013_formatted_for_publication.pdf, p3). The 2011–15 Business Plan listed using soft power “to promote British values, advance development and prevent conflict” as one of the five structural reform priorities for the FCO, and went into detail about actions to be taken (FCO (2013) *Business Plan 2011–15*, May, http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/32855/FCO-Business-Plan1.pdf, p2; pp19–20).

⁸²³ <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-security/groups/national-security-council>. See also Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy, ‘Uncorrected Transcript of Oral Evidence: National Security Strategy’ (Rt Hon David Cameron MP; Sir Kim Darroch, KCMG), HC Paper 1040, 30 January 2014, <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/joint-committees/national-security-strategy/PM%20session/ICNSS14-01-30TranscriptCameron.pdf>, Q11, Q12, Q13; Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy, *First Review of the National Security Strategy 2010* (1st Report of Session 2010–12, HL Paper 265, HC Paper 1384), <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt201012/jtselect/jtntatsec/265/265.pdf>, p14.

⁸²⁴ Dr Robin Brown.

standing, the NSC should make this clear, and the Government should move quickly to put responsibility for the UK's reputation in different hands. The Committee believes that while the NSC continues to play this role, soft power should be a regular item on its agenda—it needs to have a high priority.⁸²⁵ We urge the NSC to devote at least one session every six months to discussing the exercise of soft power, and to report to Parliament once a year about the UK's exercise of soft and smart power.

303. Too many Departments and other bodies are now involved in the UK's international presence for the NSC solely to be responsible for the UK's soft power vision. The Prime Minister must give strong and passionate voice to the theme, but he has too much on his hands to be the conductor.⁸²⁶ Professor Anholt outlined a structure that, we consider, could provide the supportive approach that is required:

“What seems to work is having some sort of central body that owns the grand strategy—the ‘everything’ strategy—that answers [the following] questions. What is this country for? What is its purpose in the world? If the hand of God should accidentally slip on the celestial keyboard tomorrow and hit delete and Britain went, who would notice and why? These questions might sound a little airy fairy, but in the age of globalisation we at least have to try to answer them. That central body owns that strategy and then it imposes it by providing services to the other branches of government, rather than acting as a policeman. In other words, instead of offering to vet people's policies, it suggests actions that they could take that would be cost-effective ways of getting across the messages that people want to get across”.⁸²⁷

304. **We therefore propose that there should be a small unit at the centre of Government specifically to assist the Prime Minister in reinforcing the consistency of the soft power story throughout Whitehall, and help him or her to counteract swiftly any developments that might undermine the UK's broader message, story and reputational standing across the world.⁸²⁸ The unit would set the theme on which Departments and non-state soft power actors could improvise. It would not impose strategies on Departments or add a layer of bureaucratic meetings and planning: by assembling and putting into telling words all aspects of the UK's strategic story and direction, it would help Departments to understand the UK's place on the international stage, and how their actions might affect this.**
305. We consider that this strategic narrative unit could follow the example of the GREAT Campaign's structure, whose central team invites Departments to ‘buy in’ to the campaign and offers them campaign-related marketing materials, but does not dictate to them.⁸²⁹ The unit would work on articulating the UK's strategic narrative, but would also offer advice, skills, resources, intelligence and support to the UK's soft power more broadly. The unit could help to ensure that Departments understand what constitutes

⁸²⁵ See Alex Aiken, Q319.

⁸²⁶ See Hugo Swire MP, Q383.

⁸²⁷ Q210.

⁸²⁸ See Graham Mather, Q170.

⁸²⁹ Alex Aiken, Conrad Bird, Q313.

the country's soft power, and which institutions and organisations, inside and outside Government, contribute to it.

