

The Coalition for Global Prosperity

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# GLOBAL BRITAIN

Interviews with  
Lisa Nandy MP & David Davis MP



**COALITION  
FOR GLOBAL  
PROSPERITY**  
*Britain as a force for good*

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ISSUE 01

# GLOBAL BRITAIN

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Britain - A Force For Good

# WELCOME

For as long as the world collectively fails to address the root causes of migration, desperate souls will continue to cross the English Channel. For as long as viruses have no regard for national sovereignty, all of us will be at risk from future pandemics. It was always false and short-sighted to present international development as a choice between helping people overseas or helping people at home. The events of the past few years have demonstrated beyond doubt that doing both is in our national interest.

If we accept that aid is both the right thing to do, and the smart thing to do too, then the real question is how best to tailor aid and development for the challenges of the 21st century? We might start with the rise of China. For the 700 million people who still live in extreme poverty – many in dysfunctional or failed states – will be the first to suffer if authoritarian powers continue to expand their influence or if climate change accelerates. The world needs British values and British leadership.

Public opinion is also important. Those in favour of doing international development need to spend less time worrying about the Guardian, and more time winning over the readers of the Stoke Sentinel. Our polling projects offer a glimpse into how that might be achieved.

Britain is at its best when it acts as a global leader in development as well as in defence and diplomacy. With a smart and effective aid budget, which leverages British expertise, the UK can transform lives and spread prosperity both at home and overseas.

**Ryan Henson**  
**Chief Executive**



# THE YEAR OF GLOBAL BRITAIN

November 2021 will definitely be remembered as an incredibly important month for the UK on the world stage and one where the future of the planet has been on the line.

At the G20, Russia and China were notably not in the room, but joined virtually which did lead to questions about their commitments to the upcoming conference on the climate in Glasgow as well as other pressing issues ahead of the world's most advanced economies. Although the summit was relatively uneventful in terms of announcements, we did see the Group of 20 commit to the Global tax rate of 15% for the world's largest companies. There was little commitment on the Climate but this would change when the world's leaders flew to Glasgow for the start of the COP summit.

Over 120 world leaders gathered in Glasgow for what was being called the last chance to "keep 1.5 alive" - the maximum amount that any increase in global temperatures should be limited to. In many areas, the summit achieved some significant declarations and targets from around the world with advances in woodland preservation, adaptation finance and carbon markets.

Some of the key outcomes from the COP 26 agreements are as follows:

- Coal and fossil fuels – Agreement asks countries to “accelerate efforts towards” phasing down “unabated coal power” and calls for an end to “inefficient” fossil fuel subsidies, although without a timescale. Clause “recognises” the need to support workers in those sectors to find other jobs. Eleventh-hour drama saw India and China water down the coal wording from “phase out” to “phase down.”
- Mitigation – By the end of next year, countries are requested to improve their 2030 national climate targets. Pledges now put the world on course for between 2.5C and 2.7C of warming by the end of the century, far from the Paris climate accord goals, which aim to limit global warming to well below 2C, ideally 1.5C, since pre-industrial times.
- Adaptation – Rich nations are asked to “at least double” their support for adaptation measures, which will help developing countries prepare for climate change, by 2025, compared to 2019 levels. This would imply that adaptation funding could be around \$40bn annually, from \$20bn in 2019.
- Loss and damage – Countries looking for payments to help them cope with the effects of climate change are to start a “dialogue” about funding a new organisation to give them support. This UN body will be dedicated to providing vulnerable nations with “technical assistance.” A standalone fund to pay for loss and damage was proposed by developing countries but rejected by rich nations including US, Europe and Australia.
- Climate finance – The agreement notes with “deep regret” that rich countries missed their 2020 target of providing \$100bn a year to help developing countries, and commits them to raise at least that amount, annually, through to 2025.
- Carbon markets – Negotiators closed a deal setting rules for carbon markets, potentially unlocking trillions of dollars for protecting forests, building renewable energy facilities and other projects to combat climate change. The final deal adopted by nearly 200 countries will implement Article 6 of the 2015 Paris Agreement, allowing countries to partially meet their climate targets by buying offset credits representing emission cuts by others.

Although the UK remains COP President until November 2022, all eyes will now be on Egypt who will become the next hosts of the summit.

