A Successful Brexit:

Three Foreign and Security Policy Tests

The **UK** in a
Changing Europe

Contents

Foreword

Foreign and security policies have, with some sporadic exceptions, been largely absent from the debate on Brexit since the referendum of 2016. Attention, perhaps understandably, has focused largely on the intricacies of the economic relationship between the UK and the EU.

Yet Brexit will impact on Britain's role in the world. What follows is not an attempt to predict what will transpire, but, rather, to provide a framework with which to assess the impact of what does. The following analysis does not preclude the possibility that some of these objectives could have been achieved within the EU, but merely considers in the light of the UK's exit what the main objectives should now be.

The report is the result of a fruitful and, I hope for the others involved, enjoyable collaboration between several individuals hailing from a number of institutions. I'd like here to record my profound thanks to Malcolm Chalmers of the Royal United Services Institute, Camilla Macdonald, Luigi Scazzieri of the Centre for European Reform and Richard Whitman of the University of Kent for agreeing to work together on this important and, I hope, useful project.

Anand Menon *The UK in a Changing Europe*

INTRODUCTION

Ultimately, the importance of Brexit will lie in its practical impact on the United Kingdom. While the spats over the process and the politics of leaving the European Union are currently dominating the media, what Brexit means for Britain will hinge on what it means in concrete terms for the country.

In a recent report, the UK in a Changing Europe attempted to set out a framework for assessing the economic impact of the UK's departure from the European Union[1]. Its objective was precisely to lay out a series of tests to allow us to grasp the implications of Brexit on key areas of economic activity. Yet Brexit is not all about economics. During the referendum campaign, both sides of the debate made numerous claims about the potential implications of membership or non-membership for Britain's place and role in world politics.

The Remain campaign argued that membership enhanced the UK's security and international influence. Leaving the EU would diminish the UK's global standing, weaken the 'special relationship' and reduce the UK's ability to shape its international environment and defend its national interests. Leave supporters, for their part, pointed to NATO and the UK's membership of the UN Security Council as the guarantors of the UK's security and power. Leaving the European Union, they argued, would have a negligible impact on the UK's national security or global standing. On the contrary, freed from the constraints of EU membership, some predicted that the UK would emerge as a more dynamic global player.

In what follows, we aim to provide a framework for assessing what Brexit might mean for the UK's international role. Our intention here is not to answer the question as to what that role might look like but, rather, to consider how we might begin to assess the impact of Brexit upon it.

This is not an easy task. An obvious difference from the assessment of the economic consequences of Brexit lies in the absence of clear data to measure many of the outcomes in which we are interested. Assessing foreign and security is, by necessity, more of a qualitative than a quantitative undertaking.

There are, of course, some metrics. It is possible to measure the public resources devoted to national security and strengthening international influence, most notably expenditure on defence, diplomacy and development assistance. The outcomes derived from these expenditures remain much harder to quantify, however. In general, it is simply not possible to measure the effects of Brexit on foreign and security policy in any straightforward sense.

Furthermore, as in the case of the economic tests, another complication lies in the area of causality. Whatever outcomes we observe will be shaped by a number of causal factors of which Brexit will only be one. Long term developments – including the increasing importance of Asia – mean that future trends must be compared, not with the situation as of 2017, but with a realistic counterfactual based on continued EU membership. UK security and influence will also be dependent on unpredictable events unaffected by Brexit, just as the recent past has been shaped by the successive shocks of the 9/11 attacks on the US, the 2008 global financial crisis, Russian aggression in Ukraine in 2014, and the victory of Donald Trump in the 2016 US election. The foreign policy of the Trump administration will doubtless exert a powerful impact over the UK and, indeed, world politics in general.

Nevertheless, and just as in the case of economics, such difficulties should not blind us to the pressing need to attempt an objective evaluation of the impact of Brexit. And this for no other reason than to provide an alternative to the politics of blame that will doubtless characterise public debate as this impact begins to be felt.

Consequently, it is our ambition to lay out a framework that can be used

[1]. A Successful Brexit: Four Economic Tests, The UK in a Changing Europe January 30 2017

as a basis for analysis before the political noise around Brexit drowns such attempts out. Furthermore, while there were obvious, and frequently bitter, arguments about the impact of the EU on British foreign and security policy, it is striking that a degree of consensus existed across both sides of the EU debate about the ultimate objectives that should be pursued.

On this basis, it is therefore possible to lay out a set of criteria against which the success or otherwise of Brexit can be assessed. We have identified three broad areas central to the referendum debate where the impact of Brexit will be important: national security, international influence, and control.

Each subsequent section attempts to assess the significance of membership of the EU on these discrete, albeit overlapping, objectives. They go on to explore the potential impact of Brexit, and what a 'successful Brexit' might look like in each field. Most importantly, we identify a series of questions that could be used to 'test' the impact of Brexit.

Clearly, this is far from an exhaustive account. The framework we attempt to lay out here could be modified or improved upon. Nevertheless, this is our contribution to beginning the processes of assessing what Brexit really means for Britain.

Please see the annex for a summary of the tests and questions.

NATIONAL SECURITY

WHY THIS MATTERS

Maintaining the defence and security of the UK is a central function of government. As the 2015 National Security Strategy (NSS) and Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) make clear, the UK faces a wide range of security risks and challenges. It is likely to continue to do so for the foreseeable future. It is therefore important to analyse what impact Brexit has on the ability of the UK to meet these challenges.

During the referendum campaign, the impact of the EU on the UK's security was raised by both sides. Prime Minister David Cameron argued that Brexit would pose a threat to national security. It would jeopardise essential European cooperation against terrorism and international crime and 'divide the West' at a dangerous moment. Former ministers, such as Pauline Neville-Jones, and former senior personnel from all three branches of the British armed services similarly warned that Brexit would limit the UK's ability to deal with pressing security threats, from terrorism to a resurgent Russia.

On the other side, Leave campaigners sought to debunk what they saw as the 'myth' of European security. They emphasised the importance of NATO and criticised the EU's attempts to fashion a common security and defence policy as ineffective and even counter-productive. Sceptical Leave campaigners also questioned the value-added by the EU in the fields of international crime, cyber and counter-terrorism. In addition, they asserted that cooperation with experts would continue, if only because the UK's superior capabilities in these fields meant that 'they need us more than we need them'.

How has the EU affected the UK's security?

The Prime Minister argued in her Article 50 letter that 'the institutions and the leaders of the European Union have succeeded in bringing together a continent blighted by war into a union of peaceful nations, and supported the transition of dictatorships to democracy.' Others also argue that the EU continues to play a positive role in coordinating European foreign and security policies, allowing Europe to wield influence over key global security issues which would otherwise be dominated by the major powers.

The UK has also used the Union, to argue for a stronger line towards Russia and to tackle manifold security threats emerging from sub-Saharan Africa. It has spearheaded developments in justice and security cooperation, in counter-terrorism and cyber security. Membership of the EU has arguably contributed to the pacification of the conflict in Northern Ireland and to better relations between the nations of the United Kingdom.

Even when contributions of the EU to overall European security is acknowledged, however, critics argue that its contemporary contribution is much more problematic. Some argue that over-ambition, and in particular the creation of the euro and the Schengen zone, have exacerbated differences between EU member states, contributed to the growth of political extremism, and now threaten the long-term peace and prosperity of the continent. Others claim that Europe and the UK would be more secure if a number of EU competencies (over trade, currency and migration) were returned to member states. Finally, others still maintain that cooperation with European neighbours remains vital to the UK's

security, yet NATO is the primary organisation through which this cooperation takes place.

What would a Brexit that had a positive impact on security look like and how could we tell?

At a minimum, a successful Brexit would preserve the principal benefits of current EU regimes and maintain cooperative security relations with EU member states. More ambitiously, the UK would use Brexit to enhance its security in areas where it will gain greater control while fashioning improved security arrangements with the EU, its member states and others. A Brexit that had a positive impact on security would:

1. Preserve close cooperation with Europe on counter-terrorism and organised crime.

2. Increase the ability of the UK to restrict the entry of harmful individuals and goods into its territory.

3. Allow the UK to continue to shape European cyber security standards while gaining more room for manoeuvre in its own practices.

4. Preserve the status quo in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Gibraltar.

5. Preserve, if not enhance, bilateral and multilateral security arrangements.

From this, the following questions emerge:

Q1. Terrorism and Organised Crime

At present, the UK participates in a number of important EU agreements. These include full membership of Europol, the European Arrest Warrant system and a number of intelligence sharing arrangements. If the UK's withdrawal from the EU were to take place without new arrangements to replace these, it could significantly reduce its ability – and that of its EU neighbours – to tackle trans-border terrorism and organised crime.

Both the UK and the EU would have a strong mutual interest in agreeing new arrangements. The recent EU/US 'Privacy Shield' agreement, along with the Umbrella Agreement for the exchange of data on criminal matters, provides some indication of the kind of data protection assurances that the EU might demand in order to exchange data with the UK on criminal matters. To continue using important law enforcement databases that the USA cannot access, however, the UK may have to accept much stricter conditions. In addition, difficulties in relation to legal authority might make it hard to separate these issues from the broader economic negotiations.

The critical question relates to how any new cooperative arrangements affect the level of security that the UK derives from the current regime. Will they contribute more or less to the UK's security than the current arrangements?

Q2. Border Security

Since the UK is not a member of Schengen, it already has the means to monitor the movement of EU citizens across its border. But Brexit will increase its ability to restrict such movement.

Whether this also contributes to UK security depends on three questions. First, to what degree does the freedom of movement represent a security vulnerability? Second, will the Government decide to further restrict the movement of EU citizens after Brexit? Third, to what extent will such restrictions include greater security profiling of EU nationals?

Similarly, if Brexit involves leaving the Customs Union, it will in principle increase the UK's ability to monitor and control the movement of goods across its borders. Whether this will contribute to security, by providing opportunities to restrict the influx of harmful goods - such as narcotics, firearms and explosives – will

depend on the post-Brexit border and customs regime. Will this be stronger or weaker than current systems?

Q3. Cyber-Security

The UK has one of the more advanced cyber security systems in Europe, and continues to devote substantial resources – both public and private – to keeping pace with rapidly changing threats. Cyber security is described as a 'Tier 1' threat in the 2015 SDSR.

The Government's National Cyber Security Centre works closely with private companies, including those responsible for critical national infrastructure, to ensure that they are ready to comply with the EU's General Data Protection Regulation, which is due to be implemented across the EU in May 2018. The Government is also examining whether more national regulation will be needed to ensure compliance with the EU's Network and Information Security Directive, due to be implemented in 2018.

In addition, the ability of the UK to counter cyber security threats is partly dependent on regular data exchange between UK authorities and private companies, including those based in the EU. These exchanges may be put at risk if the EU does not regard the UK as a safe recipient of sensitive personal data.

Post Brexit, will the UK choose to continue to meet (if not exceed) EU standards in these areas? If so, how far will it be able to shape the content of EU standards? The more the UK continues to be committed to EU cyber standards, the less significant will be the impact of Brexit in this area. If the UK diverges significantly in cyber security practice, it will be possible to weigh any security benefits derived from this increase in national control against the costs – in terms of both security and market access – of lost influence in the EU.

Q4. Northern Ireland

The Prime Minister has made clear that the Brexit negotiations must 'pay attention to the UK's unique relationship with the Republic of Ireland and the importance of the peace process in Northern Ireland.' To avoid jeopardising the peace process, and to uphold the Belfast Agreement, she emphasised that the UK will 'want to avoid a return to a hard border between our two countries, to be able to maintain the Common Travel Area between us, and to make sure that the UK's withdrawal from the EU does not harm the Republic of Ireland.'

A key question is: to what extent the UK will be able to uphold the Belfast Agreement, avoiding a return to a hard border and maintaining the free movement of people, particularly if Brexit involves leaving the Customs Union? If some amendment to current arrangements proves necessary, will this result in a rise in political instability and insecurity?

Q5. Rising Powers

The UK's ability to deal with major threats could be affected by Brexit. In the short term, there may be a distraction effect as government energies focus on the ramifications of Brexit. 'Global Britain' might provide the basis for greater engagement with rising powers. In the medium and long term, the impact of Brexit on the rate of growth in national income could affect defence spending. Faced with major power threats, including, but not limited to, a resurgent Russia, will the UK be able to stick to current defence spending plans laid out in the 2015 SDSR?

TEST 2:

INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCE
Will Brexit increase or decrease the UK's ability to shape the international agenda?

WHY THIS MATTERS

Influence – the ability to shape international outcomes – is a key element of power in international affairs. Influence can be considered in both material and non-material terms: hard power (military forces and economic leverage) and soft power (ability to lead by example). Ultimately, however, influence is measured in relation to outcomes. It implies the ability to successfully steer the actions of others, persuading them do what they otherwise would not.

During the referendum, the Remain campaign argued that being a member of the EU increased the UK's international influence, both outside the European Union (for instance over Russia, or states seeking closer relations with the EU) and vis-á-vis other EU member states. In a speech in May 2016, then Prime Minister David Cameron argued that 'either we influence Europe, or it influences us'. Conversely, the Leave campaign sought to downplay the impact of membership on the UK's influence. They argued that this influence would survive Brexit, rooted as it is in the strength of its democratic institutions, military and culture, its global diplomatic network and its leading role in international organisations like the United Nations.

How has the EU affected the UK's international influence?

The UK has used the EU as a way of pursuing its interests in foreign policy. As a member state, the UK was able to press for enlargement in the 1990s, achieving its aim of bringing stability and democracy to Eastern Europe. The UK has also shaped EU policies on international issues ranging from security to trade. For example, in international security, the UK pushed successfully for the imposition of binding EU-wide sanctions on Iran and Russia.

Evidence that membership of the EU has constrained the UK's international influence is difficult to identify. Unlike in core areas of economic activity, in most areas of foreign and security policy, binding EU law does not apply and decisions are taken by unanimous rather than majority vote. This leaves us with examples, such as Iraq in 2003, where the UK clearly failed to persuade other member states to adopt its preferred policies, but membership of the EU played little or no part in the outcome.

There are several international organisations in which the EU traditionally speaks with one voice, such as the UN Human Rights Council. Leaving the EU may free the UK to pursue independent positions as such fora, but might also decrease the scale of its influence.

During the referendum, Vote Leave suggested that the UK would have a 'friendlier relationship' with the EU after Brexit, implying it might wield greater influence than it did as a supposedly unpopular member of the club. Vote Leave also argued that membership of the EU had kept the UK from playing a potentially influential role in the context of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

What would a Brexit that had a positive impact on the UK's international influence look like and how would we tell?

A successful Brexit:

1. Would result in the UK maintaining or increasing its current degree of influence in shaping the content and effectiveness of shared approaches to dealing with the EU's neighbourhood (Baltic Sea, Balkans, Russia, Middle East and North Africa).

2. Would result in the UK maintaining or increasing its current degree of influence in shaping events outside the European neighbourhood (sub-Saharan Africa, Persian Gulf, South Asia, Asia-Pacific).

3. Would result in the UK maintaining or increasing its current degree of influence in shaping global regimes - economic, environmental, security, nuclear and so on.

4. Would equally see the UK maintain the same influence over its EU partners.

The UK will not be able to exert as much influence on EU policy (or vice versa) as it does at present; but the extent of this reduction remains unclear. The negative impact of Brexit on UK global influence is likely to be relatively limited in areas where the EU is less influential (such as military capabilities, the collective use of force, and politico-security crises outside Europe's immediate neighbourhood), and more significant where it is a key actor (for example in relation to trade, monopoly regulation and the environment, and in crises in Europe's neighbourhood). In areas where the UK is currently represented by the EU in international negotiations, the loss of leverage over common EU policies may be offset by an increase in the UK's ability to form flexible alliances, more geared to its own interests and values, than was possible while it remained an EU member.

An assessment of whether Brexit has had any effect on the UK's international influence would need to cover the following areas:

Q1. Resources

What impact will Brexit have on the size of the UK's defence, foreign affairs and development budgets? Will the end of the UK's direct contribution to the EU's development programmes lead to more resources being available for nationally-defined purposes?

Q2. The European Neighbourhood

While leaving the EU could mean that the UK is more independent in its foreign policy, it will also mean that it is less able to coordinate its response to neighbourhood challenges with other EU members. Will Brexit lead to effective ad hoc mechanisms for coordination with EU states? Or will the UK have to influence EU policy via individual member states?

Q3. NATO

Will Brexit lead to a weakening of NATO and of the UK's influence? Will it affect relations between the UK and other NATO members? And will it result in the UK still being able to influence the positions of NATO members, rather than simply adapting its own? Likewise, a successful Brexit will allow the UK to maintain or improve its close relationship with the US. Cooperation, of course, need not be a sign of influence: for Brexit to be positive for the UK's influence, it would have to be able to shape US policy rather than simply adapting its own policies. Finally, for Brexit to be successful, the UK should maintain its current level of involvement in international crisis decision-making: will the UK continue to be part of informal groupings designed to address international crises?

Q4. Global Reach

The UK is a major international player with significant global reach. The impact of EU membership on the UK's influence beyond the European neighbourhood will become clear once it has left the EU. Will Brexit lead to a retrenchment of UK foreign policy? Will it affect the UK's ability to shape attitudes and events in its favour? Will Brexit lead to an increase in the level and effectiveness of the UK's 'defence engagement' efforts?

Q5. International regimes

As a member of the EU, the UK has been able to shape global economic, environmental, nuclear and security regimes. Leaving the EU will mean that the UK will need to find other ways to maintain its influence, whether through cooperation with the EU or in other ways. Will Brexit lead to fewer UK attempts to influence global regimes in its favour? How will Brexit impact on Britain's 'power to persuade,' its 'soft power', and its ability to lead by example? Is the UK able to maintain its leading role in defining and implementing sanctions regimes?

TEST 3:

CONTROL

Will the UK increase its ability to take its own decisions on foreign and security policy once it leaves the EU?

WHY THIS MATTERS

Control, or autonomy, is an elusive but central objective of nation states in international affairs. While absolute autonomy is effectively impossible, highly autonomous states have the room to manoeuvre to pursue their own interests and assert their views with little fear of overly negative repercussions.

National democratic control was a central objective of the Leave campaign. Leavers were clear in their view that the UK could become a more autonomous international actor if it chose to leave the EU. It would be able to forge new international relationships (including trade deals, where the agility of an independent state was held to be preferable to the cumbersome nature of EU led negotiations) with other states, and move closer to existing allies with whom it had greater affinity - within the Commonwealth for example. The UK, it was claimed, would become a more dynamic actor on the world stage, relieved of the need to conform to European positions. The supposed danger of European defence integration and the 'Euro-army' reducing the military autonomy of the UK would also be averted. Resources that were no longer diverted to European foreign and defence initiatives, as Liam Fox argued, could also be used to boost the global reach and capacity for autonomous action of the UK's Armed Forces.

Conversely, the Remain campaign argued that leaving the EU would only result in the illusion of greater autonomy in international affairs. Instead of being free to choose its allies and speak its mind, the UK would find itself uncomfortably dependent on partners like Saudi Arabia, China and the United States and, in a broader sense, whoever would be willing to engage with it. If, meanwhile, the EU-27 deepened its cooperation in foreign and defence policy, it could become a more autonomous actor in international affairs. In this situation, an increased sense of control and support for the UK's foreign policy among the public would probably not materialise.

How has the EU affected the UK's control over foreign and security policy?

Formally, the restraints imposed on the UK's foreign and security policy by EU membership are minimal. European foreign and security cooperation is organised on an almost entirely intergovernmental basis.

When it comes to foreign policy, the UK often coordinates foreign policy with the EU. It has also pushed for stronger collective action on specific issues including Russia, Iran, the Western Balkans, Somalia and the Eastern Partnership, with some success. Conversely, where a stronger EU line is seen to threaten the UK's special interests – in relation to China, the US or issues such as privacy and intelligence, for example – the UK has withheld its support.

In terms of control, this suggests that while the UK tries to avoid

disagreement with the EU, it remains an autonomous international actor. When it counts, the EU has not prevented the UK from acting in accordance with its perceived national interest. Membership of the EU did not prevent the UK from participating in the invasion of Iraq in 2003, against the wishes of other member states. It has not prevented the UK from cultivating individual relationships with other countries, including those which jar with the policy preferences of the EU and other member states e.g. Saudi Arabia. Similarly, the UK retains complete control over defence policy. Under the EU's current arrangements for collective defence – the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) – each state retains the right to veto.

In a few areas, the UK has lost direct control over certain 'foreign policy' powers that flow from the EU's competence in trade and environment. While the UK can unilaterally impose a wide range of economic sanctions should it choose to, only the EU as a bloc can impose trade sanctions. Similarly, the UK's obligations under climate change conventions are set by the EU, which has responsibility in this area.

In practical terms, Brexit will allow the UK to gain control over the application of trade sanctions and its participation in international environmental regimes. Money spent on foreign policy dossiers and development that is currently channelled through the EU will be controlled by the UK. But the UK could also become subject to the extra-territorial reach of EU financial sanctions, and may lose control over which states become subject to EU sanctions. To date, this is an area in which the UK has shown considerable leadership within the EU.

It remains to be seen whether Brexit serves to reenergise British foreign and security policy. Some academics argue that membership of international institutions allows member states to hide behind these organisations to disguise their own lack of foreign policy, or blame them for failures that are largely national. It is conceivable that Britain's exit will impose on its policy makers the need to define a more thorough and coherent approach to world politics than it has needed since accession in 1973.

Outside the EU, the UK will also lose its veto over EU foreign and security policy. Depending on what influence it manages to retain and what mechanisms of cooperation it establishes with the EU, the UK may find its control over its own foreign policy effectively reduced. EU action or inaction in the Middle East, for example, could have knock on effects for the UK's foreign and security options in the region.

Companies based in Britain export defence equipment to a number of countries, and this activity is currently affected by EU arms export controls. The UK may choose to ignore EU sanctions, exporting to more countries. But it might also be subject to end-use restrictions imposed by the EU, upon which it might no longer have the same level of influence.

More broadly, after Brexit, the UK's foreign policy and security will be impacted by its economic performance. Should this be negative, it could could push the UK into unequal partnerships that circumscribe rather than showcase its autonomy, as well as preventing the UK from engaging in a range of foreign and security related activities where it may no longer be able to commit resources. Successful economic performance, on the other hand, might make more resources available.

What would a Brexit that had a positive impact on the UK's control look like and how would we tell?

Ultimately, like influence, the impact on control will be measured in relation to outcomes. A Brexit that had a positive impact on the

UK's control would:

1. Permit the UK to establish new partnerships and adopt independent positions across a range of foreign policy and security areas, while preserving cooperative relationships with the EU and European states on key issues as determined by the UK.

2. Establish cooperative mechanisms with the EU that would effectively see the UK retain some measure of control over EU policies that impact on the foreign policy and security interests of the UK.

3. Result in the UK's activism on global issues – from maritime security to human trafficking – remaining unchanged or increased to include new areas, including the negotiation of climate change conventions.

4. Result in the same or increased public support for the UK's foreign policy.

5. Result in a more agile and adaptive approach to international relations, and particularly international crises.

To test the extent to which outcome is achieved after Brexit, three areas should be considered:

Q1. Security

The extent to which the UK gains greater control over its security is dependent on the its future relationship with other EU member states in areas that impact on the UK's security. Will the EU accept UK participation on an ad-hoc basis? Will the format for continued cooperation preserve or reduce the UK's existing influence in these areas? Does greater control over policy choices carry a cost in terms of policy effects?

Q2. Foreign Policy

Those seeing benefits from the UK's exit from the EU argue the UK will no longer be a part of a foreign policy making system that results in 'lowest common denominator' outcomes. It might result in a greater sense among the public that the UK is determining its own course, acting in its own interests based on its values. Will Brexit see the UK adopt foreign policy positions that are at odds with the EU and its member states with greater frequency or degree than it did when it was a member? Are these policies more popular or unpopular with the public as reflected in opinion polls and in parliament? To what extent will the UK still be able to influence its allies, particularly in cases where it does seek to pursue and promote an alternative course of action (such as imposing or dropping sanctions)? Will the significance of independent policy positions be offset by increasing international isolation?

Q3. Defence

While CSDP places no formal constraints on UK defence policy, a counter view holds that the development of an EU defence policy is a distraction from NATO. And NATO provides Europe with a meaningful collective defence arrangement that also ensures that the United States is committed to the continent. In leaving the EU, therefore, will the UK be able to concentrate more fully on its role and commitments to NATO? Will it be able to develop new defence commitments outside Europe that more accurately reflect the UK's global security concerns? Will it retain the ability to block or influence EU defence initiatives that it opposes? Finally, will the UK succeed in developing enhanced relationships with European states which share its aspirations, to facilitate interventions both within and outside Europe?

Q4. Global Governance

After Brexit, the UK hopes to retain, if not enhance, its autonomy vis-á-vis existing and emerging global norms and regimes. An important aspect of the government's vision of a 'Global Britain' after Brexit is activism and engagement across a wide range of global issues in both bilateral and multilateral settings. Outside the EU, the UK will be free to adopt its own position in climate change negotiations for the first time.

After Brexit, will we see an increase or decrease in the UK's engagement on global issues across multilateral fora and in the context of bilateral relationships?

Will we see a shift in the kinds of issues it engages in (away from human rights, for example)?

Will the UK decide to disengage from areas in which it is currently involved?

CONCLUSION

We have set out a framework for assessing and evaluating Brexit that we think can command support across the spectrum – from the government and the opposition parties and from those who voted Leave or Remain – because it is based on a widely shared set of objectives. Of course there will be deep and sincere differences on how we achieve them, but we hope that there is a consensus that they are broadly the right objectives.

We have only set out the framework for the tests – we have not sought to specify in detail the necessary measures or indicators, let alone assess whether they are likely to be met (and, as we have explained, the fact that we do not know the answers yet is precisely the point of this exercise). Moving forward, there needs to be some clear, evidence based and, as far as possible, objective mechanism for assessment.

There are a number of (not mutually exclusive) possibilities as to how this could be done:

• The government could commit to producing reports based on these tests at regular intervals. These would inevitably be political documents, but would at least subject government arguments to scrutiny and debate, in Parliament and the country.

• Alternatively, the Government could commit to commissioning independent analysis to inform its – and our – judgement.

• Parliament could, via the select committee mechanism, choose to produce its own assessments.

• Civil society organisations (for example, think tanks) could (perhaps in consortium, for greater impact) coordinate such an assessment, perhaps with a high-profile Commission of recognised, independent experts.

As well as more wide-ranging analyses, these tests could be applied to specific issues on a topical or thematic basis, such as the Syrian crisis, the South China Sea and the future of cooperation on climate change. There are many complex issues on which these tests could 'bite'.

Whichever model is chosen, what is important is that the credibility of both the tests and the process are established in the minds of the public at large. We are entering a period when the choices we make, collectively, will determine our future for decades – the significance of Brexit to the UK cannot be overstated. We all have a stake in making a success of Brexit. But to do that we need to have a shared vision of what success means. This is our contribution.

Annex

SUMMARY OF TESTS AND QUESTIONS

Test 1: National Security

Terrorism and organised crime:

Will new cooperative arrangements in security and law enforcement contribute more or less to the UK's security than the current arrangements?

Border security:

To what degree does the freedom of movement represent a security vulnerability?

Will the Government decide to further restrict the movement of EU citizens after Brexit?

To what extent will such restrictions include greater security profiling of EU nationals?

Will the post-Brexit border and customs regime be stronger or weaker than current systems in enabling the UK to monitor and control the movement of illicit goods across its borders?

Cyber security:

Post Brexit, will the UK choose to continue to meet (if not exceed) EU standards in cyber security?

If so, how far will it be able to shape the content of EU standards?

Northern Ireland:

To what extent will the UK be able to uphold the Belfast Agreement, avoiding a return to a hard border and maintaining the free movement of people, particularly if Brexit involves leaving the Customs Union?

If some amendment to current arrangements proves necessary, will this result in a rise in political instability and insecurity?

Rising powers:

Faced with major power threats, including, but not limited to, a resurgent Russia, will the UK be able to stick to current defence spending plans laid out in the 2015 (SDSR) Strategic Defence and Security Review?

Test 2: International Influence

Resources:

What impact will Brexit have on the size of the UK's defence, foreign affairs and development budgets?

Will the end of the UK's direct contribution to the EU's development programmes lead to more resources being available for nationally-defined purposes?

The European neighbourhood:

Will Brexit lead to effective ad hoc mechanisms for coordination with EU states?

Or will the UK have to influence EU policy via individual member states?

NATO:

Will Brexit lead to a weakening of NATO and of the UK's influence?

Will it affect relations between the UK and other NATO members?

Will it result in the UK still being able to influence the positions of NATO members, rather than simply adapting its own?

Will the UK continue to be part of informal groupings designed to address international crises?

Global reach:

Will Brexit lead to a retrenchment of UK foreign policy?

Will it affect the UK's ability to shape attitudes and events in its favour?

Will Brexit lead to an increase in the level and effectiveness of the UK's 'defence engagement' efforts?

International regimes:

Will Brexit lead to fewer UK attempts to influence global regimes in its favour?

How will Brexit impact on Britain's 'power to persuade,' its 'soft power', and its ability to lead by example?

Test 3: Control

Security:

Will the EU accept UK participation in EU security activities on an ad-hoc basis?

Will the format for continued cooperation preserve or reduce the UK's existing influence in these areas?

Does greater control over policy choices carry a cost in terms of policy effects?

Foreign policy:

Will Brexit see the UK adopt foreign policy positions that are at odds with the EU and its member states with greater frequency or degree than it did when it was a member?

Are these policies more popular or unpopular with the public, as reflected in opinion polls and in parliament?

To what extent will the UK still be able to influence its allies, particularly in cases where it does seek to pursue and promote an alternative course of action (such as imposing or dropping sanctions)?

Will the significance of independent policy positions be offset by increasing international isolation?

Defence:

In leaving the EU, will the UK be able to concentrate more fully on its role and commitments to NATO?

Will it be able to develop new defence commitments outside Europe that more accurately reflect the UK's global security concerns?

Will it retain the ability to block or influence EU defence initiatives that is opposes?

Will the UK succeed in developing enhanced relationships with European states which share its aspirations, to facilitate interventions both within and outside Europe?

Global Governance:

After Brexit, will we see an increase or decrease in the UK's engagement on global issues across multilateral fora and in the context of bilateral relationships?

Will we see a shift in the kinds of issues it engages in (away from human rights, for example)?

Will the UK decide to disengage from areas in which it is currently involved?

The **UK** in a
Changing Europe

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