306. Gillespie and Webb told the Committee, in the context of the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games, that “Soft power can be used to exert influence and deliver short term advantages in tactical ways and can exert the right kind of influence at critical moments”.⁸³⁰ Many such critical moments, which create opportunities for generating or exerting influence, might be identified in advance (for example elections, Royal weddings, sporting contests, and treaty negotiations). The unit could help Departments plan a range of tactical activities in response, and ensure that the efforts made were not contradictory or counterproductive. The unit might conduct research into soft power measurement and spending, to bring some consistency to Government oversight of the amount of money invested by the many Departments that have a role to play.⁸³¹ Departments might also commission the unit to provide quantitative and qualitative targets to meet over the course of the year⁸³², while the unit's recommendations could feed into terms of reference for contractors working with Government Departments.
307. The unit might highlight where sections of Government have undermined the soft power efforts of other sections, in order to avoid future mistakes like the mixed messaging over visa policy. It might make policy proposals to mitigate such confusion—to remove students from the immigration cap, for instance. It might also be equipped to challenge Government decisions with a potentially detrimental effect on the UK's influence, such as cuts to the BBC World Service. It could help to ensure that as the international scene evolves, the balance between hard power and soft power and the dynamics operating between the FCO, MOD and DFID are reviewed and adjusted so that these key Departments work together seamlessly. The unit could also have an outward-facing communications role, to inform the public about the long-term benefits of investments that add to the UK's reputation and influence, and to improve public understanding of the way that international power is changing.
308. This unit should report directly to the Prime Minister, in order to support him or her and Ministers in their efforts to articulate the UK's qualities, outputs and international contribution, to better coordinate Government policies and to motivate the UK's soft power actors—inside and outside Government—to realise the contribution they can make to the UK's values and interests. It would also work to support the National Security Council in focusing on the UK's soft and smart power, assuming that the NSC retains this remit. Hugo Swire MP told us that for the Government, “Soft power is like breathing. It is what we do. It is our natural default position ... all Ministers should get out of bed in the morning thinking soft power”.⁸³³ Given notable failures in Governmental coordination on issues affecting the UK's reputation, and ambiguities in the presentation of the nation's position and direction, we are not convinced that this is yet the reality in Government. But we consider that a stronger and more articulate lead from

⁸³⁰ Gillespie and Webb.

⁸³¹ See Professor Joseph Nye, Q182.

⁸³² See Professor Anholt, Q211.

⁸³³ Q383.

the centre, with dedicated Cabinet Office support, could help to make it so—and that success in doing so is vital for the UK's future.

309. We were heartened to see that our proposal tallies with the findings of the House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee inquiry into National Strategy. The Committee proposed the creation of a “community of strategists’ from across Whitehall—and beyond— ...to support a National Security Council (NSC) with a widened remit encompassing National (or ‘Grand’) Strategy. ... We remain concerned that without this capacity the NSC can only broker compromises between Departmental views based on incompatible principles, and that the failure to establish a common language and idiom of thinking about strategy is bound to leave different parts of Whitehall at cross purposes”.⁸³⁴
310. **In addition we consider that there ought to be a Committee in Parliament which annually publishes a review of the Government’s soft power strengths and weaknesses, goals and priorities, looking particularly closely at the work that the Government have done to support the UK’s international standing and attractiveness. We note that there are a number of Parliamentary Committees with international dimensions to their work, such as the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee and the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy, and we hope that one such Committee will consider pursuing this.** These reports would clarify and build public understanding of the UK’s long-term foreign policy trajectory—and help to ensure that Departments take this important issue seriously. **We further recommend that, as the UK’s international standing is the ultimate in long-term and non-partisan concerns, the Government should regularly consult with all the major parties in the Westminster Parliament and in the devolved assemblies on the UK’s strategic direction and future on the world stage. The unit tasked with shaping and embellishing the UK’s strategic narrative should also consult widely with non-state soft power actors, including firms, charities and scientific, sporting and cultural institutions.**⁸³⁵

⁸³⁴ House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee, *Who does UK National Strategy? Further Report* (6th Report of Session 2010–11, HC Paper 713), <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmpubadm/713/713.pdf>, p4.

⁸³⁵ Dr Gaskarth; Jonathan McClory.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

311. In an era in which the distribution and very nature of power, influence and engagement are undergoing radical change, the UK finds itself with a tremendous range of institutions and relationships in politics, economics, science and culture, often amassed over generations, which give it a great deal of internationally recognised soft power. To parody the old saw about how it came to rule an empire, the UK could be said to have acquired a great many of these soft power assets ‘in a fit of absence of mind’.⁸³⁶ We feel that the Government have moved from absent-mindedness to neglect of certain aspects of British soft power potential, particularly the UK’s relations with the Commonwealth. The Government’s imperative now must be to defend and preserve the UK’s accumulated estate of soft power—and capitalise on the gains which soft power generates in order to fulfil the UK’s aims and purposes.
312. To make sure that the UK’s attractiveness and influence can be used by the Government and other British bodies to promote the country’s interests, the Government and foreign policy community must develop new approaches to international relations. These approaches involve communicating openly and actively both with old allies and new partners; offering the UK’s soft and hard power to the pursuit of solutions to common concerns; and avoiding false choices between international institutions and working to nudge these institutions towards global arrangements from which the UK stands to gain. It means allowing British Embassies to flourish as dynamic centres of commercial, diplomatic, and cultural activities, and ensuring that all of these activities are underpinned by a positive vision or narrative about the UK and about its role in shaping how the world will look in the future.
313. The Government should employ the UK’s soft power advantages to ensure and protect national security by employing a judicious and ‘smart’ mixture of hard and soft power, and through opening and safeguarding the access routes that its various industries need to ensure the UK’s continuing prosperity. To play a responsible and progressive role in building global peace and stability, the UK needs to widen its diplomacy, understand that it is dealing with empowered and e-enabled publics everywhere and in every country, and accept through its tone and policies that power has in some degree shifted East, South and into the world’s networks. The Committee submits that such an approach would enhance the UK’s soft power, work with the grain of the changing nature of international relations, and further the country’s security and prosperity.
314. A huge change of mindset is required among those who shape the UK’s international role and placing in the world. This mindset should not only recognise the fundamental ways in which international power balances are changing and the crucial role played by soft power in adapting to those shifts, but come to see the UK in the 21st century no longer solely as a ‘Western’ power—tied to Western models of