# INTERVIEW WITH LISA NANDY MP

**It can sometimes feel that a lot of Government policy is concentrated in the Treasury, and the Foreign Office doesn't actually have that much traction inside government anymore. Do you ever feel that actually you might be shadowing and trying to persuade the Chancellor rather than the Foreign Secretary?**

I think it's definitely true that a lot of the tools of foreign policy are scattered across government. If you look at, for example, the situation in Hong Kong, one of the ways in which we stepped up to send a clear message to China, that we stand with the people of Hong Kong, and we take our obligations of the Joint Declaration seriously, is to open up safe passage to the UK for BNO Passport Holders.

Now that sits in the home office, but it's a key tool of foreign policy. So I think that's just the reality of the world that we live in is that different parts of government have to be able to work together in order to deliver a common agenda. The problem with this government, particularly when it comes to issues like China, is that you have this bizarre spectacle of the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence being so concerned about providing balance in the region against the power of China that we're sharing our nuclear expertise with the Australian Government. But yet just down the road, you've got BEIS, handing over large chunks of nuclear energy to Chinese backed firms. I mean, it just makes absolutely no sense. So I think what's more, far more important for government is not whether you can pull the powers into your own department,



it's whether you can get things done across government, with your colleagues in pursuit of it. A shared agenda. And I think that's what's completely missing with this government. Now, the good news is that Rachel Reeves and I actually like each other, we talk to each other. And we do have a shared view as we do in this movement, about the future interests of our country. And so if we were in government, I wouldn't be battling my colleagues to say to Nick Thomas Simmons, who will control immigration policy, I want large pots of money from the Treasury. I'd be working with care with Angela, and with Rachel and with others to say, we've got to have one view of where this country goes, and we've got to work together tirelessly to achieve it.

**It sounds like sort of cooperation will be a really fundamental part of Labour's future liberal foreign policies of cooperation and coherence across government, but also with allies.**

I mean, change comes from movements, not individuals, and we hold up these amazing figures, people like Martin Luther King, but the struggle for race equality was

not won and will never be won by one man alone. And so I think we've just got to remember that it's literally on our pledge card, by the strength of our common endeavour, we achieve more than we achieve alone. And perhaps when you watch what we're all up to in Westminster, and people often say to me, oh, didn't Ed Miliband, do well or didn't, Jess Philips make an amazing speech. And they did. And it's great. But behind all of that, when I stand up, was stood up to speak for the party on Afghanistan, when parliament was recalled in the summer behind all of that was a team and a movement that you're giving a voice to. And we've got to remember that, I think, because that's what makes us different from the Tories.

### **What are your thoughts around the foreign policy tilt to the Indo-Pacific?**

I think the Indo-Pacific tilt is more of a lurch than a tilt, for lack of an anchor closer to home. In the world that we currently inhabit, where we're trying to persuade China currently, to come to the table, a country that's committing genocide against its own people that is actively undermining rights and freedoms in Hong Kong. And yet weak, there is no global challenge that can be solved without the active engagement of the Chinese government. And they're threatening to boycott COP 26. In that world, we need to build really strong alliances. And that's why rebuilding and repairing that needlessly antagonistic relationship with the EU and with our friends in Europe, was a key component of my speech today. And I believe that the AUKUS pact is actually important, because it helps to balance the power of China, in that region, it's not about attacking China, it's about having a balance of power

in the region. And if you don't think that's important, just go and talk to some of our friends from Taiwan, because it really matters to them, and to many, many people in that region that we do.

### **How important will the UK's relationship with the EU be?**

You've got to have an anchor closer to home, you've got to have those alliances, and the EU remains a central partner, and we work to go out and make that case and make the case that that's in the British national interest. This is not about reopening the Brexit negotiations - God knows I do not ever really want to hear the word Brexit deal ever again, after the experience of the last few years. And I do think the country is in a place where we want to look forwards. And looking forwards means about taking that very paper thin deal that was negotiated and using it as the floor, not the ceiling and adding and building on areas of shared mutual concern.

### **How can we help the situation in Yemen?**

I don't think that stopping arms sales to Saudi Arabia will solve all of the problems in Yemen. Not for a moment do I think that. I was given 300 seconds to lay out Labour's foreign policy on the platform this morning. I took slightly more, but you get five minutes as a front bencher on the conference platform. And so there I was trying to make clear that we will take an ethical stance to our foreign policy, and we'll take an ethical stance to our arms export regime, but that's no substitute for aid to Yemen. And we've been strongly opposed. My colleague Preet Gill, and I have been fighting very hard against aid cuts - the Tories are going to reverse them, because our fight in Parliament is not done.