⁸³⁶ Seeley J. R. (1883) *The Expansion of England*, ed. J. Gross, 1971.

modernisation and political development—but as a nation uniquely equipped to understand, respect and work with the new mélange of Eastern, Western and Southern powers, cultures and values now rapidly taking shape. The UK must appreciate that nations such as China are following other paths, and working together outside traditional multilateral structures such as the UN Security Council.

- 315. The UK has to slip its twentieth-century moorings and look to Asia, Africa and other regions, countries and communities. This does not necessarily mean striking out alone: all nations are now intensely interdependent. But the UK can exploit its singular position and its uniquely strong networks to put it in a very influential position in the changing international scene. The Government should be clear about what the UK wishes to achieve as an interdependent, networked power. This will include fulfilling its international roles and responsibilities and encouraging others to do the same in a way that spreads the load of international policing, and building the UK's prosperity, not least to enable it to perform those roles and meet those responsibilities effectively. The Government must work to restore the UK's reputation, and show up outdated perceptions of the UK as an outdated power. The UK can, and should, act as a serious force for good as the world continues to change.**
- 316. This new approach becomes more urgent by the day. The UK 'must remain a top-rank performer in the global network and it finds itself in the fortuitous position of having every opportunity to do so. However, while celebrating the UK's fortune, we also warn that if the Government do not face the facts of the transformed international order, the UK will risk finding itself outwitted, out-competed, and increasingly insecure.**

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF MEMBERS AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members

Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top
 Lord Forsyth of Drumlean
 Lord Foulkes of Cumnock
 Baroness Goudie
 Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts
 Lord Howell of Guildford (Chairman)
 Baroness Hussein-Ece
 Lord Janvrin
 Baroness Morris of Bolton
 Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne
 Baroness Prosser
 Lord Ramsbotham

Declaration of Members' Interests

Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top
Trustee and Member, Board of VSO UK (Voluntary Service Overseas)
Chair, Federation Council, VSO International
Member, Board of AGI (Africa Governance Initiative, of which the Rt Hon Tony Blair is the patron)
(Each position is unremunerated)

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean
Non-executive Director, Denholm Logistics Ltd
Non-executive Director, Hyperion Insurance Group Ltd
Non-executive Director, J & J Denholm Ltd (parent company of Denholm Group which has five divisions: shipping; logistics; seafoods; industrial services; oilfield services)
Speaking engagement, 25 September 2012, F&C Investments
Shareholdings in Safor Ltd (designs and retails handbags and other fashion accessories)
Self-catering holiday accommodation at home in Scotland, from which rental income is received
Chairman, Safor Ltd (designs and retails handbags and other fashion accessories)
Patron of a charity that helps women in India
Member, Board of Secure Trust Bank PLC— as of 1 March 2014

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock
President of the Caribbean Council (unremunerated)
Chairman, Advisory Board of GovNet Communications (publisher and events organiser)
Member of Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK

Baroness Goudie
MTG One Ltd (company owned by Member (see Register category 4(a)); strategic/management consultancy giving public interest advice and corporate social responsibility advice as and when required); clients include Deloitte LLP (audit; financial consulting)

Shareholdings in MTG One Ltd (strategic/management consultancy)
Membership of the executive and board of the Vital Voices Global Partnership
Membership of the board of the El-Hibri Charitable Foundation
Membership of a share distribution board (Sharegift)
Connection to a community foundation in Northern Ireland
Chair of the Women Leaders' Council to Fight Human Trafficking, UN
Visit to Beirut, 22–25 May 2012, to attend a meeting of trustees of the El-
Hibri Charitable Foundation and opening ceremony of the Ibrahim El Hibri
Campus; costs of air fare and accommodation paid by hosts
Visit to Brussels, Belgium, 18–19 October 2012, to attend the Jean Faurès
Foundation: Woman up! Women's representation in Politics and Business –
Fourth transatlantic gender seminar; accommodation and travel paid by the
Foundation
Visit with assistant to Bern, Switzerland, 22–24 April 2013, to attend
conference on “Sister Republics: Building Bridges – committing to a stronger
economy with women's leadership”; cost of accommodation and flights for
Member and assistant met by conference organisers
Co-chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global Education for All

Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbots

Senior Independent Director, Marston's plc (pubs and breweries)—until 21
January 2014
Chairman, RFIB Group Ltd (insurance and reinsurance broker)
Chairman, Nova Capital Management (private equity)
Official Reviewer of the Charities Act 2006, appointed by the Minister for the
Cabinet Office
Trustee, St Peter's College, Oxford
Trustee, Fair Trials International
Lord Hodgson's wife is a member of the Foreign Secretary's advisory panel on
preventing sexual violence in conflict situations

Lord Howell of Guildford (Chairman)

Adviser to Japan Central Railways Ltd
Consultant to Mitsubishi Electric Europe BV
Member of the UK Advisory Committee to the Kuwait Investment Office
Member, Economic Advisory Group to the British Chambers of Commerce
Chairman, Windsor Energy Group
Member of the Governing Board, Centre for Global Energy Studies— until
February 2014
Chairman, Council of Commonwealth Societies
President, British Institute of Energy Economics— until November 2013
President, Energy Industries Council
Personal adviser to the Foreign Secretary on energy security
President, Royal Commonwealth Society
Chairman, Commonwealth Exchange (Commonwealth-focussed London-
based think tank)

Baroness Hussein-Ece

Visit to Khartoum, Sudan, 2–6 May 2013, at the invitation of the
University of Khartoum with flights and accommodation paid for by the
University
All-Party Parliamentary Group on Population, Development & Reproductive
Health & Planned Parenthood
Secretary, All-Party Parliamentary Group, UN Women
Vice-Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group for Turkey

Commissioner, Equality & Human Rights Commission— until 2012
All-Party Parliamentary Group for Sudan
Vice-Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Race & Community

Lord Janvrin

Deputy Chairman, HSBC Private Bank (UK)
Chair of Trustees, The Royal Foundation of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry
Trustee, The Gurkha Welfare Trust
Chair of Trustees, The Entente Cordiale Scholarship Trust
Trustee, The National Portrait Gallery
Trustee, Philanthropy Impact
Advisory Board, UK-India Business Council
Honorary member of HM The Queen's Household
Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Turkey—as of 30 January 2014

Baroness Morris of Bolton

Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Jordan, Kuwait and the Palestinian Territories
Chairman, Conservative Middle East Council
Chancellor, University of Bolton—term of office ended 31 December 2013
President, Medical Aid for Palestinians
President, World Travel Market Advisory Council
Member, TSL Advisory Board (TSL Education Ltd publishes the Times Education Supplement amongst other things)
Chairman of the Governance Group for the Register of Providers of Cosmetic Injectable Treatments
Visit to Iraqi Kurdistan, 27–30 August 2012, as Leader of a Parliamentary Delegation organised by Conservative Middle East Council; visit was hosted and paid for by Kurdistan Democratic Party which met the costs of flights, transportation, accommodation and meals
Trustee, The Disability Partnership
President, National Benevolent Institution
Co-chair, Women in Public Policy
Chairman, Centre for Islamic Finance—as of 12 February 2014

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne

Chairman, AMAR International Charitable Foundation, separately as NGO in UK, USA, Iraq, Lebanon and Yemen
Chairman, Iraq Britain Business Council
Chairman, Booker Prize for Russian Fiction
President, Caine Prize for African Writing
Vice-President, Man Booker Prize for English Fiction
Chairman and Non-executive Director, Supervisory Board, Joint Leasing Company, Azerbaijan
Chairman, Asociatia Children's High Level Group (Romania, Armenia; retiring)
Board Member, Strategic Development Board, Durham Global Security Institute (DGSI)
Board Member, Global Warming Policy Foundation (GWPF)
High Representative for Romanian Children (for the Prime Minister)
Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Iraq—as of 30 January 2014

Baroness Prosser

Director, Trade Union Fund Managers Ltd (company oversees investments of participating trade unions)

Deputy Chair, Equality and Human Rights Commission
Director, Lionel Cooke Memorial Fund Limited (limited company)
Companion, Institute of Management
Secretary of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Ethics and Sustainability in Fashion

Lord Ramsbotham

Trustee, International Centre for Prison Studies
Adviser, Helen Hamlyn Trust (Youth Justice)
Senior Governor, Haileybury College
Vice President, the Centre for Mental Health (mental health in prisons)
Vice Chairman and Trustee, Institute for Food, Brain and Behaviour
President, UNLOCK, National Association of ex-Prisoners
Vice President, National Association of Prison Visitors
Former soldier involved with post-conflict reconstruction operations with and for the UN and the World Bank

A full list of Members' interests can be found in the Register of Lords' Interests:

<http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/>

Professor Ben O'Loughlin, Specialist Adviser

July–November 2012: Co-lead on research in collaboration with the BBC World Service and the Open University investigating global public reactions to the 2012 Olympics. Research funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council Public Policy Fellowship awarded to Professor Marie Gillespie (Open University) and the ESTC Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change (CRESC). O'Loughlin unremunerated with no formal relationship to the BBC World Service. Some of this research may be published after the Committee has reported.

November 2013: Invited to talk at the University of Haifa at a conference on political communication. Invitation and travel expenses from the Anglo-Israel Association (AIA), with organisational involvement from the British Council.

November 2013–April 2014: Co-organiser of international workshops on media, religion and conflict funded by the British Council's Bridging Voices scheme.

March 2014: Invited to present to the UK Defence Academy about social media and military operations (remunerated).

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF WITNESSES

Evidence is published online at www.parliament.uk/soft-power-and-uks-influence and available for inspection at the Parliamentary Archives (020 7219 5314).

Evidence received by the Committee is listed below in chronological order of oral evidence session and in alphabetical order. Those witnesses marked with * gave both oral evidence and written evidence. Those marked with ** gave oral evidence and did not submit any written evidence. All other witnesses submitted written evidence only.

Oral evidence in chronological order

*	QQ 1–22	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)
*		Department for International Development (DFID)
**		Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)
*		Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)
**	QQ 23–41	Professor Michael Cox, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)
**		John Micklethwait, <i>The Economist</i>
**		Lord Williams of Baglan, Chatham House
**	QQ 42–62	Nicholas Beadle CMG, Royal United Services Institute
*		Ministry of Defence (MOD)
*	QQ 63–92	BBC World Service
*		British Council
*		British Museum
**	QQ 93–115	Commonwealth Business Council
*		Institute of Export
*		National Asian Business Association (NABA)
*	QQ 116–125	UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)
**	QQ 126–151	Ian Birrell, columnist and foreign correspondent
*		International Alert
**		Overseas Development Institute
**		Transparency International UK
*	QQ 152–164	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
**		Baroness Prashar
**		HE Carlos dos Santos, High Commissioner for the Republic of Mozambique
**	QQ 165–175	Centre for European Reform
**		Open Europe
**		European Policy Forum

- ** QQ 176–186 Professor Joseph S. Nye, Harvard University
- ** QQ 187–199 Dr Rudolf Adam, Chargé d’Affaires, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany
- ** HE Mr Keichii Hayashi, Ambassador of Japan
- ** HE Mr Roberto Jaguaribe, Ambassador of Brazil
- ** HE Mr Kim Traavik, Ambassador of Norway
- * QQ 200–217 Professor Simon Anholt, nation brand adviser and author of the Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index
- * Jonathan McClory, policy and place branding consultant, author of the IfG-Monocle Soft Power Index
- ** Agnès Poirier, commentator on politics and French-British relations
- ** QQ 218–235 ARM
- ** David Stanley, former CEO, the Penspen Group Ltd
- ** PricewaterhouseCoopers
- ** Shell
- * QQ 236–245 Sir Roger Gifford, then Lord Mayor of London
- ** QQ 246–259 London First
- ** Tourism Alliance & UKInbound
- * Professor Colin Riordan, Universities UK & Cardiff University
- * QQ 260–273 Mark Harper MP, then Immigration Minister, Home Office
- ** QQ 274–291 England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB)
- ** Lord Moynihan, former Chairman, British Olympic Association (BOA)
- ** Premier League
- ** QQ 292–309 Sir Antony Acland, former Head of the UK Diplomatic Service and Ambassador to Washington
- * Lord Hannay of Chiswick, former UK Permanent Representative to the EEC and the UN
- ** Lord Jay of Ewelme, former Head of the UK Diplomatic Service and Ambassador to Paris
- * QQ 310–328 Conrad Bird, Director of the ‘Great Britain’ Campaign in the Prime Minister’s Office
- * Cabinet Office
- * QQ 329–342 Rt Hon Michael Fallon MP, Minister for Business and Enterprise, BIS
- ** Rt Hon Maria Miller MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, DCMS

- ** QQ 343–357 Rt Hon Sir John Major KG CH
- ** QQ 358–367 Tara Sonenshine, former Under-Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs for the US Department of State (2012–13), and Director of Foreign Policy Planning for the National Security Council during the Clinton Administration
- * QQ 368–383 Rt Hon Hugo Swire MP, Minister of State, FCO
- * Dr Andrew Murrison MP, Minister for International Security Strategy, Ministry of Defence