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This interview took place at Labour Party Conference in Brighton, September 2021.



# INTERVIEW WITH RT HON DAVID DAVIS MP

## **How did you enter politics and what inspired you to get involved?**

I was born son of a single mum back in the late 40s. When it was somewhat of a stigma. They kept it from me until I was 12 years old. They had to explain to my school every time I went somewhere why my name was different from theirs I didn't even know it was then brought up by my grandparents - unemployed, prefab, and then had the good luck to go to good school. And that's where it sort of started. But the origin of my interest in politics probably starts very young. My grandfather was a member of the Communist Party, a leading member, and had actually been imprisoned for six months, twice. Once for what the magistrate said was, he had done his best to stop the riot, but he was being locked up as a ringleader of the riot. That's British justice for you. And the second time for chaining himself to the entrance to Number 10. I've sometimes been tempted myself, but he did that at the end of leading a hunger march from from the north-east.

Anyway, so when I was very young, I was around politics without even knowing it. He was quoting Marx or some esoteric stuff like Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. I mean, I can remember clips from that. So I was sort of immersed in it. But I didn't really take a big interest except like, all of us do following the news and so on. Until I got to university.

I was at university in 1968, which for those of you are old enough was at the time the Sorbonne riots. And sort of an insurrection



really through the universities of Western Europe and America. And up until then I thought to myself was quite left wing. And I thought, I don't believe in these sit ins, and riots and so on. So I turned out at university to be the only person arguing against these riots in rooms probably three times as big as this one. But with 1000 people in them, it's quite intimidating when you learn your politics.

That's really where it started, I then became a conservative leader at that university, then I became the national chairman of the conservative students. This is when Ted Heath was the Prime Minister. I used to see him four times a year. And actually now feels a bit like that time to be frank - I might come back to that later. And, and then after that, the party sort of swept me up. And I continued to have an interest in politics and eventually just stood for an MP in East Yorkshire and was very lucky to be returned by a fabulous conservative part of the world, which most people never visit, but it's beautiful, but don't come because we call it like it is.



### **How important is development to defence and diplomacy in your view?**

I am pro aid, but the right level of aid. And that's defined by what is the need - is there a famine? Is there a civil war in Ethiopia? Those sorts of things are what decide this, and actually if you ask the British people, are you in favour of spending more money in Ethiopia or more money on your local school? What do you think they're going to say? They're gonna say spend more money in the local school. But if you say, people are dying from hunger, thirst, disease, Civil War, in this part of the world, should we help them? 94% say yes.

But I think at least 100,000 people will die as a result of that decision. And that made the decision easy, you know, one hand, you have the whips. The other hand, 100,000 people die, because I thought we went away, I thought we would win the day. We were quite well organised - care of Andrew Mitchell over there - quite well organised as a rebellion, but then it's a no brainer. It's very simple, and I'm not viewed as the kindest, gentlest, prettiest Member of Parliament by a large margin. But that's that's an argument you've got to take seriously.

### **Would you say that the debate around freedom is going to be one of the West's defining challenges and how did the withdrawal from Afghanistan affect this?**

I think in all the western democracies, freedom is going to be a big issue. People are going to be fighting to get their rights back, after 18 months of losing them. I was very, very unhappy about the way the UK and USA come out of Afghanistan. I think the blame is shared equally between Trump and Biden. And I think the impact on the western world and the way it's viewed will be massive.

So what undermines our standing in the world is people thinking we're not trustworthy allies and not thinking that we mean what we say. Thinking if we say to Afghanistan, we are going to rebuild your nation, we actually do rebuild their nation. But instead, what we do is we propped up a completely corrupt regime for nearly 20 years is what we did. And as a result, when we pull back militarily, the regime collapsed instantly, it can't act because it was corrupt.

After I stood down in 2008, I wanted to have a look at it. So I went and looked on the ground, we talked to 50 different groups of people from the Taliban, literally up to the head of the secret police as well as the sort of head of the NDS as it's called. And you know, and it was obviously that was the case, so we were never going to win. Because I said this on my way back, if we carry on like this, we're going to lose. And what's happened is it's all sort of imploded at the same time. So there was no good way to come out. That's the first thing you've got to learn to. If we ever get into that again, we may not, we've got to do it properly. And that means the civil side is at least as important as the military side. And compounding all of this is the attitude of the rest of the world to the west, is what we've done on aid as well, because I'm not a big aid supporter, I voted against the 0.7% because in my view is too big an increase too quickly. But once you got there, you've got hundreds of thousands of people depending on you, and if you cut it off, that means hundreds or thousands of deaths. We have the biggest reputation in the world. And maybe, maybe you'd expect, you know, reputation for standing up for freedom and democracy reputation for defending the rights of man, you know. So that's a very big reputation to lose. And it is, in my view at risk at the moment.

# A FORCE FOR GOOD



UK sets out its vision for a new role on the world stage

Hosted world leaders for the COP26 Glasgow Summit



PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY



Attended the G20 Rome Summit



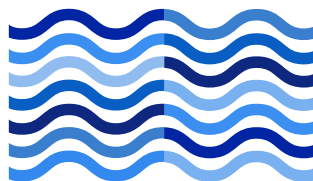
Chaired UN Security Council to drive global access to vaccines



Raised almost \$9 billion to support GAVI at Global Vaccine Summit



United Kingdom 2021



Hosted world leaders in Cornwall for the G7



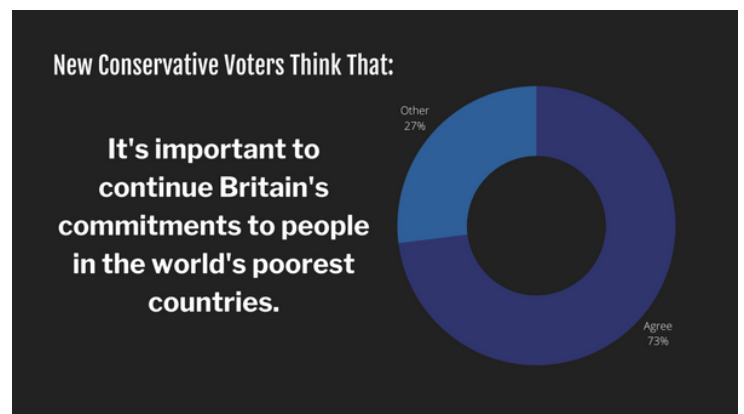
Signed the AUKUS Agreement with the USA and Australia

# ATTITUDES TO DEVELOPMENT

## What Does The Red Wall Think?

We recently polled new Conservative voters in 2019 in the Red Wall made up of 46% who had previously voted for UKIP, 39% for Labour, 11% for Liberal Democrats and 5% for other parties in previous elections. There was an even split between men and women with 36% of the group being aged 65 or older. When asked how important they rated various strands of UK aid, 95% of voters said that it was important for Britain to support developing countries to prevent and contain future pandemic diseases like the Coronavirus. 86% stated that it was important that the UK provides disaster relief and humanitarian assistance whilst 88% said it was important to promote British value like democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and tolerance. These results go some way to demonstrating the general support for the “Global Britain” strategy of the UK Government and set a backdrop for an electorate that is obviously not opposed to the UK providing assistance overseas where it is needed most.

However, the most interesting outcome from the poll was that when asked about Britain supporting developing countries directly, 30% believe Britain should be supporting developing countries, 37% oppose supporting developing countries and 33% are undecided. This incredible split demonstrates that the argument around UK aid is not yet final and that there is a third of voters who could still be persuaded on the issue.

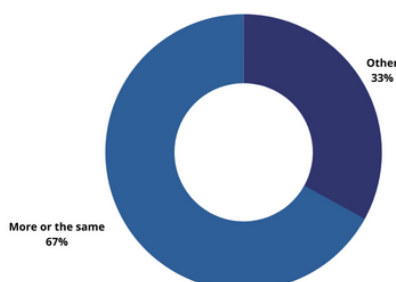


## What Does The Blue Wall Think?

Among likely swing voters in Conservative-Lib Dem marginal seats, the outcome that people most want to see achieved from the UK's investments in aid and development is ensuring that all people have their basic human needs of health and shelter met (39%). This is followed by reducing poverty and tackling global inequality (25%), empowering communities to create their own prosperity (23%) and advancing the UK's economic and trading relationships (19%).

With the issue of aid spending very firmly in the media and discussion in Westminster, when asked about what level of spending voters found acceptable for the UK's aid commitments, 67% said that we should be spending the same amount or more than our closest allies.

On how much the UK should spend on Overseas Aid compared to our allies...



When asked to choose a response that best fits the statement “The UK as a world leader in international aid...” the responses were as follows:

- Makes the world a safer place 79%
- Helps the UK to achieve its foreign policy objectives 86%
- Strengthens our trade and investment opportunities 85%
- Shows the enduring strength of our values 88%
- Sets us apart from other nations in a positive way 84%



# 2021 THROUGH





# THE LENS





# BRITAIN - A FORCE FOR GOOD

Since the Brexit referendum in 2016 there has been much discussion of Britain's global role, with successive Conservative Prime Ministers speaking confidently of "Global Britain" and Britain's "tilt" to the pacific region, but with comparatively little in way of strategy to back this up.

Indeed, at the very moment the government has attempted to paint a new role for Britain they've been considering deep and damaging cuts to our world class diplomatic service and have slashed our overseas development spending, breaking our historic commitment to the world's poorest. This is a strategically incoherent act of diplomatic self-harm, and it does a huge disservice to our vast potential as a global player.



But there is an alternative approach to our foreign policy and our place in the world. The UK's strengths are clear – a world class financial sector in the City of London, a cutting-edge tech economy, unrivalled cultural soft-power, Universities consistently ranking as among the worlds best, and a military with a truly global reach. These are the building blocks which we should use to craft a coherent global strategy with Britain as a global force for good, working with our allies and partners to stand up for the rules based global order, humanitarianism, democracy, and the rule of law.

While the UK has chartered a positive course on some issues, with the championing of women and girls rights a particular bright spot, along with the decision to grant a pathway to citizenship for human rights defenders and BNO passport holders in Hong Kong, it is clear to many that our strengths as a nation are not being utilised as part of our strategic foreign policy.

If there is a time for the UK to establish a coherent foreign policy it is now, with Russia massing on Europe's borders, populism and the far right continuing to erode democratic norms, and the Chinese Government continuing to commit human rights abuses in Xinjiang and undermine the freedoms promised to the people of Hong Kong in legally binding international agreements.

Our strengths make us well placed to work with our partners to challenge this behaviour, but it requires a sea change in our approach. Labour has already laid out our opposition to cutting the ODA and Foreign Office budgets, rightly pointing out that these hamper our ability to work with our partners and undermine our soft power, our security, and our influence. But the UK must go beyond this and demonstrate our intention to be taken seriously on the world stage once again, as a force for good.



We already know that our approach to Russia is hampered by the government's inaction on the dark money polluting our financial services, and we have committed to tackling this head on to choke off the supply of illicit finance to Russia and other government's who use our institutions to fuel their corruption and repression. To their credit the Government have instituted a range of global Magnitsky sanctions, and at our urging the Government did finally close off some of the avenues the Belarusian government was using to raise money in London, but this should be the start of a concerted effort rather than a one off.

We also need to pursue a reset in our relations with Europe. The arguments around leave and remain are over, and cooperation and pragmatism need to be in the driving force to ensure we can have the partnerships which allow us to unlock the deeper working relationship on the issues facing us all.

And on China, we need to be clear on what our strategy is. The government too often talks tough while refusing to implement the policies to back this up. Our partners and allies will expect us to stick with an approach, and we've been clear that while we need to work with and respect China we will act on their influence in our key industries, work to protect the freedoms in Hong Kong expressed by the Sino-British Joint Declaration, and support partners facing the growing threat posed by Chinese influence.

Past Labour government's have maximised Britain's influence on the world stage, and the next will be no different.

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*Catherine West MP is Labour Member of Parliament for Hornsey and Wood Green and Shadow Minister for Asia and the Pacific.*

# GLOBAL BRITAIN AND FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

I have recently had the incredible honour of being appointed as the Prime Minister's Deputy Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief. The promotion of freedom of religion or belief is an issue that I am passionate about and an area that the United Kingdom has a proud history of standing up for on the world stage. I am immensely proud to take up this work and to support the implementation of the Truro Report. I will be working alongside the excellent Fiona Bruce MP, who as the PM's Special Envoy, has already done so much incredible work to ensure that religious freedoms remain a top priority within UK foreign policy.



In the UK, we are fortunate that we have the freedom to worship or follow our beliefs without fear of persecution. Yet around the world, this is still a dream for millions. The charity Open Doors, who campaign for religious freedoms around the world, said in their latest report that 360 million Christians around the world face persecution for simply choosing to follow their own faith. We have already seen increased persecution of those in countries such as Afghanistan where the new oppressive regime have been cracking down on freedom of religion or belief. Sadly, under the cloak of the COVID pandemic, discrimination against those who practice their faith or belief has increased, with the closure of places of worship and suspension of services.

Even though the situation may seem difficult, I am confident that the UK is and will continue to be, a force for good on the world stage as the government uses its excellent soft power tools such as positions on global institutions and forums, its international development budget and its global reputation as a convening power to bring states and groups around the table to help defend basic human rights. Last year during the G7 conference, the UK ensured that protecting freedom of religion or belief was a key element of the final communique. This was not only important in itself, but crucial in ensuring the newly elected US President was also committed to this cause on the world stage. This is UK leadership in action.

This year on 5th and 6th July, the United Kingdom will be hosting a conference to support freedom of religion or belief as a human right for everyone, everywhere. It will bring together Governments, NGOs and those who have fled from religious persecution to see what more can be done internationally to defend this foundational

freedom. Following from previous conferences, Fiona and I are working to ensure that the conference invites those who do promote religious tolerance but also looks to engage those who do not. The UK has a significant soft-power tool-kit at its disposal and must use everything possible to help secure human rights around the world. The UK can also use its international development expertise to help educate and promote democratic values of freedom of belief.

Overall, we have a great deal to be proud of in this country in terms of the way in which we project our values around the world. The UK has an incredible network of diplomats and soft power tools at our disposal to forward the promotion of human rights. I look forward to working alongside Fiona Bruce with MPs, NGOs and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office as well as wider Government efforts to ensure that this important issue can be promoted in all forums. We all have a part to play in defending this fundamental human right, which is why with Fiona we have launched the EndThePersecution.uk campaign. Let's ensure the UK is at the forefront of this campaign to allow all peoples around the world to worship and manifest their faith or belief in peace and safety.

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*David Burrowes is the Deputy Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief and former Conservative Member of Parliament for Enfield Southgate.*



# AID IS ABOUT SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST DOING THE RIGHT THING

When we think about our national security, we rightly consider the military, intelligence services and our police as being central to the dedicated work being undertaken around the clock that helps keep our families safe. But there is another crucial component to the UK's foreign policy machinery that helps secure both our interests abroad, and our security at home — UK Overseas Development.

By investing in areas overseas that are challenged by poverty and poor infrastructure, we help reduce the likelihood of the consequences of those challenges, such as terrorism and humanitarian disasters, in the countries where aid is given, and help prevent them from reaching British shores.

At the same time, we increase opportunity and prosperity where it is needed most, empowering other countries to be independent and creating Britain's trading partners of tomorrow. The British people understand this and recognise that aid and development is far more than the UK simply doing its bit for others; they recognise that it is integral to achieving our foreign policy objectives.



Research by the Coalition for Global Prosperity has found that 84 per cent of voters polled in marginal constituencies in the south of England believe the UK's international development work sets us apart from other nations in a positive way, while 69 per cent consider aid and development to be intricately linked to our national security.

Even against the backdrop of our so-called culture wars, 88 per cent agreed that the UK's international development work demonstrates the enduring strength of our values. While 78 per cent of those polled believe every penny of international development money should be thoroughly scrutinised to ensure maximum value for the British taxpayer, the widely held perception that the public believe aid is mostly wasted is not borne out by this research.

Indeed, five times more respondents agreed that the UK's aid work has been impactful and transformative than those who disagreed. Importantly, twice as many respondents said that Britain had a moral obligation to continue to help the world's poorest people, even when our own economy is going through a difficult time, compared to those who took the opposite view.

Protecting the British people and our democracy is the first duty of all governments. It is right then that the UK should be undertaking the biggest programme of investment in defence for 30 years. Similarly, the government's integrated defence review made clear that the UK should remain a

world leader in international development and return to spending 0.7 per cent of gross national income on development when the fiscal situation allows. This is both the right thing to do, and the smart thing too. For aid is not only an expression of our values as a nation, but also a pillar of our foreign and defence strategies.

The world is changing. Over the coming years China will continue to weaponise aid through its Belt and Road Initiative and reap the rewards, leveraging indebted and resource-rich countries. Meanwhile, hostile states such as Russia will carry on flexing their muscles across its sphere of influence by disrupting and destabilising democracies, and obstructing progress towards peace in countries like Syria.

The pandemic and its aftermath have revealed that none are safe until all are safe. Effective UK leadership in international development, clearly supported by the British public, will be more important than ever.

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*This essay was written by Ryan Henson and first published in The Times Red Box.*

**COALITION  
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*Britain as a force for good*

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