Alphabetical list of all witnesses

- ** Sir Antony Acland (QQ 292–309)
- ** Dr Rudolf Adam, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany (QQ 187–199)
- Adam Smith International
- Indra Adnan, Soft Power Network
- All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global Health
- * Professor Simon Anholt (QQ 200–217)
- Dr Cristina Archetti, University of Salford
- ** ARM (QQ 218–235)
- Asia House
- Association of Commonwealth Universities
- * BBC World Service (QQ 63–92)
- ** Nicholas Beadle CMG, RUSI (QQ 42–62)
- Dr Matt Beech, University of Hull
- Behavioural Dynamics Institute
- ** Ian Birrell, columnist and foreign correspondent (QQ 126–151)
- David Blackie
- BP
- British Academy
- * British Council (QQ 63–92)
- * British Museum (QQ 63–92)
- Dr Robin Brown
- * Cabinet Office (QQ 310–328)
- Centre for Cultural Relations, University of Edinburgh
- ** Centre for European Reform (QQ 165–175)
- Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University
- Centre for World Cinemas, University of Leeds and B-Film: The Birmingham Centre for Film Studies

- Wygene Chong
City of London Corporation
- ** Commonwealth Business Council (QQ 93–115)
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) UK
Professor Andrew Coyle, International Centre for Prison Studies,
University of Essex
- ** Professor Michael Cox, London School of Economics and Political
Science (LSE) (QQ 23–41)
Demos
- * Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (QQ 1–22, 329–342)
- * Department for Culture, Media and Sports (QQ 1–22, 329–342)
- * Department for International Development (QQ 1–22)
Richard Dowden, Royal African Society
Durham Global Security Institute
- ** England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) (QQ 274–291)
European Economics and Financial Centre
- ** European Policy Forum (QQ 165–175)
Exporting Education UK (EdExUK)
- * Rt Hon Michael Fallon MP, Minister for Business and Enterprise,
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (QQ 329–342)
Dr Ali Fisher
- * Foreign and Commonwealth Office (QQ 1–22, 152–164)
Dr Iginio Gagliardone, University of Oxford
Dr Jamie Gaskarth, University of Plymouth
- * Sir Roger Gifford, then Lord Mayor of London (QQ 236–245)
Professor Marie Gillespie, Open University
Sir Jeremy Greenstock
- * ‘Great Britain’ Campaign (QQ 310–328)
Rt Hon Justine Greening MP, Secretary of State, Department for
International Development
Dr Peter van Ham, Netherlands Institute of International Relations
- * Lord Hannay of Chiswick (QQ 292–309)
- * Mark Harper MP, then Minister for Immigration, Home Office
(QQ 260–273)
- ** HE Mr Keiichi Hayashi, Ambassador of Japan (QQ 187–199)
Henry Jackson Society
- * Home Office (QQ 260–273)

- Humanitarian Intervention Centre (HIC)
- Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW)
- Independent Schools Council
- Ingenious Media
- * Institute of Export (QQ 93–115)
- * International Alert (QQ 126–151)
- Dr Daniel Arthur, International Policy Dynamics
- ** HE Mr Roberto Jaguaribe, Ambassador of Brazil (QQ 187–199)
- ** Lord Jay of Ewelme (QQ 292–309)
- Professor Mary Kaldor, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)
- Professor John Krige, Georgia Institute of Technology
- Levant Education Consulting
- ** London First (QQ 246–259)
- ** Rt Hon Sir John Major KG CH (QQ 343–357)
- Sir Peter Marshall
- * Jonathan McClory (QQ 200–217)
- ** John Micklethwait, *The Economist* (QQ 23–41)
- ** Rt Hon Maria Miller MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Department for Culture, Media and Sport (QQ 329–342)
- * Ministry of Defence (QQ 42–62, 368–383)
- ** Lord Moynihan, former Chairman, British Olympic Association (QQ 274–291)
- Dr Peter Munce, University of Hull
- * Dr Andrew Murrison, Ministry of Defence (QQ 368–383)
- * National Asian Business Association (QQ 93–115)
- National Museum Directors' Council
- Dr Robin Niblett, Chatham House
- Richard Norton-Taylor (*The Guardian*)
- ** Professor Joseph S. Nye, Harvard Kennedy University (QQ 176–186)
- ** Open Europe (QQ 165–175)
- ** Overseas Development Institute (QQ 126–151)
- PACT
- Dr James Pamment, University of Texas
- ** Agnès Poirier (QQ 200–217)
- ** Baroness Prashar (QQ 152–164)
- ** Premier League (QQ 274–291)

- ** PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC)
Raleigh International
Professor Gary D. Rawnsley, Aberystwyth University
Research Councils UK
- * Professor Colin Riordan, Universities UK & Cardiff University (QQ 246–259)
Professor Caroline Rooney, University of Kent
Professor Laura J. Roselle, Elon University, USA
Dr Christina Rowley, University of Bristol
The Royal Commonwealth Society
The Royal Society
- ** HE Mr Carlos dos Santos, High Commissioner for the Republic of Mozambique (QQ 152–164)
Professor Philip Seib, University of Southern California
- ** Shell
Emile Simpson
Professor Giles Scott-Smith, Leiden University
Lord Soley
- ** Tara Sonenshine (QQ 358–367)
Professor Annabelle Sreberny, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)
- ** David Stanley, former CEO, the Penspen Group Ltd (QQ 218–235)
Rt Hon Jack Straw MP
- * Rt Hon Hugo Swire MP, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (QQ 368–383)
- ** Tourism Alliance and UKInbound (QQ 246–259)
- ** HE Mr Kim Traavik, Ambassador of Norway (QQ 187–199)
- ** Transparency International UK (QQ 126–151)
Dr Alban Webb, Open University
- ** Lord Williams of Baglan, Chatham House (QQ 23–41)
UK China Visa Alliance (UKCVA)
UK Sport
- * UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) (QQ 116–125)
UK Trade Facilitation
- * Universities UK and the UK Higher Education International Unit (QQ 246–259)
VICTUS

VisitBritain

Walpole British Luxury

Welsh Government

Derek Wyatt

Professor Urs Matthias Zachmann, University of Edinburgh

APPENDIX 3: CALL FOR EVIDENCE

Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence

The House of Lords Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence, chaired by Lord Howell of Guildford, is conducting an inquiry into the ways in which Government, companies, individuals and other non-state actors might develop and improve the UK's use of soft power in furthering its global influence and protecting its interests. The Committee invites interested organisations and individuals to submit written evidence as part of the inquiry.

Written evidence is sought by 18 September 2013. The submissions we receive will guide the Committee's deliberations in oral evidence sessions later this year, and also inform the Committee's final conclusions and recommendations. Public hearings have been held since June 2013, and will continue until the late autumn. The Committee will report to the House in March 2014. The Report will receive a response from the Government, and is likely to be debated in the House.

The Committee was set up on 16 May 2013 'to examine the use of soft power in furthering the United Kingdom's global influence and interests, and to make recommendations'.

Professor Joseph Nye, who has written extensively about soft power, summed it up as 'the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments'.⁸³⁷ It has been argued that the information revolution has expanded soft power potentialities, while recent military engagements have shown the limitations of hard power. The concept of soft power has also gained currency in the UK Government in recent years. The 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review and National Security Strategy stressed the value of soft power in response to the challenges facing defence funding. The Foreign Secretary argued for the importance of soft power as a 'vital component' of the UK's international influence in a key 2010 speech.⁸³⁸ To that end, the 2010 Foreign and Commonwealth Office Business Plan contained a commitment to 'develop a long-term programme to enhance UK 'soft power', co-ordinated by the National Security Council'.

The Committee's inquiry will consider how the UK Government might in the future develop and employ better the country's soft power resources to strengthen the UK's influence abroad—but also how the UK's soft power is extended and used by organisations in the private and civil society spheres, as well as the public sector, and how it inter-relates with the role of the Armed Forces.

The Committee is keen to take evidence from a wide range of stakeholders working in a variety of sectors. These include, but are not limited to: businesses, and their representative organisations, which are engaged in foreign trade or are working to attract foreign direct investment to the UK; the culture, sport, design, research and universities sectors; the media and communications sector; the tourism sector; Government institutions and publicly-funded bodies; foreign policy research institutions and think-tanks; the security and defence community; those working with, or who have a research focus on, the Commonwealth, EU, UN, NATO and other international networks and institutions such as the World

⁸³⁷ Nye J.S. Jr (2004) *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, p ix.

⁸³⁸ Rt Hon William Hague MP (2010) speech on 'Britain's values in a networked world', Lincoln's Inn, 15 September.

Bank and IMF; the humanitarian and international development sector; political, religious and constitutional bodies and institutions; and those with knowledge of or an interest in how other countries seek to promote and use soft power, and in how other countries and their peoples view the UK.

Issues

The Committee would welcome submissions of written evidence that consider any of the following questions (not listed in any particular order of importance).

The meaning and importance of soft power

- What is your understanding of ‘soft power’? What does it mean for the work that you do?
- How important is a country’s soft power? What is the evidence that soft power makes a difference?
- How do deployments of soft power inter-relate with harder and more physical exercises of the nation’s power, ranging from trade sanctions up to the full use of force through military means?
- In a digitally connected world, is soft power becoming more important? If so, why, and will this trend continue?

The extent and use of the UK’s soft power resources

- What are the most important soft power assets that the UK possesses? Can we put a value on the UK’s soft power resources?
- Are the Government doing enough to help the UK maximise the extent of, and benefit gained from, its soft power? What more—or less—should the Government do to encourage the generation and use of soft power?
- How can non-state actors in the UK, including businesses, best be encouraged to generate soft power for the UK, and be discouraged from undermining it?
- How can non-state actors in the UK, including businesses, best be encouraged and assisted to benefit from the UK’s soft power? How can the UK mobilise its soft power resources to boost trade with other countries and foreign direct investment in the UK?
- Who should be the target audiences, and what should be the aims, of the application of the UK’s soft power? Is the UK using its soft power well and to the right ends?
- Is there sufficient return for the Government’s investment in soft power? Is the Government’s investment adequate?
- Are there spheres of influence in which the Government should do more to promote the UK? Are there spheres in which the Government should do less?
- Given the soft power resources at the UK’s disposal, how can the UK Government, companies, individuals and other non-state actors do better at getting soft power to deliver, in terms of the UK’s interests? Can you give examples of where attempts to employ soft power have been

unsuccessful, for instance because they delivered counter-productive results?

- What should the UK be aiming for in five years' time in its possession and deployment of soft power and influence?

Soft power and diplomacy

- What roles do international networks such as the UN, the EU and the Commonwealth play in strengthening the UK's soft power and influence abroad and facilitating its application? How could the UK use these networks more effectively to increase its influence?
- How best should the UK's foreign policy and approach to diplomacy respond to the new global communications environment, where social media have rapidly become prominent, where alternative media organisations (such as Al Jazeera) have multiplied in power and reach, and where the grips of traditional elites on the flows of information in their countries have weakened?
- How should the UK best respond to the more prominent role in international affairs played by non-state actors and emerging powers? Can the UK shape this landscape as it develops, or must it take a purely reactive approach?
- How are UK institutions (such as Parliament, the Monarchy, and religious bodies) and values (such as the UK's commitment to the rule of law, human rights, and freedom of speech) perceived abroad? Do other countries have negative opinions of the UK? Do those representing the UK give enough consideration to how the UK is perceived?
- Are there any examples of how its commitment to such values has hindered the UK's influence abroad or damaged its interests?
- How can the UK promote its values abroad without being accused of cultural imperialism, propagandising, or hypocrisy?

Soft power and hard power

- How should the UK's generation and use of soft power relate to its generation and use of hard power?
- Has the soft power generated by the UK's Armed Forces increased or decreased in recent years? Can soft power promotion contribute to national security?

Learning from others

- Are other countries, or non-state actors, performing better than the UK in maximising the extent of, and their benefits from, their soft power resources?
- Are there any soft power approaches used by other countries that are particularly relevant to the UK, with its institutional mix of public sector bodies, private sector enterprises, and civil society organisations?

- Have other countries been able to leverage soft power resources over the long term, and find ways of measuring and demonstrating long-term benefits?
- To what extent have other countries tried to form and project a single strategic narrative about their identity and their place in the world?

Aspects of soft power

- What roles do sport and culture play in boosting the UK's soft power?
- What is your assessment of the role played by the English language, and English-language publications, in advancing the UK's influence abroad, bearing in mind that English is the working language of the Commonwealth, which embraces roughly a third of the world's population? What more can be done to leverage this?
- What more can be done to encourage British people to learn foreign languages and acquire deeper understanding of foreign cultures?
- What is your assessment of the role played by UK universities and research institutions in contributing to the UK's soft power? Does the global influence of UK universities and research institutions face any threats?
- What soft power gains can the UK expect from its overseas aid and humanitarian commitments? Should aid be used to advance the UK's influence abroad?
- Do UK companies working abroad get the support that they need from the Government, particularly when they face competitors from other countries?
- What should be the UK's role in setting rules, norms and standards for international trade? Does the UK's commitment to upholding international standards help or hinder the UK's commercial activities overseas?
- What will be the long-term impact of budgetary cuts to publicly-funded bodies involved in promoting British culture overseas?
- To what extent should the UK Government involve the devolved administrations in its work on soft power? Does the UK have a single narrative or should it project a loose collection of narratives to reflect the character of its regions?

APPENDIX 4: GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACU	Association of Commonwealth Universities
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BBCWS	BBC World Service
BIS	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
BRIC	Brazil, Russia, India and China
CCTV	China Central Television
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CERN	European Organisation for Nuclear Research
CIVETS	Columbia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey and South Africa
CNN	Cable News Network
CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
CSO	Civil society organisation
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DfE	Department for Education
DFID	Department for International Development
EEA	European Economic Area
EU	European Union
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FTA	Free trade agreement
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNI	Gross national income
ICAEW	Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IU	UK Higher Education International Unit
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NABA	National Asian Business Association
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organisation

NMDC	National Museum Directors' Council
NSC	National Security Council
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PACT	Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television
RCS	Royal Commonwealth Society
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
SDSR	Strategic Defence and Security Review
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UKTF	UK Trade Facilitation
UKTI	UK Trade and Investment
UN	United Nations
UUK	Universities UK
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature