



SOFT POWER AND THE UK'S INFLUENCE COMMITTEE

Oral and written evidence

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Adam Smith International – Written evidence

I. Introduction

1.1 Adam Smith International is a professional services business that delivers real impact, value and lasting change through projects supporting economic growth and government reform internationally. The technical assistance that we and other organisations provide is an important element of the UK's soft power, helping achieve UK objectives in a wide variety of circumstances. Such technical assistance, when provided effectively, can have a hugely positive effect. It is a form of aid that can have a major impact that is out of all proportion to its cost and which can help achieve transformational change. The return on investment in well-designed and well-delivered TA can be very high indeed.

1.2 In conflict environments this technical assistance is very much complementary to 'harder' exercises of UK power such as military force. We believe it would be most useful to the Committee if we set out some examples of the use of technical assistance as an effective form of soft power, and below discuss interventions in three countries, Afghanistan, Iraq and Nigeria. We first discuss the effectiveness of the primary UK financier of development assistance, DFID.

2. DFID, Britain's main financier of technical assistance

2.1 DFID (aka UK Aid) 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 these countries. The qualitative view of British excellence in development is underpinned in quantitative terms by the UK's commitment to spend 0.7% of GDP on Aid.

2.2 The quality of DFID's programmes – best measured in the results of these programmes - and the quantity of money that DFID spends gives the UK significant access to policy makers, political actors and other influential actors in the large number of countries where DFID is active and achieving significant results. There are three complimentary ways in which UK Aid projects soft power for the UK.

2.3 Soft power in countries: This access allows the projection of soft power directly through the UK's ability to influence policy in these countries. This influence is achieved in a number of ways:

- I. by DFID officials located in these countries providing advice directly to government on matters of policy;
- II. through the provision of technical assistance given to government directly by expert advisors funded by UK Aid through contractors such as Adam Smith International;;
- III. by setting conditions on governments that are in receipt of budget support, an instrument by which aid is channeled directly into the recipient government's budget.

2.4 Soft power on the international stage: the quality and heft of UK Aid gives DFID a significant voice in international development forums and multinational development actors, although more could be achieved.

2.5 DFID is arguably one of the most influential voices in world of international development, second only, perhaps, to the World Bank and IMF. International development is a rapidly developing, influential and dynamic sector/industry. Development programmes are growing in scale, and complexity. In this time of exceptional change the UK, through

UK Aid, projects significant power in helping frame the agenda, debate and future direction of this dynamic sector/industry.

2.6 Soft power with bilateral Aid Agencies: DFID also projects power by influencing how other bi-lateral aid agencies construct their own development approaches and programmes. The best bi-lateral aid agencies – Danish DANIDA, Swedish SIDA, Australian AUSAID and New Zealand Aid, inter alia, look to DFID as the leading bi-lateral agency and copy their approaches and programmes and often look to co-finance DFID funded programmes.

3. Afghanistan

3.1 Adam Smith International has been working in Afghanistan since early 2002 when we were asked to help rebuild key Ministry of Finance and Central Bank functions. Since that time, ASI has implemented over 60 projects in Afghanistan for DFID, USAID, FCO, DANIDA, EU, CIDA, World Bank, ADB and SIDA.

3.2 These projects have ranged from small design and review projects to major programmes of institutional development such as our ongoing multi-phase multi-year programmes of DFID funded support to institutions that include:

- The Revenue Department of the Ministry of Finance
- The Budget Department of the Ministry of Finance
- The Ministry of Mines
- The Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- The Independent Directorate of Local Government (IDLG) within the President's Office

3.3 These projects all have teams of long term international advisers – for example, a team of 2 in the IDLG and a team of 23 currently engaged in the Revenue Department - who work full time in the government institutions that we support and make up the bulk of the 60 or so international advisers we have in country at any one time. These experts from around the world work alongside our team of more than 100 Afghan technical advisers. We are particularly proud of the contribution that these Afghan colleagues are making to the development of their country, and we take care to support their professional development as an additional wider benefit to Afghanistan in terms of human resources for the future.

3.4 These programmes have contributed considerably to both creating a viable Afghan state and the conditions in which the international community can greatly reduce its involvement. If we look at some of the major programmes in turn:

3.5 **Results in tax reform** We have worked with the Afghanistan Government and DFID on innovative tax reform since 2002, initially as part of a broad project to support economic development, and since 2004 on dedicated DFID tax reform projects: *Tax Administration Reform, 2004-08*; *Strengthening National and Provincial Tax Administration, 2008-12*; and now *Tax Administration, 2012-15*.

In summary we have helped the Afghanistan Government achieve the following:

- » Develop a comprehensive tax policy and law that constitute the framework of Afghanistan's tax system.
- » Restructure, reorganise and build capacity of a sustainable modern tax administration in Kabul and five priority provinces.

- » Increase revenue six-fold since 2004. Revenue for the latest financial year was over \$2bn.
- » Increase revenue as proportion of GDP from 4% in 2004 to almost 12% today.
- » Increase tax revenue relative to customs, with tax taking over as the single largest revenue source in 2008 and increasing relative to customs at an accelerating rate.
- » Turn non-tax revenue, i.e. royalties, fees and charges raised by line ministries into a major revenue source from a close to zero base.

3.6 Results from DFID's support to the budget department. The DFID programme of support to the Budget department which Adam Smith International delivers began in early 2008 and is now in its second phase. Key achievements of that project to date include:

- » The rolling out of performance based budgeting reforms across all budget units
- » The development of the budgetary process to an 11 month schedule, that includes defined national policy priorities, from a 3-4 month process based on bilateral negotiations between ministers
- » The development of a Medium Term Fiscal Framework which is integrated into Pre-Budget document and Budget Statement - containing analysis of different fiscal pressures and risks
- » The introduction of a Medium Term Budget Framework containing budget ceilings - specifying what priorities the funding is allocated to – over 3 years
- » The raising of development budget execution rates by nearly 15 percentage points last year
- » The provision of assistance Afghan participation in the Open Budget Index (OBI) as a measure of the transparency of the Afghan budget process and raising Afghanistan's predicted rating to nearly 60% this year (from 8% in 2008) – higher than Poland and only slightly less than Italy.
- » The development of a comprehensive Budget statement in three languages and published online, containing analysis of historical spending, achievements, medium-term outlook, issues, budget and performance targets
- » The first ever presentation of new budget and fiscal policy reforms to the Afghan media
- » The formation of a dedicated capacity development unit within DGB (the Budget Reform Unit - BRU)
- » The mapping of all processes. All key budget processes have now been documented and training conducted as a means of making the Budget Department a process-centred organisation
- » On-budget funding modalities agreed for all donors, enabling donors to meet their Kabul Conference commitment to bring 50% of aid on budget
- » Establishment of a database for donors to self-report their projects to Afghan government providing greater transparency to the government about what projects are being carried out within Afghanistan.

This work has considerably improved the effectiveness of Afghan Government spending and thus has contributed significantly to the viability of the Afghan state.

3.7 Results in the Mining sector. Mining is the best hope for the Afghan economy. In 2010, a survey carried out by the US Geological Survey identified US\$1 to US\$3 trillion of

mineral wealth in Afghanistan including significant volumes of copper, gold, iron ore, rare earth metals, and oil and gas. With ASI assistance the MoM is transiting from an owner-operator type role to that of a policy-maker and regulator able to attract private sector investment. With DFID-funded ASI support, the MoM has developed a five-year business plan to oversee its restructuring aims, and is two years into its implementation. Under this business plan, key directorates have been staffed, and significant capacity development has been undertaken within the policy group, the investment promotion directorate, and the legal directorate. The project has supported the ministry in updating the legal environment for mining in the country, which was previously outdated and unfriendly to investors.

3.8 The project has played a critical role in transforming the effectiveness of the MoM, catalysing significant private investment and creating new hope for the Afghan economy. If the MoM's plans are implemented the Afghan Govt. estimates its revenue from mining will increase to \$3.5 billion over 15 years which will cover 77.7% of the core budget. Afghanistan is on its way to becoming an economically sustainable state.

4. Iraq

4.1 In Iraq we have been helping strengthen centre of government institutions and address key finance issues since 2004. Our DFID-funded programme of support to Iraq over the period 2004 – 2010 was instrumental in setting up from scratch the central government structures in Baghdad, including the Office of the Prime Minister, the Cabinet Office and the Presidency, and associated policy analysis and decision-making systems. The effectiveness and success of this work was praised repeatedly by senior witnesses giving evidence to the Iraq inquiry. Tim Foy was head of DFID Baghdad:

TIM FOY In terms of the quality of consultants which we were able to engage to work for us in terms of the machinery of the centre of government, the Prime Minister's office, to work within the finance department, I think we would be hard pushed to have got better people. They were people that gave us fantastic leverage with the Americans, and where we punched genuinely above our weight, it was the quality of expertise that we were able to bring in. The Americans might have outnumbered us, but in terms of quality, I think there was a great deal of difference, and that brought us an awful lot of kudos. It brought us that access that I spoke about, the ability to engage at the highest level. I am amazed that it was the UK that basically got the standby agreement with the IMF, resolves Iraq's debt problems. It wasn't the United States. It was about half a dozen UK consultants that did it.

THE CHAIRMAN: And that is a very big thing, in terms of the numbers and significance.

TIM FOY: It was a big thing, and we should be quite proud of that.

4.2 Mark Lowcock, then Director of DFID's Bilateral Programmes, now DFID Permanent Secretary, described ASI's work in a personal assessment at the end of his evidence to the Chilcot Inquiry:

MR MARK LOWCOCK: I can give you a personal assessment of what are the biggest impact things we have done.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, we would like that.

MR MARK LOWCOCK: My personal assessment is that getting the macro-economy right and enabling Iraq to manage its growing budget effectively and enabling Iraqis to run their own affairs by better co-ordination at the centre of government level, more

effective process in the Council of Ministers, all those things, in my assessment, are, you know, perhaps the most important thing to do for the long-term goal of building a capable state in Iraq able to, you know, look after itself.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

4.3 Similarly, when asked by the Inquiry to nominate an example of success, Christopher Prentice, who was Ambassador from 2007 to October 2009, cited ASI's work at the centre of government:

SIR MARTIN GILBERT: "Were you able to see specific achievements by November when you left?"

MR CHRISTOPHER PRENTICE: Well, certainly the longer-term projects at the centre, in particular, as was mentioned this morning, the capacity building in the Cabinet Secretariat was really beginning to show results.

This was a very quiet project, which I think was not widely known amongst the Iraqi politicians whose interests it was serving, and all the better for being below the surface because it was so central to the government machine, and it was one which was very much hands-off. It was DFID's working through Adam Smith International, who were providing consultancy for the Iraqis and that was confidential to the Iraqis and it was - it could have been a delicate matter, but actually was handled quietly and successfully and - by the time I left, the Cabinet Secretary had got to the point of being able to -- already had started transition planning for the handover of government after the elections, now due in March, pulling together deputy ministerial level representatives across their equivalent of Whitehall, to draw some lessons from this period of government in terms of the structure of government for presentation to the new Prime Minister, when elected. That's a fairly sophisticated operation and was really, I think, an example of success."¹

4.4 ASI supported several transitions over the period of these years the most recent being the transition to the administration of the current Prime Minister Maliki whose administration, although not without faults, was robust enough to allow an exit of external military forces. The structures that ASI/DFID established are still in place - indeed a small team of ASI advisers remains in place within them funded by Swedish SIDA - and their robustness and resilience were key factors in allowing UK and other troops to withdraw and Iraq to return to relative stability and to begin the process of reconstruction. The project continues to deliver good results. It is very much appreciated by the Iraqi Government. Dr Alaaq, Secretary General of the Iraqi Council of Ministers Secretariat (ComSec) has commented:

"I have often compared the success of this relatively small project to the much larger projects supported by other donors that do not deliver results. The small team of ASI advisors have achieved visible results and have made CoMSec an institution that we are very proud of.

ASI advisors have worked with me personally since 2006 and have provided advice to Iraq since 2004. The professional advice they have provided is always in support of our specific needs and this advice is provided with the greatest respect. We particularly

¹ http://www.iraqinquiry.org.uk/media/41640/100106pm-prentice.pdf_pages_48/49

appreciate that they recognize the need to adapt international best practices to our environment.

ASI helps me to focus on the longer term changes that need to be implemented, especially when it is so easy to become involved in day to day issues.”

5. Nigeria

5.1 Nigeria is facing wide range of challenges, including a dangerous Islamist insurgency. If it slips into chaos the fallout for Britain and other countries will be significant and costly. Moreover Nigeria is facing a demographic bulge which has the potential to transform its economic prospects, with benefits not only to Nigeria but also Britain. UK exports of goods and services to Nigeria are worth around £3b and rising sharply as the Nigerian economy grows.

5.2 Utilising this demographic dividend requires an improvement in Nigeria's stock of infrastructure. By a central bank estimate, there is currently an annual shortfall in infrastructure investment equivalent to 5% of GDP. The absence of sufficient grid power is a huge barrier to economic growth. In another DFID programme, ASI has been assisting the Nigerian Government to tackle these issues. Our recommendations of how to tackle the power sector problems have been accepted by the Nigerian government and power sector reform is now the Nigerian President's highest priority. We are well on the way to achieving transformative change with tariffs up hugely, the sector now viable and privatization about to occur. The economic effect will be gigantic. The improved service delivery in power resulting from the work of the project has, we estimate, already produced savings to Nigeria worth over £1bn in a full year.

5.3 Again the assistance is very much appreciated by the Nigerian Government. For example the Chief Economic Adviser to the Nigerian Government recently commented that “DFID through NIAF (the Nigerian Infrastructure Advisory Facility) is our best development partner. The contrast between NIAF and others is like day and night in terms of timeliness and effectiveness of support. Others will promise help but delay and go through various procedures so by the time it is available it has been overtaken by events. I really appreciate the assistance. I am very, very pleased. Let me say thank you. My main message is keep it going, keep it working in the same way”.

5.4 Of course we are not the only organisation to have made a significant contribution to Nigerian stability through the provision of technical assistance. For example, the work financed by DFID and carried out by Crown Agents to establish an effective debt management process was critical to ending Nigeria's status as a pariah state which did not pay its debts, and has subsequently saved Nigeria many hundreds of millions of pounds in lower interest costs.

6. Conclusion and policy recommendations

6.1 These few examples illustrate how UK development assistance is a critical component of this country's soft power. Our suggestions on policy are as follows:

6.2 Care must be taken to ensure that UK assistance not only remains fast and flexible, but is made faster and more flexible. This is a key element of its superiority over most other development assistance programmes and its attraction to recipients.

6.3 Similarly, care must be taken to preserve and increase the quality of technical assistance provided. Again this is a key point of comparative advantage. There are concerns, as highlighted for example in the Independent Commission on Aid Impact's recent report on DFID's use of contractors, that recent adjustments to procurement policy may be leading to a decline in quality.

6.4 To maximise soft power it is generally preferable for DFID to deliver assistance through its own bilateral programme, rather than handing funds over to multilateral organisations which tend to be much slower, less efficient and less able to deliver programmes that explicitly help the UK extend its soft power. Whilst the use of a multilateral organisation may sometimes be preferable, these occasions are relatively rare and the direct benefits to the UK less clear.

6.5 A stronger focus on language teaching in schools and universities would definitely help, as we experience a shortage of graduates with skills in languages other than French and Spanish, e.g. Arabic, Farsi, Urdu, etc.

September 2013

Indra Adnan, Soft Power Network – Written evidence

Beyond security: a new age of soft power

SUMMARY

Understanding and developing soft power is the single most important task for the British government to master in the 21C. While some of the reasons for this are commonly understood, some less so. I hope to give an overview of the rationale for this assertion along the following lines:

A: EXTERNALLY: enabling Britain's transition from a global (one world, one message) hard power to a transnational (beyond nations) soft power

1. Our success in helping to shape the global community and global society
2. Our ability to influence outcomes in international (between nations) conflicts
3. Our ability to stay buoyant in the rapidly changing global economy
4. The freedom and potential of global citizenship – UK citizens abroad and foreign citizens in the UK

B. INTERNALLY: keeping abreast of the changes in public agency and helping politics and government to remain relevant in 21C

1. Ability to represent the people of Britain in a meaningful way
2. Ability to regain / retain influence in the shifting power dynamics of the 21C
3. Ability to do the work of government more effectively than the media or other private initiatives
4. Make way for a new era of individual and social potential in the UK

I will make the argument that because of the radically changed nature of our global meeting space and the very different historical context within which we are operating since Joseph Nye first made these distinctions, soft power should be understood not as a commodity but as a capacity. Our soft power is our ability to be in the world flexibly and effectively – able to make a difference without betraying our bigger picture of a benign transnationalism. It implies our relationships with other countries as well as transnational movements, but also the internal relationships of community and governance.

For this reason, soft power should not be the remit of the National Security Council but have a ministry of its own that draws together all the vehicles of connectivity and influence alongside the tools of self development that shape our story of ourself. It would not be in the interest of the nation for any government to control our soft power, rather to support it and enhance its capabilities as it will be forever developing. In addition, an understanding of the balance between soft and hard power should be a principle underpinning all ministries, supporting them with research, training, personal and group development.

Beyond security: a new age of soft power.

1 In order to justify the scope of this paper, I should first describe my use of the term soft power. Joseph Nye agrees that he did not invent soft power: his gift to the world was to disaggregate the concept of power, to separate hard 'power over', from soft 'power for' – force from attraction. In so doing he named something that has always existed but was not distinct, could not be harnessed.

2 Nye did so in a very specific moment in time:

- post the failure of military action in Vietnam
- at the height of the Cold War - a b/w world of well defined good and evil
- in the hey day of Hollywood's articulation of the American Dream, before other film industries rivalled its domination of our screens

His impact came from being able to maintain America's image of itself as the only global super-power. Even if it failed in hard power, it remained unquestionably dominant in soft power: both were offered as tools to shape global preferences – to control the world.

3 Twenty years on the context for soft power is very different:

- fall of Berlin Wall and disappearance of Iron Curtain
- 9/11, birth of US vulnerability
- America pivots East and becomes mediator rather than master
- failure in Iraq, Afghanistan, Middle East: loss of faith in hard power grows
- rise of BRIC superpowers: idea of control loses power
- diminution of global appetite for war, awareness of military industrial complex
- global financial crisis: distrust of financial markets in global capital
- development of network sensibility in business and personal life
- growth of social media, rise of non-state actors
- growth of people power: Avaaz, Facebook, Twitter
- rise of women in spotlight – as actors and as causes
- growth of self authoring practice and industry

What this adds up to is a shift in the nexus of power. Whereas up until very recently we could identify who was in charge and the rationale for their actions, today everything appears to be more fluid.

4. Take for example the recent vote in the House of Commons on whether or not to bomb Syria and compare it to a similar vote on Iraq ten years ago when the PM, despite popular dissent, was confident of approval. Events played out very differently this time. Polls taken on the internet persuaded Ed Miliband to resist the call to war in the UK Parliament > Cameron's loss of permission to support Obama causes the US President to hesitate and call for a vote on Syria creating a vacuum > Putin steps up to the mediator role and gives Syria a way to step away from chemical warfare > Obama appears to thank Putin for giving the US an alternative to the vote (a vote he may have lost).

5. What caused the radical shift in events? Not threats or promises, neither carrots nor sticks but a new context for action: each leader was led by their sense of how they would

appear to their own domestic audience and to the broader global public. They were trading reputations and accumulating soft power – the ability to influence – for the future.

6. Does the British public know where it stands? Shortly after 9/11 George Bush told us “you are either with us or against us” and the British government stood with him – clarity which the British people did not have an opportunity to accept or reject. Today the waves of sympathy towards the Arab rebels flow and retreat; Obama loses and gains popularity; Ed Miliband is the darling of the peaceniks but a disappointment to the media. Have we managed to see past that crude dualistic position to a more complex, fluid one, that nevertheless feels true to our belief in democracy?

7 When Nye first described hard, soft and smart power we were **living in the context of hard power** being supreme. We could all have opinions but we were powerless in the face of the men with guns and money. Within that context, soft power was seen as a second best, an alternative way for those same men to get their way in the world. Today, in the age of the internet, with massive connectivity between state and non-state actors across the globe, we are living in the context of soft power shaping outcomes at every level. It's less clear what the desired outcomes are and who will deliver them: it's not black and white any more.

8. What then should be the aim of any government? Strength is no longer measured by the ability to physically dominate others but the ability to draw others into your way of thinking and being in the world. As Joseph Nye says, it is not the party with the most weapons but the one able who tells the best story. To that end, working to gain soft power in the form described by Nye 20 years ago – cultural capital – will always be important. That's the garden towards which people are drawn and the space in which they can build relationship. However, in an age of soft power our goals must be broader, deeper, smarter.

9. To stay with the metaphor of the garden for a moment, nectar is only attractive because the bee's survival depends upon finding it. Knowing and understanding other cultures and being able to grasp what would enable a relationship is key. Being able to see the biggest possible picture of the dynamics between them makes international relations and strategy more important than ever. But being able to do all this in 3D, with actors at multiple levels attempting to create new patterns of action and response week by week is more difficult. More than a garden, a nation has to be an event, constantly offering evidence and experiences of how it is growing and developing in response to the rapidly changing needs of the world around it.

10. In this age, soft power will accumulate to those countries who can engage successfully at this frequency: whose relationships, both internal and external are strong but flexible, warm and accommodating. Who have not only the best understanding of how connection happens, but the best skills in turning those connections into relationships.

11. The character of the politicians representing the nation must, above all, be capacious. Emotional and spiritual intelligence have always been required, but a less macho approach, what the Chinese might describe as more yin than yang, will be more successful. There must be a healthy, robust self regard but a ready humility: what some people have mistaken for weakness in Obama will prove over time, to have been smart in the face of the advantage gained by allowing Putin to act.

12. Soft power then, relies on two specific capacities: 1) an active authenticity 2) relationship potential. Think of the most charismatic person you know: not only are they being themselves confidently but they are also able to pay full attention to you. Those two things combined are irresistible: it's no different for countries.

13. A good example here would be Norway, a small country that consistently comes in the top 5 of the soft power tables drawn up by Monocle, or Anholt GFK Roper index on nation brands. 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. When I asked Ambassador **Mona Elisabeth** Brøther about this achievement she described how it arose naturally from the character of the Norwegian people: they dislike and avoid conflict, teach mediation at school and family and relationship is at the heart of their culture.

14. A country can't control its image although it may try: its image arises in the eye of the beholder, from what it is perceived to be doing and being in relationship to that country's own needs. While China promotes its Confucius Institutes, it also censors what can be discussed there: both these actions play a part in how China is viewed in the world, negatively for some. Does that mean China is not hard wired for attraction - no: it means China has not developed an understanding yet of how to form relationships with other countries that allow reciprocity and interdependence while being true to itself – most countries after all, are only somewhere on the journey towards that ideal.

15. Seen from this broad perspective, soft power - rather than describe a very specific commodity - would be an umbrella term that describes a capacity for everything that is not hard power as a means to agency. Under this umbrella we can place all other forms of diplomacy on a continuum which reaches from the most passive expressions of soft power – authentic being, tending the garden – to more active expressions which come ever closer to hard power such as public diplomacy. (For more on this continuum, see <http://softpowernetwork.ning.com/page/softpower-training-education>).

16. Once we acknowledge the bigger picture and the paradigm shift it describes for power and influence both locally and globally, we can also see the many other areas of activity that are part of this group of interests. All aspects of the media (public and private), social networking, aid initiatives, think tanks, NGOs can be added to the sector - currently referred to as culture - that creates a narrative not only about Britain but about the future of our world, not only over the long term but in real time too.

17. More than a specialism, soft power is a mainstream issue representing the biggest opportunities for Britain going into the future: it demands no less than a ministry of its own to pull together and serve the activities it implies. But note, unlike hard power, this is not a category of interest that can be brought under government control – it is soft, fluid, shape shifting. It can, however, and must be better understood and better harnessed: this is our world, if we don't shape it, someone else will.

A: EXTERNALLY FOCUSED SOFT POWER

A1) Our success in helping to shape the global community and global society

18. In a world of competing interests and influences, who succeeds not only in holding their own ground - ensuring the confidence of their citizens – but also in contributing qualitatively to the emergence of our ever more globalised world in the 21C? It is the countries with most soft power.

19. To be attractive and have influence, a country must develop a way of being in the world which is intelligent at every level – intellectually, emotionally, spiritually – to present an authentic, open, global identity that other countries can understand, engage with and trust. It must develop a clear moral stance on the future and be consistent rather than opportunistic, facing both inwards and outwards.

20. Some of you reading this will think job done: Britain knows where it stands in the world and has no trouble projecting that through its many soft power vehicles – the BBC, British Council, Arts industries etc. And yes, in many ways Britain is well ahead of other countries both small and large and has remarkable stocks of soft power given its size. However, with the diminishing of its hard power capabilities, will that always be the same? There will be no doubt from the majority of those giving evidence to the Select Committee that we have to stop the depletion of our soft power vehicles - BBC, British Council, Film Institute etc - and for that reason I will not make that case here.

21. In this paper I prefer to focus on the power that arises from our story, how we are perceived in the world in terms of our values, moral strength, benignity and to what extent this gives us relationship potential. Is it clear, authentic, confident in the way I describe Norway above? I'm sure the jury will be out on that but let's begin with an assumption that it wishes to be so and likes to believe it has an history of behaving with integrity.

22. Being able to see with a global eye view then is crucial and would reveal many weaknesses that, if courageously addressed, would not only shore up British identity but give it the kind of influence in global society it once had in the global economy. Here is a beginner's list of issues that currently cause distrust because of their inconsistent handling, but could be a great source of soft power if we could tell a better story about them:

- **Immigration:** Britain's past is characterised by its Empire. Today, Britain has become the home of many of the citizens of its former colonies. Yet no British politician can tell a story of how this is consistent with Britain's global-centric identity. Instead, 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.
- **Weapons of mass destruction:** Britain went to war with Iraq because it believed Saddam Hussein was hiding WMD. However, Britain itself is hugely invested in the military industrial complex that manufactures weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons. It refuses permission to Iran to develop even domestic nuclear capabilities, yet is about to invest another 4billion in replacing Trident. This kind of hypocrisy robs Britain of its influence in developing countries as well as amongst transglobal movements – both terrorist and peaceful.
- **Women:** the British press and politicians appear to take a clear stand on female equality around the world. Yet we are 53rd in the globe in achieving balanced representation in our Parliament or board rooms – that puts us behind Pakistan, Afghanistan, many of the countries whose attitudes to

women we challenge.

- **Gap between the rich and poor:** this is a consistent trope in British politics that we fail to address from a narrative viewpoint. In Holland the King and Queen – traditional symbols of privilege - have a clear objective to connect with their people. They ride bikes, have opinions, appear in public without pomp. In contrast, the celebrity nature of our Royal Family both emphasises and makes light of the evidence that the class system is thriving: something more obvious to outsiders than to ourselves. As a result, British politicians are left eulogising about the achievements of European countries whilst suffering the humiliation of continuing to appear low in the list of nations overcoming the gap.
- **Well being:** Britain wants to be a leader in the well being industry - a combination of mental and physical health practices and products. Yet it is the only country in the EU that has opted out of the shorter working weeks policy, thereby ensuring that only the wealthy have a choice to create a good work life balance.

23. These are all cross party issues whose outcome is as much in the hands of the multi media machine as government. However, a better understanding of soft power might encourage more cooperation across the sectors to forge new and more positive narratives in each of these areas rather than expend the same energy on point scoring against each other. Soft power does not arrive from results alone, but from the attention that is being paid to issues in the course of governing.

A2) Our ability to influence outcomes in global conflicts

24. As the current conflict in Syria is demonstrating for us, the public appetite for war has decreased significantly. There are many reasons for this:

- the cost of war: we can't afford to police the world any more
- a leap in awareness of the mental and physical damage wreaked by war on those taking part and their families
- disillusion with results delivered by hard power post Iraq, Afghanistan and to some extent, Egypt
- loss of trust in government and the true motives behind going to war
- globalisation is maturing: once we understood it as the unregulated space that multinationals were taking over. Today we are more aware of the dynamics between competing nations, religions, cultures.
- More of us live global lives – not just through travel, but through the virtual global community we have constructed as our daily interface
- A growing global centric view: more people sign up to NGOs that fight for pan-global causes such as climate change than sign up for political parties

25. Nevertheless, people – or shall we say voters to give them their influence in government – are still clearly affected by the plight of the victims of war and anxious about power shifts in the globe. In response they are either retreating from engagement for practical reasons or looking for new ways to be influential in the outcome. The million people marching against going to war with Iraq proved pointless. Ten years on social media was able to deliver a more resounding 87% of people polled against going to war with Syria and it made the

difference between a motion being carried or lost. Both Miliband and Cameron showed courage in accepting the will of the people over what may have been their own preference to support Obama in the call to strikes. Britain caused the US military to pause and today we are talking about Syria joining the treaty against the use of chemical weapons. In domino fashion, the Presidents of US and Iran are now talking for the first time since 1997.

26. None of this is hard power – it is a demonstration of how the many different elements of soft power combine to get an effect hard power can no longer deliver. Soft power as cultural capital guaranteed Britain's decisions make an impact. It is the direct use of the media, particularly social media, to tell a different story about global dynamics – what the people of one country wants for the people of another - rather than the old school exchange of political stand offs, that is growing exponentially.

27. How conflict is reported is a crucial instrument of Britain's soft power. While the BBC has always believed its own claim that it only reports the facts, no news organisation operates without an agenda although it is often unexamined. I took part in 10 years of investigation and research into how conflict is reported, much of which is now written up and taught by Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick from Sidney University (<http://bit.ly/1aSAQeT>) in countries all over the world. Until recently, reporting global conflict has been very closely allied with reporting war: daily news is framed as moving towards or away from war. Outbreaks of violence, both small and large are reported faithfully while peace initiatives are mostly sidelined. Readers are well informed about the history of conflict but know little or nothing about the history of movements to overcome those conflicts. Framing news is an important aspect of soft power. Because Britain has such an extensive network of news organisations, the active development of a global story about new ways of transforming conflict is in its gift.

A3. Our ability to stay buoyant in a rapidly changing global economy.

28. The rapidly growing ranks of middle-class consumers span a dozen emerging nations, not just the fast-growing BRIC countries,¹ 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.

Despite having strong global brands, multinational companies face challenging competition in emerging markets, as these economies already boast aggressive local players that have captured a significant portion of spending. Chinese beverage maker Hangzhou Wahaha, for example, has built a \$5.2 billion business against global competitors such as Coca-Cola and PepsiCo by targeting rural areas, filling product gaps that meet local needs, keeping costs low, and appealing to patriotism. **McKinsey & Company 2010** (<http://bit.ly/1bn5ywb>)

29. While there is little doubt that China and the BRIC nations will win the battle for their own markets in delivering the staples, there will always be an appetite for overseas products, particularly as the middle classes grow and wish to distinguish themselves. The bigger picture within which Britain can be a favoured market will depend on its soft power – its capacity for relationship:

- whether or not it can respect and understand the BRIC markets on their own terms rather than as a passive recipient of traditional British goods
- the extent to which Britain can remain culturally distinct. From this point of view a

good relationship with Scotland, Ireland, Wales remains important. Britain is a rich and diverse entity: in my view, a break up of the Union would damage Britain's image abroad in a number of ways.

- to what extent Britain welcomes China into the global arena rather than fears it. Britain is not an economic competitor but it does have political and social influence – it should put that to good use helping to encourage China's peaceful emergence
- it is important to challenge the simplistic idea that any country supporting China's peaceful emergence into the global arena, has given up on the fight against their human rights abuses. It is possible to hold both these goals at the same time but it requires a clear narrative – arising from multiple intelligences and some humility - to deliver the complexity of the relationship. These are the very skills that a commitment to soft power can develop and deliver.
- Peer to peer relationships, discovered and grown on the internet, will be crucial to Britain's overseas markets in the future. The British government's investment in technology for British entrepreneurs – particularly smaller businesses delivering information and services – will be crucial.

A4. The freedom and potential of global citizenship – UK citizens abroad and foreign citizens in the UK

30. There are many who look back at the British Empire as a regrettable period of history, others as the scene of our greatest triumphs. Both views are irrelevant in the growing challenge that globalisation is bringing to everyone: it is already important and will increasingly be so that, for the safety and security of your citizens, your country is not considered a threat to others. In contradistinction, if your country has a lot of soft power, your citizens and their business will be welcome everywhere. If you doubt that compare how an Iranian national feels walking in the streets of a Northern British town to how a Brazilian feels.

31. 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. Britain must 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. There is no other multicultural city as successful as London in the world. We must build on that. It is quite possible that in the future other countries will not be flocking to Britain for its jobs and services because the call of the East will be much stronger as their markets grow exponentially. It is our task to hold our nerve in this period of transition and continue to build and develop our soft power rather than lose our reputation for fairness and boldness in the interim.

B INTERNALLY FOCUSED SOFT POWER

32. The British people have been in a conversation about Britishness for a long time. We have a good number of discourses – around class, religion, nationality, history, the Royal Family - that divide us, pulling us this way and that. However, when we are faced with an opportunity to present ourselves in a global context – what makes us different from other countries - we can rise to it well. Last year's opening ceremony for the Olympics was outstanding for that reason: not because director Danny Boyle took one side or another, but because he made a virtue of the complexity. Recognising for example, that a struggling

NHS is better than no NHS, that we can now own the cruelty of the industrial revolution even as we were grateful for the prosperity it brought was the kind of nuanced message that only the arts can deliver.

33. At a recent conference on Chinese and Indian Soft Power hosted by University of Westminster, Professor Xong Xin, Deputy Director of the Public Communication Research Institute at Renmin University in Beijing presented a study of the messages of the Olympic Opening Ceremony as received and enjoyed by onlookers in China. In order of importance, here is what they saw:

- 1) Britain has a long tradition of creativity
- 2) British humour is central to its character
- 3) British culture is diverse
- 4) The spirit of the Olympic Games
- 5) British historical contributions
- 6) Britain's tradition of humanism
- 7) Britain's tradition of non-conformity
- 8) Britain's global influence

The conference incidentally was remarkable for the quality and depth of the papers on soft power from China and India, both of whom take the subject very seriously. More evidence of this on request.

34. The Opening Ceremony was incredibly well received across the world with (<http://huff.to/Ooz6OI>), many people seeing Britain in quite a new light as a result. Quite remarkably, the effect was equally strong domestically; it transformed what at one point looked like being a lacklustre story about empty hotels and poor ticket availability into an important historic moment when the whole nation pulled together in the excited scramble to get to the park at any cost.

35. What is remarkable however, is that no politician has been able to harness that feel good factor: that no one has directly drawn on Danny Boyle's remarkable feat to present a coherent picture of a powerful nation at ease with itself to itself. Internally Britishness remains a thorny issue, exacerbated now by the challenge of Scottish Independence.

36. The British Council would say that this is the natural domain of artists – however many artists would argue with that. Art is a neutral space: it must be free to criticise as well as to eulogise. Politics does not have the same luxury: while it may be able to absorb the honesty of art and artists, it must always have its own purpose trained on gain for the greatest number. How can politicians develop the capacity to do this well? What are the qualities they need to be able to 'dance with the public' while leading the country and what are the skills and technologies that enable it all?

BI Ability to represent the people of Britain in a meaningful way

37. What does it say about our democracy that only 32% of people turned out to vote in our most recent local elections? That even in the general elections, the IPPR (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-23832607>) estimated that turnout for under-35s earning less than £10,000 a year was just 34%, whereas turnout for over-55s with an income of at least £40,000 a year was 79%. This describes a disconnect between politicians / government and

the people they serve. If soft power grows in proportion to authenticity (see Norway illustration above and all references to China) then there is clearly a lot of 'growth potential' in politics.

38. It would not be true to say however, that the British are apathetic: participation in civil society, which includes membership of new social movements, non-governmental organisations and pressure groups concerned with various new areas of public concern, has flourished. (<http://bit.ly/lgyokit>) This is not the place to discuss at length the reasons for this, but it is an important issue for Britain that its ability to have a good collective conversation is poor. A family that cannot have a meaningful chat around the table, will lack confidence in public: the children will not be willing to invite their friends home and the parents will hesitate to talk with pride at social gatherings. Inner doubts radiate outwards as much as inner confidence.

39. Is it time to seriously question the nature of our representation? Should politics reflect the real interests and concerns of its people more? Can a marginal seat, with up to 60% of a constituency not voting for the MP, consider itself representative? Any government that is aware of the ebb and flow of soft power must concern itself with such questions.

B2) Ability to regain and retain influence in the shifting power dynamics 21C

40. In addition to politics needing to engage with civil society more in order to reflect the voters' interests and needs better, government itself must also do more to recognise the paradigmatic shift in how society organises and speaks to itself. In the absence of activists' front room, town halls, party conferences or rallies, where is the conversation happening? – because it would be a mistake to say it is not happening at all. The internet is burgeoning with Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, Pinterest covering all subjects from all points of view; Mumsnet has become so influential in its own right that politicians queue up to be featured.

41. While the two main political parties differ in significant ways, most of the key assumptions that frame the political narrative are common to both. Many of them are outdated for example:

- that a full time job is what everyone wants – not so (<http://bit.ly/l6y8mmn>)
- that voters are selfish so the economy is more important than the planet – not so (<http://read.bi/l50RcKt>)
- that female equality is a woman's issue – not so (<http://bit.ly/l5yrfWj>)

42. Taking part in the public conversation – rather than trying to manage or manipulate it – will enhance the government's relationship with the voters and ultimately deliver more domestic soft power. This might require more distribution of power within government, even allowing a civil society tier to open up to capture public preferences. Of course this is not the place to discuss that other than to say again, that better relationships within the country will create more confidence – attraction – going outwards.

B3) Ability to do the work of government more effectively than the media or other private initiatives.

43. In a paper titled Communication, Power and Counter-power in the Network Society written in 2007, Manuel Castells, Professor of Communication at the University of Southern California, says the following:

The media have become the social space where power is decided. (This paper) shows the direct link between politics, media politics, the politics of scandal, and the crisis of political legitimacy in a global perspective. It also puts forward the notion that the development of interactive, horizontal networks of communication has induced the rise of a new form of communication, mass self-communication, over the Internet and wireless communication networks. Under these conditions, insurgent politics and social movements are able to intervene more decisively in the new communication space. However, corporate media and mainstream politics have also invested in this new communication space. As a result of these processes, mass media and horizontal communication networks are converging. The net outcome of this evolution is a historical shift of the public sphere from the institutional realm to the new communication space.

44. There will always be a shifting dynamic between politics, mass media and the new horizontal networks of communication. However, since the advent of proactive political PR professionals such as Bernard Ingham and Alistair Campbell – men who are intent on shaping the news on a daily basis – there is a battle for the hearts and minds of British voters that is becoming ever more conspicuous. Whereas not so long ago people would be captive to their chosen news source, today we mix and match our inputs fully aware that none of them are giving us the full picture and some are almost fantastic in their framing of the news. In addition many of us are now mixing in reports picked up from Twitter and Facebook, without checking their veracity. It seems we are as interested in the feel of a report – how much it resonates with our view of the world, or our need to have certain hopes or fears confirmed – as we are with the truth.

45. This is an aspect of soft power that government rarely talks about. How a journalist frames the news to attract the reader is an important form of influence that has social and political outcomes. While some might see this as a subject for the media department, it is my contention that it should be served by the same ministry that considers soft power and government influence at home and abroad. Not, I reiterate, so that government can have more power over people, but so that government can develop more power for and with the people – just as greater understanding of how the body operates benefits both doctor and patient.

46. Government's ability to communicate with the voters is woeful: there simply is no relationship between the rulers and the ruled that is trusted or enjoyed. In the age of infinite forms of communication this is an area of potential all governments should aspire to improve radically.

B4. Make way for a new era of individual and social potential.

47. To recognise the limitations of hard power and be curious in the face of our growing understanding of soft power is all that is required to open the door to a new era of both individual and collective agency. With the benefit of hindsight, we are able to look at the phenomenon of the internet and laugh at how we could not have seen what a difference it was going to make in our lives. Same for every major shift in human agency – from the introduction of electricity to the car. And it will be the same for soft power.

48. Hard power – guns, money, force - has always been concentrated in the hands of the elite. But soft power can be amassed in a million different ways by almost anyone with the ability to communicate. Mohamed Bouazizi did not have his own newspaper – he may not

have had his own computer for all we know – but setting fire to himself in a public space changed the course of history in the Middle East. This was not accidental: he knew the power of spectacle in the age of social media, he understood soft power.

(<http://bit.ly/vJJRUw>) Now multiply that awareness by any number you like.

49. A more attractive example might be how Uganda's mobile phone revolution is beginning to change the global view not only of their country but of the continent. Now that the African people are able to email, tweet and Facebook images of their growing middle class, challenging the well meaning but disempowering image of Africa as malnourished, dependent and unable to manage, investment is increasing steadily (<http://bit.ly/18v6RYH>)

50. At this moment we are still socially organised in a triangle, with the poor masses at the bottom of a very pointy local and global world. We've heard about the phenomenon of horizontalism – how more people are able to connect side to side rather than up and down and how this is making a difference to businesses. We are just at the beginning of this making a difference in politics, both local and global.

51. This is unlikely to result in an upside down triangle: leadership will always be sought and needed – but it is unlikely to stay the shape it is now. Will it look more like an oval with the leaders balancing precariously on top? Or might it look more like a circle, with leadership in the centre modelling change? The lessons of global soft power suggest that it is the inner qualities of authenticity, integrity and consistency are the most effective tools of influence. Aren't our most popular global leaders – Mandela, Gandhi, Luther-King – individuals that show as much vulnerability as strength?

52. Will Britain embrace this change and be ahead enough of the curve to be able to model its successful transition globally? This House of Lords Select Committee is a good start: it provides more of a cross party space than the House of Commons and traditionally values maturity and perspective over short term gains. Even so, it will be a rare politician that can embody the shift from nation centric to global centric to see that Britain's role as an early adopter of soft power as a governing principle is as much in the interest of our own islands as it is in the interest of the globe.

17 September 2013

Simon Anholt – Written evidence

The UK is unusually rich in ‘soft’ power: the content, and the instruments for delivering it. There is no need for me to list them here, as the enquiry will have produced abundant evidence of these riches.

Of course, every such instrument has two functions: an *intrinsic function* (the World Service provides news; museums collect and curate; universities teach and research) and an *incidental function* (they also convey our talents and values to people in other countries, and thus increase our moral or ‘soft’ power). How well their intrinsic function operates is incidental to this discussion: one assumes that if they don’t perform it well, they won’t stay in business very long.

How well their incidental function operates has a lot to do with Government. None of these players can achieve a great deal on their own, because the world is too big and too busy, and because most people don’t think much about the UK or any other foreign country. The only way that ‘soft’ power can become an effective force is if these instruments, instead of being just left lying around the place as they habitually are in this country, are inspired and informed by a shared, long-term, national strategy. Achieving this without jeopardising their independence and integrity is of course a tricky business, but one can rely on the owners and managers of the soft power instruments to monitor this risk.

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. The MARSS model (described in a separate paper) shows 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.

I’ve spent the last fifteen years teaching countries how to corral their soft and hard powers around a shared, national, grand strategy, so that their impacts can be combined and thus multiplied. 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.

The **first stage** is a complete review of all the country’s instruments of international engagement: both those controlled by government and those beyond its influence. The **second stage** is a well-guided national conversation leading to a grand strategy: a strategy which attempts to answer the apparently simple but desperately important question, *what is the UK for?* The **third stage** is to corral our instruments of engagement around the execution of this strategy, in order to produce an unbroken, unending stream of dramatic evidence that we deserve the standing we desire: this must be done with unflinching courage and imagination. The **fourth stage** is to measure how well we are doing this. The **fifth stage**, having taken the learnings of the fourth well into account, is to carry on forever.

Simon Anholt – Written evidence

The risk of this process being interrupted by changes of government is so great – for these things take decades and generations to achieve – that the creation of a cross-sectoral, public-private body to manage the task and maintain both quality and momentum will probably be essential.

September 2013

All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global Health – Written evidence

Health and healthcare:

A key asset to the UK's soft power



Summary

Good health is vital to everyone around the world and to all nations, whether economically rich or poor. Its value in terms of global economics, security and development means that those with the knowledge and resources to improve health command a powerful asset and a high degree of influence.

This paper highlights how, as a leader in the science and delivery of healthcare, the UK carries significant influence with governments, businesses and local communities worldwide.

Four categories of global influence through healthcare are outlined below:

1. Soft power through intellectual capital and expertise
2. Soft power through partnerships with the NHS
3. Soft power through improving health in developing countries
4. Soft power through roles in international governing bodies

Together, these roles and relationships strengthen the UK's position abroad and create opportunities for influence open to few other nations.

The global perspective

A number of features give the healthcare sector a special status in its potential for soft power and influence:

- **Economics:** Healthcare is a very big business. Most developed countries spend in excess of 10% of their GDP on it every year. This accounts for an annual global total spend of around US\$6.5 trillion, making health one of the world's largest and fastest growing industries.²
- **Security:** Access to quality healthcare is a vital component in every nation's stability. This is particularly evident in states with rapid economic growth such as India, China

² World Health Organisation Global Expenditure Database (figures for 2010)

and the Arab nations, where better health systems and services are among the first priorities for citizens and governments.

- **Development:** Improving health is one of the most effective and common means of international development. Health interventions are among the most effective and efficient uses of international aid.³ Health is the joint largest area of spending for global aid to Sub-Saharan Africa (18%), alongside projects to improve the governance and enabling environment of developing countries.⁴
- **Conflict:** Access to healthcare is a vital component in the rebuilding of states in or recovering from conflict. Military medicine, control of communicable diseases and health systems strengthening are all areas where the UK boasts a substantial proportion of the world's expertise.

I. Soft power through intellectual capital and expertise

The UK is a world leader in the research, development and discovery of advances in healthcare. Its thriving biomedical science sector is one of the strongest and most productive in the world – spreading new drugs, devices and procedures to patients around the world and contributing an estimated £50bn to the UK economy each year⁵ (or around 9% of total UK exports)⁶.

As figures 1 and 2 show, UK research institutions out-perform all but the USA in terms of the amount of biomedical research published each year and the impact these publications have. This dominant share of the world's life science expertise and intellectual capital increases the prestige associated with the UK's scientific community and academic institutions, attracts further investment and talent and creates opportunities for significant political and commercial influence in a sector set to continue transforming health and healthcare over the next century.

³ Making Aid Work (2007) Banerjee A; MIT Press

⁴ Official Development Assistance: Data and Guides (2012) Development Initiatives report

⁵ Department for Business Innovation and Skills Office for Life Sciences current estimate

⁶ Office of National Statistics (2009)

Figure 1. UK performance by number of health science articles published⁷

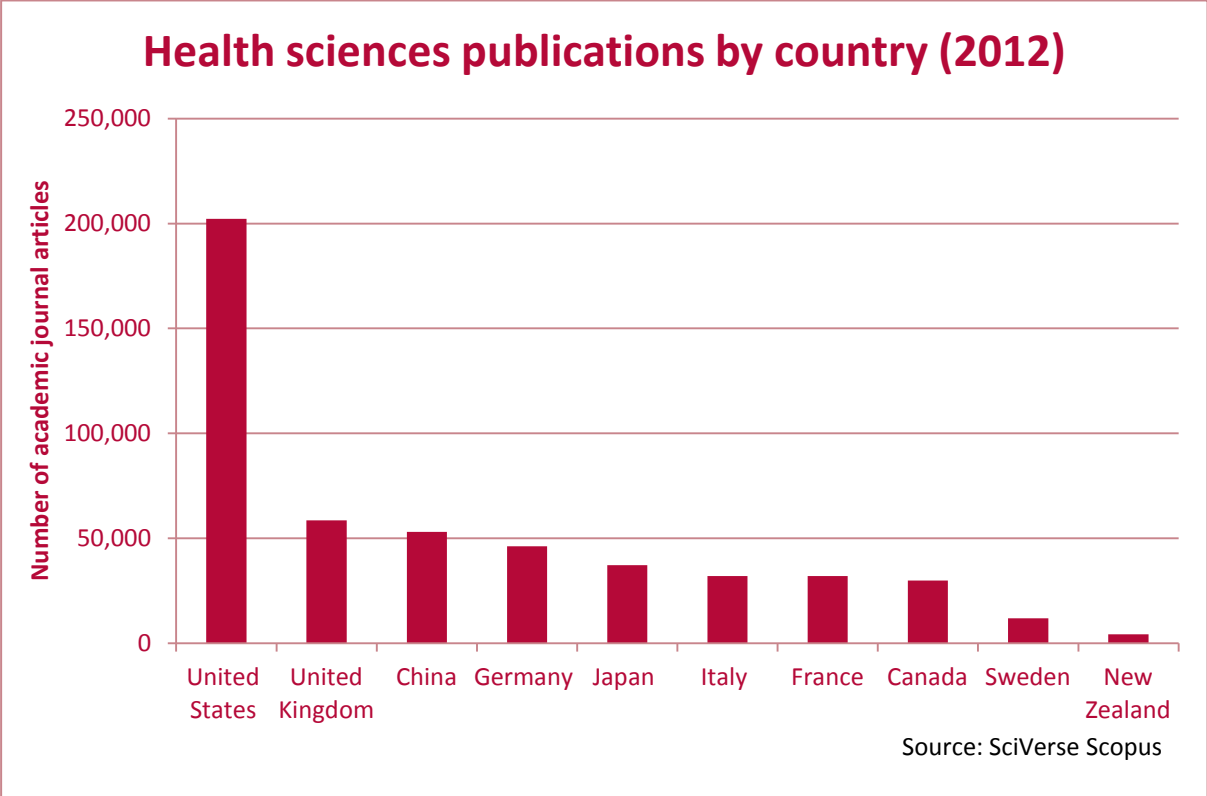
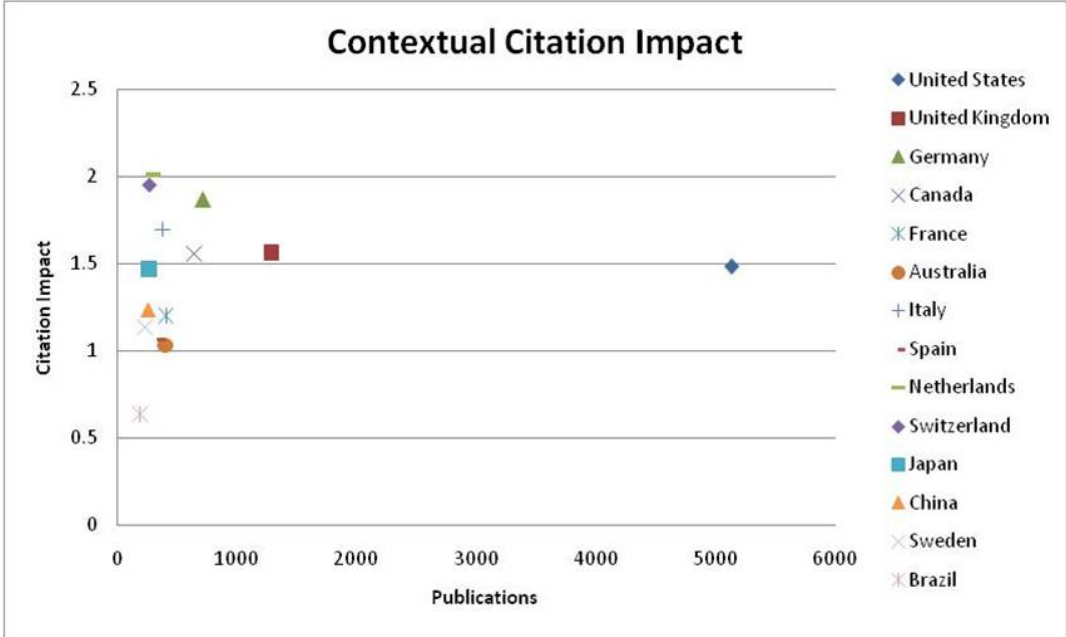


Figure 2. UK performance by impact-weighted articles in biology and medicine (2011)⁸




⁷ Data on 2012 retrieved from SciVerse Scopus August 2013

⁸ *The Most Innovative Countries in Biology and Medicine*; Forbes Magazine (2011)

2. Soft power through partnerships with the NHS

The modern NHS is one of the best performing and most well-regarded health systems in the world. As figure 3 shows, it outperforms most if not all other countries on objective measures of safety, fairness and efficiency. Public perception of its strength also bear this out. As figure 4 shows, the UK health system has the highest public approval rating of any other comparator nation, despite having one of the lowest spending-per-capita rates on healthcare in this group. It is not only esteemed among British patients either – in 2010 alone around 52,000 overseas visitors came to the UK for medical treatment, activity though to have generated around £132 million in private income for healthcare providers.⁹

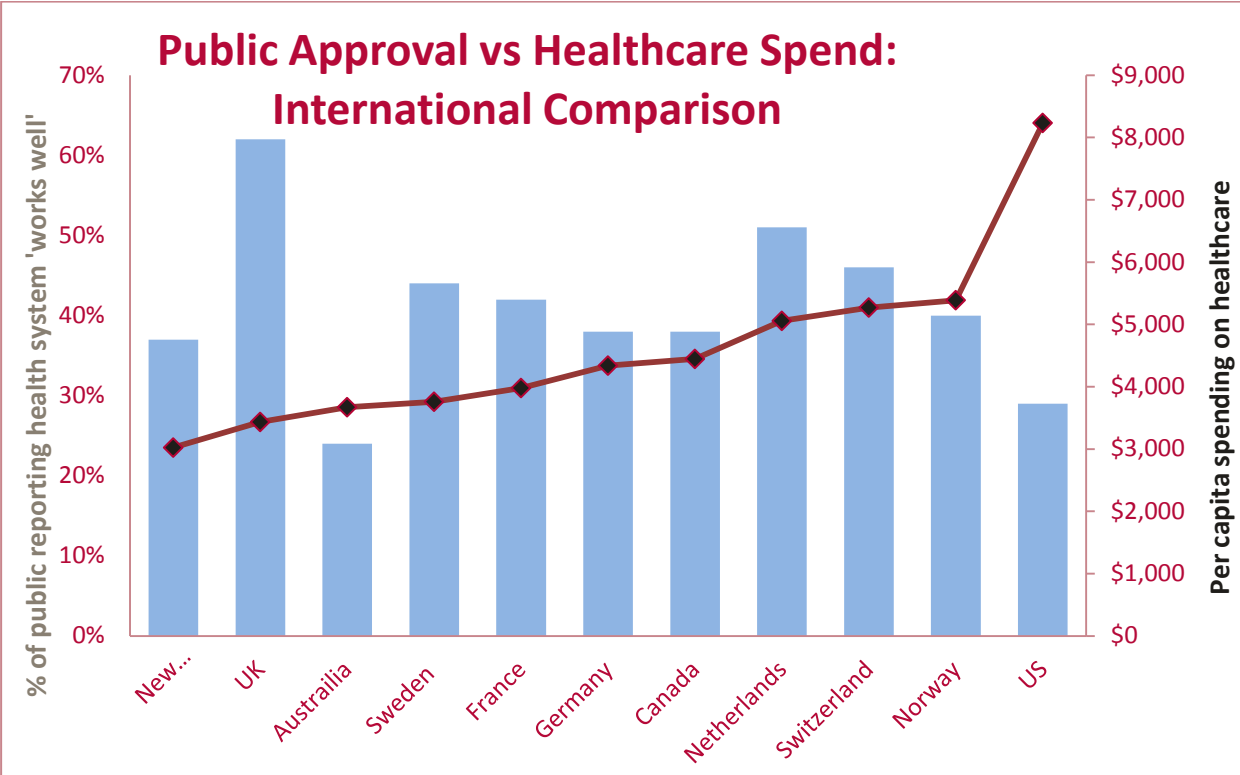
Figure 3. Rankings of health system performance by country¹⁰

Country Rankings								
	1.00-2.33							
	2.34-4.66							
	4.67-7.00							
		AUS	CAN	GER	NETH	NZ	UK	US
OVERALL RANKING (2010)		3	6	4	1	5	2	7
Quality Care		4	7	5	2	1	3	6
Effective Care		2	7	6	3	5	1	4
Safe Care		6	5	3	1	4	2	7
Coordinated Care		4	5	7	2	1	3	6
Patient-Centered Care		2	5	3	6	1	7	4
Access		6.5	5	3	1	4	2	6.5
Cost-Related Problem		6	3.5	3.5	2	5	1	7
Timeliness of Care		6	7	2	1	3	4	5
Efficiency		2	6	5	3	4	1	7
Equity		4	5	3	1	6	2	7
Long, Healthy, Productive Lives		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Health Expenditures/Capita, 2007		\$3,357	\$3,895	\$3,588	\$3,837*	\$2,454	\$2,992	\$7,290

⁹ A framework for exploring the policy implications of UK medical tourism and international patient flows (2013) Lunt NT, Mannion R, and Exworthy M; *Social Policy & Administration* 47(1): 1-25

¹⁰ International Comparison Data on Health System Performance (2010) Commonwealth Fund

Figure 4. International comparison of public approval rates vs. healthcare spending^{11 12}



The NHS actively works to foster international links and partnerships – both capitalising on and further increasing the reputation of the service, and the UK, abroad. Two growing trends in this area are not-for-profit schemes with low and middle income countries and revenue-generating commercial ventures overseas.

Not-for-profit partnerships: Over 200 NHS organisations are thought to operate partnerships in low and middle income countries.¹³ These typically involve NHS staff helping to train health workers overseas or directly providing care to patients (for example through visiting ‘surgical camps’). In 2010 Department for International Development funded two successful schemes to connect NHS organisations and staff with partners overseas. The first, the ‘Health Partnerships Scheme’, will by 2015 have resulted in NHS staff spending 50,000 days working abroad training some 13,000 health workers. The second scheme, ‘Making it Happen’, will over four years have trained 17,000 health workers and is expected to save the lives of more than 9,500 mothers and 10,000 newborn children.

These partnerships foster valuable relationships at the governmental, institutional, community and individual level. In a recent study of overseas partnerships by the APPG on Global Health, NHS organisations reported that their overseas links brought back important

¹¹ International Profiles of Health Care Systems (2012) *The Commonwealth Fund*

¹² OECD Health Data (2012) *Organisations for Economic Co-operation and Development*

¹³ Tropical Health and Education Trust data

benefits for them in terms of international reputation, leadership development and innovation, as well as meeting critical health needs in their partner country.¹⁴ These NHS partnerships form part of a much wider movement of community-community links between the UK and developing countries. Although many are not specifically health related, these partnerships are an important part of the grass-roots relationships and influence held by the UK. Officers of the APPG on Global Health are involved in several types of initiative that may be of interest to the Select Committee:

- Lord Crisp co-founded the Zambia Health Workforce Alliance to bring together the many UK-based organisations with health links to Zambia. The alliance aims to provide a focal point for the Zambian host government so that joint work is less fragmented and better aligned to the country's national priorities
- APPG Vice Chair Kevin Barron MP established the APPG on Connecting Communities, which specifically focuses on the issue of linking communities in the UK with low income countries for the purposes of development.

Commercial ventures: There is also growing interest within the NHS to capitalise on higher-income countries that look to the UK health system as a model. These initiatives can spread British ideas and influence abroad, further enhance the reputation of the UK and NHS brands and earn additional revenue to be spent on health services back home. One example of this activity is Moorfield's Eye Hospital, which in 2007 established a branch in Dubai's 'Healthcare City'. Since then it has treated over 26,000 patients, with steadily growing profits currently at £390,000 in 2012/13.¹⁵

An example at a national level is the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), which in response to growing interest in its resource allocation model and clinical guidelines founded an international department to spread these ideas abroad. The department provides advice to foreign institutions and governments on clinical and policy decisions. They have completed dozens of projects in almost every continent, including ongoing partnerships with emerging economies such as India and China.¹⁶

The Government has recently established *Healthcare UK*, a joint initiative by the Department of Health and UK Trade and Industry to help expand and accelerate commercial partnerships between the UK health sector and partners overseas. Further examples of ongoing and planned ventures can be found on their website.¹⁷

3. Soft power through improving health in developing countries

The UK is the world's second largest donor of overseas development assistance to low and middle income countries (figure 5). As figure 6 shows, national spending on international development will, this year, reach its target of 0.7% of Gross National Income, doubling the proportion that was spent in 2007.

¹⁴ Improving Health at Home and Abroad: How overseas volunteering from the NHS benefits the UK and the world (2013) All Party Parliamentary Group on Global Health

¹⁵ Data from freedom of Information request: https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/international_business_2

¹⁶ <http://www.nice.org.uk/aboutnice/niceinternational/projects/NICEInternationalProjects.jsp> (accessed 21/8/13)

¹⁷ <http://www.ukti.gov.uk/export/sectors/lifesciences/item/429220.html> (accessed 21/8/13)

Figure 5. Total overseas development assistance contribution by country¹⁸

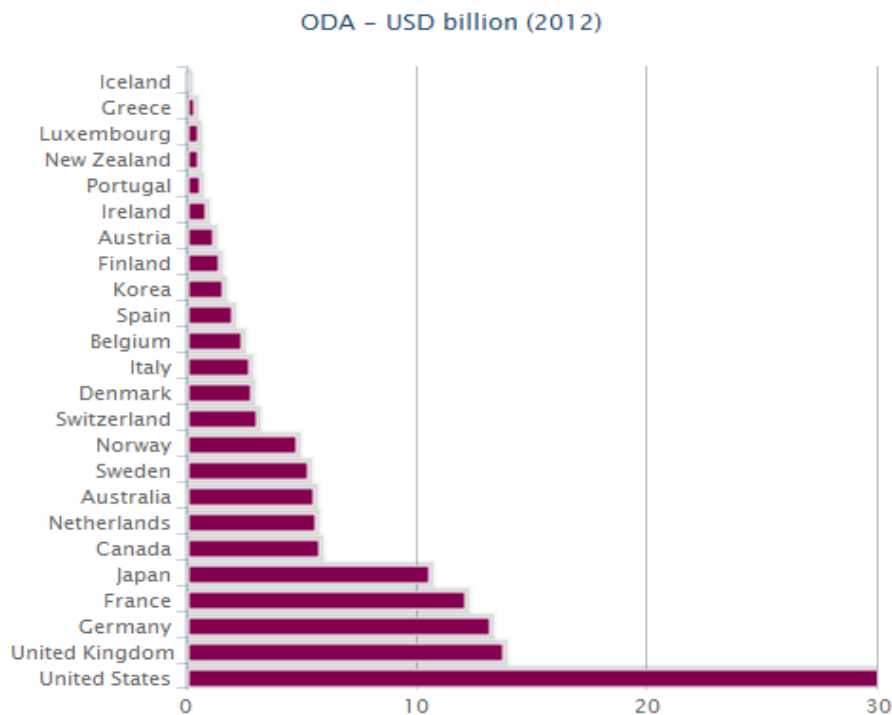
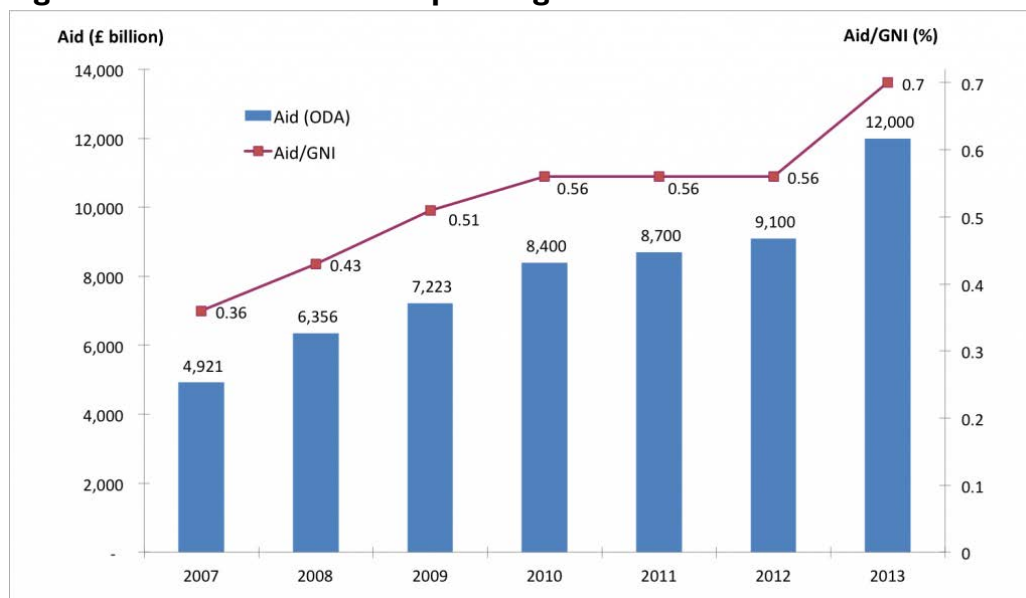


Figure 6. Growth in UK aid spending 2007-2013¹⁹



¹⁸ Official statistics on Overseas Development Assistance; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/aidtopoorcountrieslipsfurtherasgovernmentstightenbudgets.htm> (accessed 21/8/13)

¹⁹ Development Policy Blog, using figures from Department for International Development <http://devpolicy.org/uk-aid-will-it-hit-0-7-next-year/> (accessed 21/8/13)

Health projects account for around 18% of spending by the Department for International Development (DFID), second only to that given towards government and civil society organisations.²⁰ Typical health projects include vaccination programmes, improving access to clean water and sanitation, providing new health facilities and training staff.

DFID is also a major investor in research to improve health in developing countries, including work that is now contributing to successes in the control of HIV/AIDS. Ongoing studies include establishing the evidence base for effective public health interventions in humanitarian crises and large-scale trials into TB vaccines.

The leading role played by the UK in international development not only gains it influence with recipient countries, many of whom are now rapidly growing into major economic players for the 21st century, but also standing among all. One recent example of this was the invitation by the UN for the Prime Minister to act as one of three co-chairs for the High Level Panel to determine the global goals that will replace the Millennium Development Goals from 2015 onwards.²¹

4. Soft power through roles in international governing bodies

The UK's presence and prominence in international organisations is a key part of its soft power and influence internationally. The strengths in health science, delivery and development outlined in the sections above all help to support these roles – and there are various examples of the UK influencing on, but also being able to influence through, global health issues.

The UK is a member and major funder of the World Health Organisation (WHO). It plays a leading role on several issues, including global responses to pandemics and emerging infections such as Swine Flu and the recent novel Coronavirus. Several UK figures have also been invited into positions of significant influence at the WHO, including:

- In 2005 Sir Michael Marmot was made the Chair of the WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health.
- In 2006 His Royal Highness, Prince Charles addressed the main assembly of the WHO on the achievements of modern medicine.
- In 2011 Sir Liam Donaldson was made WHO Envoy for Patient Safety, responsible for promoting the issue of patient safety as a global health priority.
- The current Chief Medical Officer Dame Sally Davies is a member of the WHO Advisory Committee on Health Research.

Health also contributes to the UK's position in non-health international governing bodies, examples include:

- Having a key role in the development and introduction of the UN Millennium Development Goals in 2000, which have led to significant improvements in health worldwide.
- Leading the EU's pandemic preparedness during our 2005 presidency.
- The recent Hunger Summit called by David Cameron alongside the 2013 G8 meeting in Northern Ireland, where the UK pledged an additional £375 million of core funding

²⁰ The IFS Green Budget 2012; Institute for Fiscal Studies p155

²¹ A new global partnership: Eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development. Report of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post 2015 Development Agenda (2013) United Nations

and £280 million of matched funding to fight hunger, donations pledged by all delegates as a result of this summit totalled £2.7 billion between now and 2020.

About the APPG on Global Health

The APPG on Global Health focuses on the underlying, cross-cutting health issues which affect us all wherever we live.

Through research and regular events, it offers recommendations and advice to Parliament and the Government on key policies impacting health in the UK and overseas.

The Group is led by its members, co-chaired by Lord Crisp and Meg Hillier MP and

supported by academic institutions, the Lancet and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Together, these allow us to connect the interest, impact and knowledge of parliamentarians with the expertise and experience of the wider global health community.

6 September 2013

Dr Cristina Archetti, University of Salford – Written evidence

Dr Cristina Archetti

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This submission addresses the role of new media (the internet and social media) and international news in the delivery of the UK's soft power. The following assessment is based on extensive empirical research that has involved interviews with diplomats, officials and foreign journalists (Archetti 2014, forthcoming; 2013a; 2013b; 2013c; 2012a; 2012b; 2011).

Soft Power, New Media and Diplomacy

1. *ARGUMENT: Despite the strong belief that new media can support public diplomacy in establishing a “global conversation,” thereby more effectively delivering the UK's soft power, I argue that this is not necessarily the case. There is no one-size-fits-all strategy to global engagement. Influence, even in the communication age, does not depend on the use of interactive technologies. The ability to exercise soft power rests rather on understanding the fit between the networks each diplomat needs to engage with, the communication tools actually used by these cohorts, and each local information environment.*

2. Digital communications are widely seen as tools to more effectively deliver the UK's soft power to increasingly diverse and dispersed audiences. The opportunities offered by new media—the internet but also social media platforms like Twitter—to directly connect governments to worldwide publics are said to be blurring the distinction between diplomacy (negotiation among official actors) and public diplomacy (communication between governments and foreign publics). In this sense, many have started talking about a ‘new public diplomacy’—where governments interact with a variety of state-, as well as non-state actors and audiences of citizens. One can also easily find references to ‘public diplomacy 2.0,’ and ‘digital diplomacy,’ not least on the websites of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the American State Department.

3. In this highly interconnected world, where communication technologies allow individuals who might have never met to build communities of interest (like advocacy networks) across national borders, where physical borders and geographical distances appear to have been bypassed by the internet, one could be forgiven for thinking that only what is “global” and what happens in the ethereal world of cyberspace matters. What happens within countries in the very offices and along the corridors of embassies around the world, in the daily life of diplomats, is not important. This, however, is a huge mistake.

4. Examining the “local,” the way in which communication technologies are used and appropriated on a daily basis, not only by diplomats in the pursue of their countries' interests, but also by those the diplomats interact with, such as journalists, politicians and members of the public, in each specific national political and social context is essential to understanding how exactly diplomacy is evolving in an age of interconnectedness and how soft power actually works. Crucially, by examining the everyday dimension of diplomatic

²² Evidence submitted in the author's capacity as individual.

practices we can learn that, rather than being replaced by a generalized “communication of everybody anywhere anytime,” the delivery of influence and soft power is becoming increasingly multidimensional and, counterintuitively, selective.

5. To understand how the specificity of each local context affects the practices of foreign diplomats and where advances in communication technologies fit within this picture we need to understand the place of foreign diplomats, carrying out their functions of representation, negotiation, information-gathering and reporting back to their respective countries, at the edge between the national and the international dimensions.

Being able to make sense of what happens in the country they are working in is of paramount importance to diplomats. They need information. And they get it not only by meeting people, but also by consuming the reports provided by the media. Local media, in particular, has always been vital to their daily activities. As Phillips Davison (1974) wrote almost four decades ago: ‘The [national] press serves as the eyes and ears of diplomacy.’ Not only this is still very much the case, but through the multiplication of the opportunities for interaction (both face-to-face and mediated by technologies), diplomats have come to operate in what we could call a much broader “information environment” that they did in the past. Such environment is constituted by the networks of contacts spanning both the offline and online dimensions across which information is accessed, gathered, processed and distributed in the official, media, and public domain. Differently from a natural environment, which would be the same for all species living in it—the physical urban space of London, Beijing or Washington, for example—the information space is different for every single actor, as if each diplomat or embassy office inhabited a parallel dimension.

6. The way each diplomat operates in his/her own information environment thus reflects the specific goals and objectives of the respective embassy office. These goals, in turn, are becoming increasingly differentiated—an outcome of both developing international relations, but importantly also of the ease with which communication takes place among politicians across countries. A senior German diplomat in London I interviewed, for example, talked about an increasingly ‘ceremonial role’ for European embassies in the British capital over the past 30 years at the expense of their traditional hardcore ‘messenger’ functions. This is both because of the EU’s consolidation, particularly the fact that political leaders tend to meet regularly within the EU’s institutional structures and bodies, and the technical possibility of communicating directly: ‘If Germany had a problem with Paraguay, the foreign ministry would probably ask our ambassador in Ascension to see the foreign minister or to see the president or prime minister [...] and to deliver a strong message [...]. If the German government had a problem with the UK government, [...] the head of the Chancellor’s office would call the head of Downing Street, Number 10, and would say “look, Angela [Merkel] has to talk to David [Cameron]. Could we fix a phone call for two o’clock in the afternoon?” And the embassy would perhaps not be even aware of it.’ This explains the increase in public outreach activity by European embassies in London: ‘we are compensating for the diminishing role of traditional diplomacy by talking about our role in public diplomacy’.

Non-European countries’ embassies, instead, tend to retain to a greater extent the diplomat’s ‘messenger’ role. A Syrian diplomat in London, for example, commented that his function consisted mainly in being ‘a tool of [official] communication.’ An Australian source also confirmed the increase of an ‘advocacy function’ at the expense of information-gathering and relaying: ‘...we weren’t writing cables predicting who was going to win the last election [...] [Instead] we were saying, you know, if the Conservatives win, this is what foreign policy may look like [...] Once upon a time you would have been sending a cable every couple of days saying “this is the latest” [...] You wouldn’t do that now because somebody

could just go to *Guardian Online* or *The Times Online* and get that.’ The advocacy function consists of agenda-setting and lobbying through official contacts: ‘going down to Whitehall, trying to get the UK government to do things that we want them to do.’

7. Whether foreign diplomats want at all to engage with local publics, the extent to which they pursue such activity in case they do, as well as the communication channels used in the process—social media like Twitter, rather than an e-magazine, or a series of lunch receptions for selected guests—is thus the unique outcome of the match between each diplomat/embassy’s objectives—‘ceremonial’ function rather than ‘advocacy,’ for instance—with the information environment in which the diplomatic actor operates.

A pattern observable in the case of the London environment is that the lower the level of interest towards a foreign country in the mainstream British media coverage, the greater the effort by the respective embassy office at reaching out through alternative means of communications (social media, for example). Countries like Australia or India, in this respect, tend to receive extensive coverage in the British media because of their membership of the Commonwealth, their historical and economic ties to the United Kingdom and their status as former British colonies. Among the countries that tend to attract less media attention—mainly because they are, like Britain, all members of the EU and there are virtually no sources of tension among them—are Sweden or Denmark.

8. Such different levels of attention in the mainstream media translate into equally diverging outreach strategies and choice of communication platforms by diplomatic actors. The Swedish embassy (low visibility in British media coverage) tends to organize few press conferences. As a Swedish diplomat put it: ‘there’s too much going on in London and journalism is too fast. So, you know, people [journalists] may pop up for a press conference or they may not.’ The most important engagement activity, in this context, is rather targeted networking through face-to-face contacts at seminars and roundtable discussions led by the ambassador. The press office of the Danish embassy, to further illustrate the variety of communication channels adopted, among other initiatives, established in February 2010 the ‘Defence News, Danish Embassy in London’ Facebook page. The purpose was to enable the Danish embassy to tell the British public about stories that did not normally make the news in the mainstream media: to ‘actively tell the British population about Denmark’s international engagements; especially explaining the extensive and mutually respectful cooperation between Denmark and the United Kingdom in Afghanistan.’

9. Countries that tend to receive a great deal of official attention and, as a consequence, extensive media coverage, instead, are under less pressure to raise their visibility. This is confirmed, among the rest, by the fact that the websites of countries like the previously mentioned India, or Russia or Egypt (all identified as public diplomacy ‘geographical priorities’ for the UK), are rather basic when compared to those of less influential counterparts. The only exception is represented by the United States: despite receiving more coverage than any other country because of its ‘special relationship’ with the United Kingdom and its superpower status, it also uses alternative communication channels: a sophisticated website, a Facebook page, a Twitter feed and a YouTube channel.

10. The illustration of the variety of outreach strategies by the diplomats/embassies of different countries in London underlines the following points:

- a) There is no one-size-fits-all policy when it comes to identifying an effective communication strategy to deliver a country's soft power, whether it is diplomacy (in its narrow sense of official negotiation) or understood as public diplomacy.
- b) It is all very well to say that social media like Facebook and Twitter are useful tools in supporting soft power and a new kind of public diplomacy that is characterized by dialogue with foreign audiences. And indeed these platforms—in the right conditions and when used by certain actors in specific environments—will support the achievement of such a result. The outcome, however, cannot be a simple extrapolation from the characteristics of a technology. It is, instead, a product of the flexible appropriation of communication tools by each diplomat in adapting to a specific local information environment.
- c) British diplomats abroad should be trusted to identify which tools—whether “new” or “old” media, Twitter rather than a newsletter, a series of receptions, or even a combination of multiple tools—can best serve their purposes within the context of the interactions—with diplomats, officials, journalists or the broader public—relevant to the local context (also bearing in mind that the interlocutors might change over time).

Soft Power and International News

11. *ARGUMENT* Foreign correspondents shape the image of the UK to the eyes of audiences abroad every day through their reports. As shapers of perceptions of the UK in foreign countries, these journalists can be considered influential gatekeepers of the UK's soft power. Because of this role, within public diplomacy quarters, there have been calls for officials to actively engage foreign journalists through “more access” to “high-level briefings.” I argue that such recommendations, while they make apparent sense, are in fact based on a lack of understanding of 21st century journalism. I propose different measures.

12. Foreign journalists working in London shape every day the image of the UK to the eyes of foreign audiences through their reports. Just as what we see on TV or read in the newspapers shapes our understanding of issues and events that exceed the narrow boundaries of our direct experience, what foreign journalists report about the UK is often all publics abroad know about Britain. In this respect correspondents are veritable gatekeepers and possible influential agents of the UK's soft power.

13. The important role of foreign correspondents in the delivery of UK soft power has to some extent been recognized by policy makers involved in public diplomacy. An official review of British public diplomacy activities (Wilton et al. 2002 report) pointed out that ‘an article written by a foreign correspondent in London has a greater impact than any of our other public diplomacy outputs. Feedback from embassies, when asked to give views for this review, overwhelmingly identified more attention to foreign correspondents in London as the one thing that could improve our public diplomacy work’ (ibid.: 20). A later document (Carter 2005) again underlined the ‘multiplier effect’ deriving from the presence of ‘over 2,000 foreign correspondents based in London (the biggest single concentration after Washington) with the potential to reach large numbers of the UK's public diplomacy audiences overseas’ (ibid.: 52). Recommendations to make use of the soft power

opportunities offered by foreign journalists revolve around a greater engagement with this cohort. The British Wilton report (2002: 47) calls for the establishment of regular ‘high-level briefings’ and ‘better access...to ministers of all departments’ to ‘maximise the international impact of positive stories in the UK.’

14. Calls to improve the engagement with foreign journalists for more effectively promoting UK’s interests, however, are based on simplistic beliefs rooted in a lack of understanding of the dynamics of international communication in the 21st century, let alone developments in journalism in a fast-changing information environment. Here are the problems:

a) The first wrong assumption is that there is a defined group of journalists that can be targeted and “given access” in order convey the UK “message.” Nobody (including the International Press Officers at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office or the London Foreign Press Association) knows exactly how many foreign journalists are based in London. Full time correspondents who make a living out of journalism (not everyone manages to do so) are estimated to be about 500. The inclusion of stringers (occasional reporters) could make the number raise to about 2,000 journalists. Beyond the members/contacts registered with the London Foreign Press Association and the International Press Office, however, through the internet (blogs, Twitter, Facebook...) virtually anybody can nowadays become a journalist—a phenomenon referred to as “citizen journalism”—which leads to hypothesize the presence of potentially thousands of additional credible and influential communicators whose identity and whereabouts are completely unknown (they do not have offices or official addresses). Add to this the role of citizens who go about their everyday life and, by posting images of the UK or writing about their experiences, further shape the perception of the country abroad.

b) The second erroneous belief is that foreign journalists would almost automatically write what they are “fed” by governmental sources, as if they were some kind of information conveyor-belts.

The fact that the communication process between political actors, journalists, and the public does not take place in such a linear manner is not only related to the fact that, in our age, information is ubiquitous and there are myriads alternative sources of information than official ones. A linear communication process has never really existed. A study of foreign correspondents in London conducted over 30 years ago already observed that correspondents in London overwhelmingly relied on local media (not officials!) to write their reports. Robert Vansittart, who had the responsibility of dealing with the press during the tenure of Lord Curzon as Foreign Secretary in the 1920s remarked almost a century ago that ‘Every morning trouble arose on the telephone. “Why did you put that in?” He [Lord Curzon] did not understand that the modern journalists had sources of information other than the Foreign Office’ (in Taylor 1981: 16).

My analysis of the way journalism has transformed in the age of global communication confirms the tendency of foreign correspondents to re-interpret the information they collect. Rather than being driven to “churnalism” (the endless recycling of the same information available online, often originating from newsagencies) by tighter deadlines and fiercer competition to get first to the news, as many would claim, foreign journalists are under pressure to find unique angles for their stories. Gone are the days when foreign correspondents, as it did occur 50 year ago, simply translated what they read in the local media. Journalists are now aware that the public in their home countries can read *The Guardian* or *BBC News* online. If foreign correspondents want to keep their job they need to provide alternative perspectives.

c) The third false assumption is that all journalists somehow report about politics, hence the need access to ‘high-level’ ministerial briefings. Not only does the evidence gathered through my interviews confirm the reliance by journalists on an extensive range of sources, but also the analysis of the content of reporting shows that what ultimately becomes “news” is not just politics or foreign policy. What is newsworthy, in fact, depends on several factors. Among the rest, it depends on: the country for which a reporter is writing, particularly, in the case of this submission, on the country’s relationship with the UK; on the editorial needs of the media outlet for which the journalist reports; but it can also vary depending on the short-term developments of the domestic situation within the journalist’s home country. I could find, for instance, that journalists from EU countries tend not to be interested in UK domestic politics because, within the framework of European supranational institutions, this does not have dramatic consequences abroad. As a correspondent for a German public radio broadcaster put it: ‘American politics are [in this respect] a lot more important for Germans than British politics is.’ In addition to this foreign audiences are interested in different kind of issues. A Brazilian correspondent, for instance, made the point that the main focus of interest for his home readers/viewers is the economy. A Greek correspondent, instead, explained how Greek audiences are particularly interested in financial and society news. Editorial needs also affect the nature of the topics being reported. Magazines, for instance, favour topics that can provide stunning visuals (heritage, waterways...). The news agenda further changes along with events in foreign countries. Another Greek journalist, for example, described how the student protests of 2012 became newsworthy for audiences in Greece because they could be related (rightly or not) to the domestic unrest in the Mediterranean.

How to engage foreign journalists to support the UK’s soft power?

15. The main intermediaries between the UK’s Government and the foreign press, the International Press Office and the London Foreign Press Association, understand the new information environment and have flexibly adapted to communicate effectively with their members/contacts. The International Press Office, for example, painstakingly updates its mailing list of the transient journalists’ cohort through word of mouth—and old-fashioned but effective method. The FPA has recently cut the provision of a press room (which ‘nobody’ had been using over the last few years), having recognized that relying on a physical meeting place, when newsgathering happens mostly in cyberspace, is no longer a priority for its members.

The problematic issue is how to deal with those journalistic actors, thousands of citizen journalists and even members of the public, who are not part of these institutional networks.

16. Both official and non-official actors who want to promote their activities and interests should:

a) Bear in mind that they are not talking to “the media”: there is a whole army of citizen journalists out there, not only professional journalists.

b) Identify the range of interlocutors they intend to address their communication to: What media sources do they consume? Which communication tools are most suitable to reach them? Which other actors are the intended target audiences listening to? The key is to think in terms of networks (who do my interlocutors talk and listen to?) beyond the more myopic linear communication process (who is the receiver of my message?).

c) Make promotional/informational materials (possibly in different formats: text, video, images...) available online (before or at the same time of live events, not later). Officials still need, if appropriate, to be available for interviews and to provide press briefings. However, my research reveals a general reluctance of foreign correspondents (even full-time ones) to travel to events, especially in London. It is due to the combination of the sheer size of the urban centre (correspondents tend to live outside London while events are normally centrally located) and hectic routines (London is the most competitive media hub on this side of the Atlantic). Perhaps events could be streamed live on the web.

Conclusions

17. My research suggests that the prevailing mindsets both in academia and policy circles are based on outdated communication models. The very idea that soft power (mainly in the form of ideas or messages) can be “delivered” to foreign audiences indeed reflects simplistic assumptions about the way international communication works in the 21st century.

What should be understood is:

a) It is not possible to control the “message” and keep track of it, as a policy maker could hope to do in delivering a press briefing to a group of foreign journalists—a sort of “international media management.” While briefings are informative and useful, there is no guarantee that the desired messages will be picked up and reported in the same way as they have been issued. Communication processes in a highly interconnected world are not linear (a message being delivered from sender A to receiver B): receivers are simultaneously also senders of messages, there are multiple exchanges among many continuously interacting interlocutors, and messages are incessantly re-interpreted at each step of the communication process as results of such interactions, as in a series of feedback loops.

b) In this context, the basic values of the UK brand— such as rule of law, democracy and fairness, respect for human rights, a concern for sustainability and the environment to name a few—provide a dynamic framework to loosely (but firmly) guide all national actors’ discourse and behaviour. These values constitute the “brand platform” or, just in different terms, a national “narrative.”

c) The Government has a role in upholding such dynamic framework.

d) Even in the information age and the era of “soft power” it is not so much messages and ideas that matter, but the CONSISTENCY between those ideas (UK brand values/national narrative) and policy action. What is absolute key in establishing the UK’s soft power is not the effort at sending and controlling messages abroad—which is unfeasible and, as such, not the best use of resources—but at making sure that what the UK and its citizens (diplomats, businesses, members of the public...) do reflect the country’s values at home and abroad.

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18 September 2013

Asia House – Written evidence

We welcome the Select Committee's efforts to understand how the UK Government might develop and employ better the country's soft power resources to strengthen the UK's influence abroad, and how the UK's soft power is extended and used by organisations. We appreciate the chance to be involved with this exercise.

Asia House's second name is soft power. Our aim is to bring the UK and Asia closer through activities and events focused on business, policy and culture. We are not a political body but hope to influence the development of national policy, education and social attitudes. We have strong views on the need to prepare the next generation in the UK for the reality of the world outside. Our particular responsibilities relate to Asia. We are a charity operating without any contribution from public funds. We aim nevertheless to assist the positioning of the UK as an effective player in this vital region.

Asia House has links with some 40 individual countries, ranging, in our broad definition of Asia, from the Gulf to the Pacific. South and East Asia are naturally important in our programmes, but we pay particular attention to those countries and regions that are not currently represented or significantly reported upon in the UK. Over the last 18 months, this has included an emphasis on Burma, Central Asia, and the increasing importance of the ASEAN Secretariat ahead of community and economic integration in 2015. We have joined with parliamentary and trade delegates visiting Indonesia and hosted the ASEAN Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General in the past 12 months. We have been represented at other ASEAN events in the region. Alongside conferences, roundtable discussions and business events, we provide opportunities for people to experience Asian cultures through film, literature, art, food and performance. We mount or host important exhibitions at Asia House of Asian visual art. These efforts are explicitly welcomed by Asian governments and commercial players as well as the Asian public.

The first component of soft power for Asia House is building and deepening the understanding of Asian societies and the way they function – objective understanding based on facts. The UK's national information base needs strengthening. This requires a coherent and cooperative effort.

Our second function is to use this understanding to strengthen economic success. Asia has 50% of world GDP. It will not be possible to export to or invest in Asia effectively, or to attract a sustained volume of inward investment in the UK, without a thorough grasp of the objectives, capabilities and mind set of the cultures concerned. This belief drives the many conferences (trade, energy, and environment) and briefings we run for our corporate subscribers. We have contributed also, in a small but significant way, by publishing introductory guides to Asian markets for SMEs looking to expand in Asia. Our Navigating Asian Markets series provide the market perspective alongside cultural guidance, to demonstrate that understanding the culture is central to commercial success.

The third function is to prepare the next generation to deal with Asia. Asia will be a big fact for them, impacting directly on their personal prospects. Our youth programmes reflect this perception. Broadly speaking there is a thirst among young people for knowledge of Asia. But this is not always focused or fed with useful information. Gaps in the UK's foreign

language capability are very evident. Australian Asian language programmes are in sharp contrast.

It should go without saying that to play a significant role in Asia we need to communicate effectively. English is an enormous strategic asset. But we cannot rely on English alone. Asian languages must receive closer attention in our educational system. Mandarin Chinese is now widely taught though not to a uniformly high standard. Our visits to British schools have revealed some imaginative solutions – and considerable gaps. We were delighted that, after some thought, the educational authorities decided to permit the teaching of further Asian languages at Key Stage 2. The study of Japanese, for instance, is an important contributor to that political relationship. Many of our contacts point to language study as the gateway to real understanding of, and successful grassroots operation in, the societies concerned. Similarly we detect a thirst in schools for a curriculum delivering stronger information on Asian countries and their cultures.

Opportunities in Asia challenge the UK to deploy its best soft power skills – reputation, education, and the contribution to international policy development. The Monarchy, the Armed Forces and the World Service contribute hugely to perceptions of the UK. The global standing of our science must be maintained. Creative thinking generally, not least in sport and music, brings enhanced reputation and leverage. The outcome of the London Olympics was admired in Asia as elsewhere. The popularity with Asian students of a British education, whether at school, university or research level, speaks for itself. Our universities are listed in Shanghai at the top of the world tree but this will only remain true while our leading educational institutions are rigorous in defence of independent thinking and academic standards.

Asia House goes with this grain. We work collegially. We aim to bring in new voices to develop a shared, forward-looking, position on the Asian future and our response, though specific roles cannot be allocated top down. We cooperate with leading think tanks and cultural institutions as well as government. We reach out increasingly to relevant partners, not only in Asia but also in the US and Continental Europe. We see the Asian Commonwealth and its traditions as a huge plus. We have evidence that our Asian interlocutors appreciate this perspective.

We are opposed to any narrowing of British attitudes towards open debate and engagement with the world outside. In all these matters the UK's reputation for transparency, reason in global problem-solving and a constructive tradition in international fora, is central. We need to be seen as an outward-looking and inwardly welcoming culture, conscious of our limitations as well as our record and our strengths. But it should indeed be our objective to help shape the international landscape.

Sir John Boyd KCMG
Chairman

September 2013

Association of Commonwealth Universities – Written evidence

Universities, scholarships and soft power

Background

1. This submission focuses on the role that academic activity, and in particular government-funded scholarships, can play in soft diplomacy. While appreciating that this represents only one area of the Committee's remit, it is an important one. There is increasing evidence that academic or scientific collaboration represents one of the most effective forms of diplomacy – as demonstrated by the establishment of major programmes in the field by the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Royal Society in the UK. International scholarships represent a very personal manifestation of this, and one in which the benefits are starting to be quantified. The comments below include evidence of this from the three main scholarship schemes of the UK government.

The Association of Commonwealth Universities

2. Although based in London, and constituted as a UK charity under the patronage of Her Majesty The Queen, the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) is a Commonwealth, not a UK, body. We are a membership organisation, with over 530 member institutions drawn from 45 countries. Encouragingly, at a time when the viability of some Commonwealth activities is questioned, membership is higher than at any time in our history. Our core (membership) income is approximately £1 million per annum.
3. The ACU is, in the terms of the Committee's inquiry, a 'non-state actor'. The ACU is not a government body, and it is not our primary role to generate influence for the UK or for any other country. We would draw a particular distinction here with the role of our 'sister organisation' the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie, which in 2012 had a budget of €37.1 million, of which €33.2 million came from government.²³ This difference in resources may make the Commonwealth look insignificant by comparison, but it is not a model that we would like to see adopted by the UK. We greatly value our independence from government, and emphasise that the promotion of the UK (or any other member state) is not our prime function. Nor, however, are the objectives incompatible; in many ways, 'neutral' fora such as the Commonwealth provide better opportunities for effective diplomacy than specifically UK ones. The ACU is marking its centenary year by launching an endowment fund to provide some permanent underpinning to our work. We hope that this will attract the support of the UK and other governments, on a one-off basis.

International scholarships and soft power

4. The ACU has, since 2012, been the only organisation to administer all three major international scholarship schemes of the UK government at the same time. Two of the schemes – the Chevening and Marshall Scholarships – are funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), and have public diplomacy benefits as their main objective. The Commonwealth Scholarships are primarily funded by the Department for

²³ <http://www.auf.org/auf/en-bref/budget>

International Development (DFID), with modest support from the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Scottish Government. Total investment from government is substantial – around £42 million per annum to support around 2,500 individuals – although significantly lower than countries such as Australia (AUD 334.2 million in 2012)²⁴, France (€86 million in 2009)²⁵, and Germany (17,674 individuals supported in 2011)²⁶.

5. In recent years, the ACU has also sought to undertake groundbreaking work on behalf of these scholarship schemes to evaluate the impact of government investment in scholarships. As a result, we believe that we are increasingly able to discuss the role that these schemes play in pursuing public diplomacy and international development objectives, and propose some practical measures to improve this. We particularly welcome increasing recognition by government over the past decade that development and public diplomacy/soft power objectives can be complementary. Development scholarships have huge potential to further public diplomacy; public diplomacy scholarships also have a real impact on recipient countries.
6. For international scholarships to generate soft power benefits, two preliminary conditions must be fulfilled. First, the recipients themselves must have influence; second, they must retain their links with their home countries, where the UK is seeking to enhance its reputation. Both of these connections can be demonstrated. The anecdotal evidence of influence is strong. A list of former Chevening, Commonwealth, and Marshall Scholars is appended. Marshall, for example, can point to several alumni who have served in the Obama administration. In recent surveys, we have sought to move beyond reliance on 'star' examples to establish more general evidence. A survey of Commonwealth Scholarships alumni, for example, found that 45% of respondents had influenced government thinking in specific policy areas, and 25% had held public office.²⁷ 18% of Marshall alumni who responded to a recent (2012) survey had also held 'a political or public related post', and 37% had served as a board member or trustee of a charitable or public body. In sectors where comparisons are possible, award holders rise to disproportionately senior levels in their career – a claim backed up by income levels – and their scholarship is instrumental in gaining career advancement. All of this might be expected as holders of prestigious UK degrees.
7. Surveys of Commonwealth Scholars consistently show between 85% and 92% of former award holders living in their home regions, and around one-sixth of Marshall Scholars have studied or worked outside the United States. In both cases, there is strong evidence that these scholars return and build careers in their home countries, although the importance of this is being diluted by the increasing trend of 'global careers' during which alumni work in several countries. We would also emphasise that alumni not working in their home countries can still have significant benefits for the UK; many work, for example, for intergovernmental bodies or NGOs. A recent example is the current Governor of the Bank of England, who undertook his doctorate at the University of Oxford on a Commonwealth Scholarship.

²⁴ <http://www.australiaawards.gov.au/content/about.html>

²⁵ French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, *Receiving foreign students* (2010), p.5

http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/IMG/pdf/MAE_mobilite_etudiante_v_anglaise_web.pdf

²⁶ DAAD, 2011 Annual Report (2012), p.94 https://www.daad.de/imperia/md/content/presse/daad_jahresbericht-11-engl_120712b.pdf

²⁷ Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom, *Evaluating Commonwealth Scholarships in the United Kingdom: Assessing impact in key priority areas* (2009) <http://cscuk.dfid.gov.uk/2009/06/assessing-impact-in-key-priority-areas>

8. Moving beyond this, soft power relations require a willingness on the part of the individual to retain relations with the UK. Our ability to quantify this is in its infancy, but the available evidence is highly encouraging. Commonwealth Scholarship surveys have broken down these links into several categories. 88% of Marshall survey respondents had visited (or lived in) the UK since their awards, and 30% had visited at least every four years. Around a quarter said that these visits were mainly for business purposes, and 59% rated business as at least equal with social reasons for their visits. Marshall has also started to examine financial contributions to the UK. 45% of survey respondents had made a donation to, or financial investment in, a UK institution since their award. The Association of Marshall Scholars (the US-based Marshall alumni association) is also playing an important fundraising role, while almost 200 former Commonwealth Scholars contributed to an endowment fund set up to mark the 50th anniversary of the scheme in 2009.
9. The detailed evaluation of scholarships remains in its infancy, and many of the findings above can be seen as *a proxy* for public diplomacy and soft power benefit, rather than firm evidence. However, the evidence does suggest that scholarship alumni have significant potential to influence the reputation of the UK, and clear willingness to maintain their connections with this country. The policy question remains, therefore, what can be done to *increase* the prospect of this happening in practice? In this context, we would make the following observations:
 - a. *Funding needs to be at competitive levels.* Although HMG invests some resources in international scholarships, we note above that this investment has not kept pace with countries that we might regard as ‘competitors’ both in public diplomacy terms or as providers of higher education. For example, China plans to increase the number of government scholarships offered to international students to 50,000 by 2015.²⁸ Although the process has not been even (DFID, for example, has recognised the value of the contributions that such scholarships make to development, and has consequently increased funding for Commonwealth Scholarships in real terms since 2008), support for all three schemes is significantly lower in real terms than at their historical peak.
 - b. *Branding is vital.* International scholarships depend largely on their historical reputation and prestige. This can take decades to build. In the UK context, alumni associate themselves directly with the Chevening, Commonwealth, and Marshall communities, as well as with the UK generally. In this context, the UK has three very strong international brands, which have been built up over 60 years. It is critical that all three are preserved, and resourced to a level that remains internationally competitive.
 - c. *HMG scholarships need to be seen as a coherent package.* Although we regard maintenance of the three ‘brands’ as critical, awareness of each, and coordination between the branches of HMG offering them, has historically been weak. This has, however, improved in recent years and we now sense a real desire on the part of FCO, DFID and BIS in particular to work together. Some practical ways through

²⁸ Yang Xinyu, ‘National Policy and Government Support for Student Mobility’, presentation at the Conference about Cooperation between European and Chinese Higher Education Institutions, 16-17 May 2011, Peking University, China (http://www.emeuropasia.org/upload/EMECW11/Conf_YANG_XINYU_CSC.pdf)

which this can be achieved – such as strengthening the UK experience for scholars and subsequent alumni programmes – are highlighted below.

- d. *Serendipity is inevitable, but can be managed.* Scholarships, like higher education generally, involve a degree of unpredictability. They are essentially an investment in high-quality individuals, with all the uncertainty that this involves. That said, ways can be developed to focus investment on specific sectors. Distance learning scholarships offered by the Commonwealth Scholarships scheme, for example, focus on targeted courses and sectors. Doctoral Commonwealth Scholars are known to go on to careers in academia in particularly high numbers. Candidates for Chevening Scholarships must have a minimum level of work experience. All three schemes have developed 'leadership' criteria for use in their selection processes. The Commonwealth scheme also maintains virtual 'professional networks' for alumni in related areas of work.
- e. *UK experience is vital.* For many years, surprisingly little attention was paid to the experience of HMG scholarship holders while in the UK. In recent years, there has been welcome recognition that the schemes can do much to improve this, and at the same time emphasising the connection of HMG with the scholarships. This experience needs to embrace many elements of British life, but an insight into the UK system of government should be prominent. There is much good practice here already – Marshall Scholars visit Downing Street, both FCO and DFID make ministers available to attend welcome programmes and other events, and some scholars will meet Her Majesty The Queen next month, while the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association annually hosts an event for Commonwealth Scholars in the Palace of Westminster. This is an area in which all three schemes are developing their work.
- f. *British Embassies and High Commissions have a critical role to play.* Just as the experience of scholarship holders in the UK needs to be actively managed, so does contact with HMG on their return home. In our view, this responsibility rests squarely with British Embassies. Once again, there is much good practice here, particularly within the Chevening and Marshall schemes; this has been less the case with Commonwealth Scholarships, perhaps because of the DFID funding base and lack of awareness. With the new desire for HMG to work together, however, we feel this is changing. Fundamental to this approach is the ability of the three schemes to provide posts with necessary information and contacts. A good example of this is the Directory of Commonwealth Scholars, which is updated online annually. Marshall Scholars also have a very tight network, highlighted by the staggering fact that over 50% of all those ever to hold a Marshall Scholarship answered a recent survey. In the case of Chevening, too, the many local databases are now being combined into a global one. It is likely that, within the next two years, we might even be able to produce a global directory comprising all three schemes. Such data is not only of use to Embassies and others in identifying individual contacts, but it also underpins our efforts to rigorously measure impact through surveys of alumni.

Soft diplomacy and the wider higher education context

10. This submission has primarily discussed the role of international scholarships and soft power. We now conclude with some comments on the importance of higher education

more generally. As stated above, there is growing recognition that academic relations are a particularly powerful tool of diplomacy; academics tend to speak the same language as their disciplinary peers in a way that is likely to survive short-term political circumstances. From the student perspective, we have also presented evidence above that higher education can affect individuals at a particularly important time of their life.

11. Immigration policy is significant in realising this potential. Immigration issues have generally been resolved for the HMG-funded scholarship holders that we refer to above – they receive additional help from the team at the ACU, they have greater credibility than most students, and, where necessary, we are able to draw on the support of Embassies and High Commissions. Anecdotal information from ACU members, however, confirms increasing concern about the UK as an accessible destination. Our experience of organising the annual Commonwealth Residential School for the first time in the UK this year reinforced our fears, with applicants from three countries (who had been chosen from some 200 applying for bursaries) being rejected. These decisions were hard to fault on the grounds of criteria supplied to UKBA officials; our bursaries were specifically intended to attract students without the means to otherwise travel to the UK, and who were thus seen as high risk. The inability of the UK to welcome such talent, even for a short period, is nonetheless of concern.
12. The final point we would like to make concerns outward mobility. Much has been said about the desirability of more UK students undertaking some part of their course overseas, and we would endorse this. Much of the focus of this debate (for funding and political reasons) has focused on Europe, but we believe that the Commonwealth – as a two-way organisation with immense diversity and extensive use of English – should not be overlooked as a channel for such activity. Nor should such activity be confined to the ‘developed’ Commonwealth. Although the vast majority of Commonwealth Scholarships are held (and funded by) the UK, the scheme has widespread capability to arrange awards (not funded by the UK) in other member states. Each year, UK candidates are nominated for awards in locations such as Brunei Darussalam, India, Malaysia, New Zealand, and Trinidad and Tobago. The number of countries is increasing – largely thanks to the anniversary endowment fund mentioned earlier – so that Commonwealth Scholarships now exist in Kenya, Samoa, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, and other low and middle income countries. Sadly, however, the withdrawal of Canada this year has been a step in the opposite direction. We believe that developing a Commonwealth-wide programme in conjunction with other governments, but based on the foundations laid by the existing Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP), could be an important element of UK policy in the area of outward mobility, which would in turn contribute to public diplomacy objectives.

The Association of Commonwealth Universities

18 September 2013

The opinions stated above reflect the views of the Association of Commonwealth Universities alone, and not necessarily those of the HMG scholarship schemes or their funding departments which are quoted.

Appendix I: Eminent alumni

Chevening Scholars

Sergei Stanishev	Bulgaria	currently President of the Party of European Socialists; former Prime Minister of Bulgaria
Alvaro Uribe Velez	Colombia	former President of Colombia
Baldwin Spencer	Antigua and Barbuda	Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda
Anote Tong	Kiribati	President of Kiribati
Marek Belka	Poland	currently Head of the National Bank of Poland; former Prime Minister of Poland
Joao Miranda	Angola	former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Angola
Gega Mgaloblishvili	Georgia	former Prime Minister of Georgia
Wang Lili	China	Vice Governor of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China
Bozidarka Dodik	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Supreme Court Judge, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Commonwealth Scholars

Dame Bridget Ogilvie	Australia	former Director of the Wellcome Trust, UK
Professor Germaine Greer	Australia	Broadcaster and author
Nicholas J O Liverpool	Dominica	former President of Dominica
Dr Michael Cullen	New Zealand	former Deputy Prime Minister; Minister of Finance; Minister of Tertiary Education; Shadow Leader of the House, New Zealand
Dr Kevin Lynch	Canada	former Deputy Minister, Department of Finance, Canada; Executive Director at the International Monetary Fund; Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet, Canada
Professor Elizabeth Blackburn	Australia	2009 recipient of Nobel Prize for Medicine or Physiology
Sir Ross Cranston	Australia	currently High Court Judge, UK; former Member of Parliament; Solicitor General, UK
Professor Atiur Rahman	Bangladesh	Governor, Bangladesh Bank
Professor Walter Woon	Singapore	former Attorney General, Singapore
Dr Kenny Anthony	St Lucia	Prime Minister of St Lucia
Dr Rolph Payet	Seychelles	Minister for Environment and Energy, Seychelles; Founding President and Vice Chancellor, University of the Seychelles

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Mark Carney	Canada	Governor, Bank of England
Alison Stone Roofe	Jamaica	Jamaica's first Ambassador to Brazil
Marshall Scholars²⁹		
Dr Ray Dolby		Founder and Chairman, Dolby Laboratories
Justice Stephen Breyer		Supreme Court Justice
Bruce Babbitt		former Governor of Arizona; US Secretary of the Interior for President Bill Clinton; 1988 Presidential candidate
Professor Roger Tsien		2008 Nobel Prize for Chemistry
Thomas Friedman		Pulitzer Prize-winning author; columnist for <i>The New York Times</i>
Dr Cindy Sughrue		Chief Executive, Scottish Ballet
Reid Hoffman		Founder and CEO, LinkedIn
Professor Amy Finkelstein		Winner of the Clark Medal for Economics

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²⁹ Marshall Scholarships are awarded to US citizens

BBC – Written evidence

Introduction

Joseph Nye, who invented the term ‘soft power’, defines it as ‘The ability of a country to get what it wants through attraction, rather than coercion or payment’, based on the deployment of intangible assets (institutions, ideas, values, culture and perceived legitimacy of policies) rather than physical resources (armies and treasuries). When effective, it is characterised by foreign countries or businesses choosing to associate themselves with the UK, whether in trade, diplomacy or even military activity.

The BBC is not a soft power ‘asset’ to be deployed at will by the Government. However, through providing global public goods, the most trusted objective international news services, and content which deepens knowledge and understanding, and is inspiring and entertaining, 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. Indeed as the Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport, Maria Miller, acknowledged in her recent speech to the Royal Television Society, the UK’s Public Service Broadcasters play an important role in influencing the way that the UK is perceived internationally.

The BBC is one of Britain’s leading global cultural assets that enable the open exchange of ideas, information, and values among nations and so helps to foster mutual understanding. It is just as important that the BBC brings ‘the UK to the world’ as it is ‘the world to the UK’. The BBC’s contribution to the UK’s standing and reputation in the world sits alongside its support for the comparative advantage of Britain’s creative industries.

The BBC contributes to the UK’s reputation abroad through its global portfolio of services which encompasses:

- BBC World Service - the world's leading international multimedia broadcaster providing impartial news and analysis in English and 27 other languages;
- BBC World News – the BBC’s commercially funded 24-hour news and information channel;
- BBC Worldwide - the BBC’s main commercial arm in the UK and overseas supporting the BBC’s public service mission through operating linear TV and digital services, developing global product brands and licensing secondary merchandise; and
- bbc.com - which alongside BBCNews.com, offers high quality international news, business, features and in-depth analysis.

This diverse range of activities means that the BBC has a strong international presence, touching people across the world. BBC Worldwide’s 44 channels are available in over 406 million households across the world. Global News (comprising bbc.com, BBC World News and BBC World Service) reaches 170 countries, with an audience of 256 million people who consume it on a weekly basis. Recently bbc.com reached a major milestone – in August for the first time there were more than 1 billion page views of the BBC’s international website in the month.

At the heart of the BBC's global effort is the desire to deliver the best possible output for our audiences on a UK and a global stage, and in doing so there are a number of ways that

the BBC, as an independent media provider, enhances the UK's 'soft power' - its strength, prosperity, wellbeing and place in the world.

- BBC News delivers a global perspective on the world free from national or commercial interest, and as result Britain gains geopolitically through enhanced global reputation, relevancy and respect.
- The BBC's global activities bring a direct economic benefit to the UK's creative economy, also driving growth in the UK's creative sector.
- The UK economy also indirectly benefits as the BBC's overseas activities play a key role in shaping the UK's global influence and positive reputation— enhancing Britain as an attractive place to visit, to study and to do business; attracting the world's leading talents in a range of fields; and promoting understanding of the UK's cultural variety and richness.

Our assessment of the BBC's role has been informed by conversations with a range of stakeholders. We include a number of their statements in the submission.

This global role is important for the BBC, and we will be spending a significant proportion of the licence fee on the World Service from 2014. The move from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to licence fee funding distances the BBC World Service from perceptions that it has been an arm of government, enabling the BBC's role in promoting global values to be even more respected; and, as a by-product, increasing its value to the UK. The move also provides greater clarity and security of funding for the World Service (through to the end of the current Charter agreement in 2016). Looking ahead, and in order to make the most of this spending, we recommend greater clarity on Parliament's role to ensure an appropriate and proportionate level of accountability. In particular the BBC would like to better understand the following:

- The Foreign Affairs Committee has indicated that it will have continued interest in the World Service after 2014, but the Culture, Media & Sport Committee will be the parliamentary committee with oversight for all of the BBC including the World Service. What will be the potential mechanism of co-operation between the two committees to ensure that parliamentary interest is focussed appropriately?
- Parliamentarians periodically ask questions of ministers concerning the BBC World Service. Is it clear to which department (FCO or DCMS) such questions should be directed from April 2014?

Geopolitical impact of the BBC

I) The BBC plays a major role in enhancing the UK's standing and reputation in the world by providing a global public good in the form of accurate, impartial objective journalism, free of national or commercial interest, which in turn enhances British 'soft power'.

As the BBC Trust Position paper on the BBC World Service³⁰ states: *"The BBC World Service is editorially and operationally independent of the UK Government. Unlike some other international broadcasters, the objective of the World Service is not to advance the foreign policy of the UK Government.... This independence is highly valued by our audiences. It is an explicit role of the BBC Trust to ensure that the independence of the BBC is maintained and we will continue to fulfill that*

³⁰ http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/consult/wsol/wsol_positioning.pdf

BBC – Written evidence

role with regard to the World Service.”

The BBC is consistently rated the most trusted and best-known international news provider, with CNN our nearest competitor³¹. In the words of Professor Joseph Nye:

"In the information age, when there is a surplus of information, the scarce resource is credibility – and credibility is established by being open and showing you are open, including being self-critical, and critical of your allies. If you can establish a reputation for credibility – and BBC has that, it is a pity to see it squandered.”

The global media landscape in which we operate is competitive, but far from free. Around the world today, only one in six people lives in a country with free media. According to Freedom House, this is the worst media freedom rate in more than a decade.³²

Trusted news is especially valued at times of upheaval. In Egypt, The BBC audience quadrupled during the Arab Spring, and high levels of reach have been maintained since that time, showing an ongoing need for trustworthy, objective news. The BBC Arabic TV audience in Egypt is currently over 8 million. There is also a need for trusted news in developed, stable countries. In the US, there is a decline in trust for US news providers. American consumers value the distinctive international perspective offered by the BBC, which fills in a gap in domestic media.

Professor Ngairé Woods *“The BBC World Service has a long established global brand which is widely trusted as bringing independent analysis with reliability, depth, accuracy and global coverage. The BBC’s capacity to deliver on this is powerful. When you look across the resources of journalism across the world, they are massively under threat - with newspapers cutting back and other media pushing particular points of view. The incredible gift of the BBC is impartial information - that is what people thirst for.”*

a) The BBC provides a counter-balance to other large international media organisations, and creates impact in a far more competitive fragmented digital media landscape.

The last few years have witnessed media liberalisation in many countries and a dramatic flourishing of competition. A host of local commercial media outfits are entering the market. The power of international media as a vehicle of soft power is demonstrated by the increasing effort and budget that China, Iran and Russia are putting into their international media operations. However there is a marked difference in the values that are projected by international media such as CCTV, Press TV, Russia Today, Al Jazeera and Al-Arabiya and those of the BBC³³.

There have been many cases across the world in which BBC content has been dropped in favour of paid content from providers such as Voice of America (VoA), CCTV, and Voice of Russia. In the Arab world, Deutsche Welle, RT and CCTV are increasingly offering packages combining content, training programmes, equipment and in the case of CCTV and RT, hard cash. In African countries such as Kenya, Uganda, and Benin, there have been many

³¹ Source: BBC Global News Brand Tracker conducted by Kantar Media, December 2012 and other independent surveys

³² Freedom House, 'Freedom in the World' Annual Report 2013

³³ See Annex I for a Strategic Assessment of Global Competition between International Broadcasters [Not reproduced here]

BBC – Written evidence

cases of BBC deals being cancelled because of more lucrative offers from VoA, CCTV, and Deutsche Welle.

Digital platforms provide new challenges and new opportunities for the BBC to reach audiences. The ways that global audiences consume content is evolving, and the BBC has been at the forefront of continually innovating the type of content, the way we deliver it and the platforms we use. For example, in Burma, a country whose media is just opening up after decades of state censorship, BBC Burmese has recently launched a one-minute audio news bulletin for mobiles.

As well as the digital offer on BBC News online, and BBC.com, the BBC offers digital content in all its 28 languages. The largest portion of growth in the BBC Global News Audience in 2013 was from digital audiences, young people using their mobiles to discover the BBC, often for the first time. The BBC continues to invest in growing and understanding the digital dynamics of the global media market place. The BBC also reaches audiences on a host of social media. BBC Top Gear has more than 13 million 'likes' on Facebook. BBC World News has over 4 million Facebook 'likes', and more than 4 million Twitter followers. On YouTube BBC Worldwide's eight channels have attracted over 4,750,000 subscribers to date with Top Gear reaching the three million subscriber mark last month (August), ranking 76th out of the top 100 most popular YouTube channels

Yet this more complex media landscape is also more fragmented. In Kenya, for example, new radio stations in diverse languages are also broadcasting a more one-sided picture to their listeners. In India, there are over 800 TV channels; regionalisation and local language content is also making news increasingly partisan. The BBC is rare in having the capacity to reach all sections of society in often fractured countries, enabling discussion that can transcend deep divisions.

b) The World Service, alongside BBC Media Action, plays a significant role in post-conflict and fragile states such as Afghanistan and Somalia, deepening the communities' mutual understanding, providing a public good and thus indirectly benefiting British soft power.

The BBC reaches over 70 million people in the countries of high need (across Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Egypt, Libya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Darfur, Syria and Burma), on average reaching over 1 in 4 people in these areas of need. Our recent first ever survey in Somaliland and Puntland showed the BBC to have a very high reach of 63%.

Many countries, especially those affected by conflict, don't look to the BBC for impartial and trusted news only, but for platforms for independent and trusted debate and dialogue. BBC Media Action, the BBC's development arm, works with national partners as well as with the BBC to engage more than 250 million people worldwide.

For example, over recent months, the BBC Afghan service has broadcast a series of debate programmes, named 'Open Jirga', bringing together men and women across diverse communities across Afghanistan, to engage with national leaders such as President Karzai, a first for Afghanistan. Similar programmes designed to improve accountability and foster dialogue have been created (often with DFID funding) in countries including Bangladesh, Egypt, and the Palestinian Territories.

Professor James Gow: *“The BBC is the best easiest form of humanitarian assistance that can be provided after an emergency, giving people the best possible shot at truth, knowledge, and understanding. It is always important that the BBC is where possible, broadcast in places which most need it, which are challenged by peace and security.”*

c) The BBC also has big audiences in diaspora communities, in the UK and internationally, reaching communities who may have considerable impact on political outcomes back home. There are 0.3 million UK users of content in other languages including Somali, Urdu and Bengali.

d) Working through BBC Media Action and the BBC College of Journalism, the BBC builds the capacity of local media in many countries of the world, sharing our values of objectivity, accuracy and quality. Media Action supports training and capacity building programmes for journalists and media organisations in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and parts of Eastern Europe. Training journalists and media organisations around the globe also provides the BBC with potential partners to enhance our newsgathering.

Set up by BBC Media Action in 2005, Radio Al Mirbad is Iraq's only independent radio station providing public service broadcasting. It gives communities in the nine southern provinces a voice and holds officials to account. In 2012, Al Mirbad launched its online platform, www.almirbad.com, with a presence also on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

This year the BBC has been working with MRTV, the Burmese state broadcaster, to improve the quality of information they provide to Burmese audiences. And we will continue to build the capacity of working journalists across the country to ensure that as the media opens up, they are prepared to report on issues accurately and impartially.

2) The BBC helps set the framework for global exchanges, providing the space in which people across different communities and cultures can have meaningful conversations. The BBC demonstrates (rather than advocates) free expression.

The BBC is perceived to be the embodiment of a culture that has a passionate commitment to freedom of expression. For example, following the Israeli elections, a BBC Persian TV discussion was broadcast between Iranians and Israelis, which couldn't be countenanced in Iran itself. Programmes like *World Have your Say* demonstrate and promote open discussion and debate, and challenging journalism. Following the gang rape of a woman in Delhi last December, our African services held discussions between men and women, breaking taboos and challenging stereotypes and attitudes.

Philippe Sands QC: *“What the World Service does is to offer people in a state of oppression a lifeline to a different set of values – and that is very significant”.*

3) BBC Monitoring observes and understands key media sources, enabling its customers, including the BBC and the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, to make more informed decisions, and enhances the UK's relationship with the US.

BBC Monitoring shares insights with BBC News, including media analysis, which gives the BBC a special understanding of competitive media strengths. It also provides services for key government customers, including the FCO, Ministry of Defence, the Cabinet Office and the intelligence agencies, plus the commercial market. It has been working in partnership with the US Open Source Center since World War II on the basis of complete information sharing, product transfer and reciprocal tasking. This enables the partnership to cover 150 countries in 100 languages from 12,000 sources. BBC Monitoring delivers 800 stories per day, producing actionable information on news, events, opinion and media environments.

4) **The contribution that the BBC makes through BBC Worldwide has direct economic benefits to the UK** (see below), which also enhances the UK's geopolitical power. The BBC is one of Britain's leading global cultural assets that enables the open exchange of ideas, information, and values among nations and so helps to foster mutual understanding. Research indicates that countries with higher degrees of mutual understanding and trust invest and trade with each other more in both directions³⁴.

Direct Economic Benefits

The BBC's global activities bring a direct economic benefit to the UK by providing an international platform for UK talent and creativity. This in turn helps to build the reputation and awareness of the UK's creative industries thus enhancing the UK's soft power. There are several ways that the BBC's international activities generate revenues which flow back to the UK. For example by:

- Exporting programmes and formats and through secondary exploitation (DVDs, merchandise and partnerships with Netflix and Hulu);
- Establishing production bases overseas – which in turn bring revenues back to the UK;
- Attracting inward investment; and
- Generating revenues for the creative industries.

Exports

BBC Worldwide is the largest distributor of finished TV programmes outside the major US studios, with a catalogue of 50,000 hours, sold to over 700 international broadcasters and digital platforms. It supplies 44 channels internationally which are available in 406 million households, providing a shop front for a range of content that both entertains and inspires. In 2012/13 BBC Worldwide achieved headline sales of £312.3m including top selling titles, such as Africa, sold to 195 territories.

Establishing production bases overseas

The BBC is BBC Worldwide's primary production partner for content supply, sitting alongside output from BBC Worldwide's production houses and from the UK independent production sector. BBC Worldwide's Content and Production business generated headline sales of £151.2m in 2013/13 (compared to £135.5m in 2011/12), with particularly strong sales in new content and new formats produced by its productions houses in Los Angeles and France.

³⁴ Quarterly Journal of Economics, 2009, *Cultural Biases in Economic Exchange?* by Paola Sapienza and Luigi Zingales

Attracting inward investment

The BBC plays an important role in helping to attract inward investment. Taken together the BBC and BBC Worldwide helped to attract £32m of co-production funding into the UK production sector in 2011/12 from overseas broadcasters. For example, BBC Worldwide and Lookout Point brought together BBC, Mammoth Screen, HBO Miniseries, ARTE France, Trademarke Film, BNP Paribas Fortis Film Fund and Anchorage Entertainment to make BBC Two's acclaimed drama by Sir Tom Stoppard, *Parade's End*.

Revenue to the creative industries

Many of BBC Worldwide's activities lead to revenues flows to rights holders through upfront rights investment, profit shares and royalties. In 2012/13 BBC Worldwide returned £91 million to rights holders.

Indirect Economic Benefits

For the UK creative sector as a whole, the BBC's global approach maximises our national competitive advantage by raising the profile and reputation of the UK as the world's leading centre for media and the arts.

The BBC's global perspective, free from national or commercial interests, enhances the lives of audiences around the world, and also builds the BBC and the UK's reputation as a trusted and credible partner. With the growth of BBC Worldwide's own portfolio of BBC-branded direct-to-consumer channels and digital services, we are increasingly providing international audiences with carefully curated BBC experiences which **showcase a broad range of the UK's highest quality output and bring to life the full range of values and characteristics which together comprise British creativity**. By propagating British values and culture in its broadest sense, we seek to inspire and tap into the wider aspirations of younger audiences from around the world.

The BBC also acts as a **National Champion for the wider economy**, well beyond the creative industries.

Colin Stanbridge *"We do a lot of work in India, China, Far East, and South America, representing SMEs, who we encourage to market and who travel with us on trade missions. The World Service sets the scene very nicely. The SMEs don't have the brand advantage of large companies, and therefore rely more on the strong brand of the BBC. People in our markets know about the UK through the work of the World Service, which creates a vision of Britain, one based upon values of integrity quality and impartiality, that helps our companies to be more trustedThe BBC helps companies punch above their weight. I do believe that the work that the World Service does is a key driver promoting the UK brand"*

The impact of our global efforts also has a profound effect on our partners (including other important UK cultural institutions which lack the BBC's international reach), the rest of the UK creative sector and indeed the wider economy.

The BBC's portfolio of international services acts as a **platform and business enabler for partners from the British Film Institute and the Royal Opera House to UK**

independent producers. Partnership with the BBC enables such businesses and institutions to deepen their engagement with international audiences, maximise the value of their exports, and attract inward investment. The BBC is the only UK player in both the business-to-business and direct-to-consumer space which can offer these benefits to British content producers, brands and institutions. In particular, the creative sector benefits because of the dynamic market in commissioned programming that the BBC has helped to create.

A study³⁵ of business influencers across five countries found that the BBC is a frequent source of news and information for business influencers. Proportions saying they access the BBC most days (TV, radio or online) range from 22% (Turkey) to 70% (India).

These influencers were asked to consider the attractiveness of different countries as business partners. Great Britain ranks second to the US among the countries measured in terms of attractiveness (and well ahead of France and Germany), with 51% rating it 'very attractive' – but among those who access the BBC daily or most days, Great Britain's rating is much higher (64% 'very attractive'), and on a par with that of the US (65%). There is widespread endorsement among influencers of the idea that the BBC is a great ambassador for Britain. Nine in ten feel this way, with 49% strongly agreeing that this is the case – and even more (57%) among those who identify themselves as 'key' decision makers within their company. These key decision makers are also more likely to feel that the BBC is a positive influence in stimulating business with Great Britain, and that it reflects positively overall on Great Britain.

In its news services, the BBC covers culture across the globe, including the UK, where there is editorial justification. Our audiences expect us to cover what is happening in the arts and entertainment arena in the UK, because of its strength, creativity and originality. In the period April – July 2013, the BBC News website has featured stories on a host of BBC cultural institutions and their activities, including the Tate, Royal Opera House, the Royal Academy of Arts, the National Gallery, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Library, the British Film Institute, the British Museum, and countless articles on productions from theatres including The Royal Court, the National Theatre of Scotland, and The Theatre Royal Dury Lane.

During the 2012 Olympics, BBC global output featured a series of programmes and content in multiple languages with the strap line "London Calling" and "London- the city of 2012 brought to life by the BBC". The Olympics saw record-breaking traffic levels for Global News- driven by BBC.com/sport/Olympics. Olympics period saw highest traffic ever for: Afrique, Great Lakes mobile, Indonesia, Pashto, Persian, UK, China, and Vietnamese digital sites. In research conducted with the BBC Global Minds community, when prompted, more than two third of the users found the BBC coverage of the Olympics improved their perception of London and UK in general, and more than 80% of them said they are now interested in visiting London/UK as a result of it.

The BBC also contributes to promoting the English language, through the BBC English website and podcasts, and BBC World News which is available in more than 200 countries and territories across the globe. The BBC's English Language Teaching offering and the BBC content more widely continues to be used by teachers, students alike to enhance their education and build their English communication skills. The

³⁵ Human Capital, BBC Global News, International Research Report, February 2010

BBC – Written evidence

BBC Persian Service has also partnered with the British Council to produce *Word on the Street*, a TV drama adventure set in the UK, which is distributed internationally by the Open University in countries from Iran to Hong Kong, Uzbekistan to Columbia.

6) The BBC helps position the UK in its relationships with the BRIC countries, at a crucial moment in history when global power is shifting East and South. The economic activity of BBC Worldwide in these countries builds upon the reputation of the BBC, established by the BBC World Service.

In June 2013 BBC Brasil experienced a record in access to its desktop and mobile sites during the wave of protests in Brazil, driven mainly by Facebook and search engine referrals. The Brazilian audience may well have been weary of the coverage of private media in Brazil, perceived by many as biased, and therefore looked to BBC Brasil with its reputation for independent journalism.

Professor Rana Mitter “Since 2000, there has been a change in the global economic and political power structures and relationships. The UK is no longer as potent an actor, but rather one that has to react to new circumstances. Today we have this window of opportunity, a transition moment, when power is shifting, when the UK can assert itself, make itself relevant to the BRIC countries. The conversations between BRIC countries are becoming increasingly important, but still limited; there are only four direct flights between Delhi and Beijing a week. Five years from now, these opportunities will likely be closed.”

Annex 1: Extract from Shawn Powers: “New Players, New Directions: A Strategic Assessment of Global Competition between International Broadcasters”, December 2012, Georgia State University, Atlanta. Prepared for Director, Office of Strategy and Development, Broadcasting Board of Governors, USA [not reproduced here].

Annex 2: Supporting quotes and biographies

All quotes are from conversations with the BBC’s Emily Kasriel and have been approved by their sources for public quotation.

Professor James Gow

Professor of International Peace and Security, and Director of the International Peace and Security Programme at Kings College, London.

Professor Rana Mitter

Professor of the History and Politics of Modern China, University of Oxford. Frequent traveller to China and India and involved in many symposia.

“If Britain didn’t have the BBC World Service, it would want to create it, as illustrated by the lengths China and Russia are going to create internationally focused media. CCTV and RTV look to the BBC model – they want to be a widely respected news brand”.

“The BBC World Service brand continues to be one of the best known brands around the world, even in places such as China where reception and availability is often limited. No other international broadcaster comes close. This is particularly important at a time when Britain’s service skills such as

BBC – Written evidence

higher education and consultancy are at the forefront of its economic model. Having the BBC positions Britain as a country which handles information in a sophisticated and productive way.”

Sir Mark Moody-Stuart

Former Chairman of Anglo American plc, and the Royal Dutch Shell Group following a long career with Shell living in Holland, Spain, Oman, Brunei, Australia, Nigeria, Turkey and Malaysia, and UK.

“The World Service values of integrity and impartiality are important contributors to soft power and contribute to the maintenance of influence and communication with people in countries even when intergovernmental relations may be strained. In some way the World Service contributes more than the FCO to British standing, through delivering a unique service that your audience can’t get from anywhere else.”

Professor Joseph Nye

Distinguished Service Professor and former Dean of Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government. A renowned global thinker, who is known widely for having coined the term ‘soft power’ in international relations.

“I understand the British government is looking to increase their relationships with the BRIC countries. The BBC plays an important part of that strategy – a point of entry that is not mistrusted - a point of entry to British influence. 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.”

Professor Philippe Sands QC

A barrister in the Matrix Chambers and a professor of international law at University College London, he has appeared before many international courts including the International Court of Justice, and the European Court of Justice. He frequently acts for states, international organisations, NGOs and the private sector on aspects of international law.

Colin Standbridge

Chief Executive of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry. He was Managing Director of Carlton Broadcasting, and worked at the BBC for 20 years.

Professor Ngaire Woods

Professor of International Political Economy, founding Director of the Global Economic Governance Programme, University College, and Dean of the Blavatnik School of Government. She has served as an Advisor to the IMF Board, to the UNDP’s Human Development Report, and to the Commonwealth Heads of Government.

September 2013

BBC – Supplementary written evidence

BBC culture website

The BBC Culture feature section on BBC.com was launched by BBC Worldwide in May 2013 - it is one of five non-news feature sections available on the website outside the UK. BBC Culture focuses on film, fashion, art and music and is a fusion of videos and images coupled with editorial content from a host of well-known and respected journalists and commentators, offering an alternative lens on global trends across the arts.

A section titled 'Big In...' features relevant and topical cultural stories from around the world as reported by the BBC's network of correspondents, as well as linking to content from other feature sections BBC Travel, BBC Future and BBC Autos.

The website has presented many stories featuring British cultural talent and institutions, using them as a starting point to explore wider questions. Some examples include:

- The V&A's *Club to Catwalk* exhibition was featured in a story exploring fashion's fascination with club culture.
- The BP Walk Through British Art Exhibition was covered in a story asking, *What makes British art 'British'?*
- Are 'feminine' looks the future of men's fashion drew upon London Men's fashion week.
- To celebrate 100 years since Benjamin Britten's birth, a piece recommended the best way for a casual listener to discover the magic of his music.

Cultural Diplomacy Group

First established by the British Council in 2010, the Cultural Diplomacy Group comprises senior level representatives from major UK-wide cultural institutions such as the British Museum and V&A, relevant UK national bodies such as the British Film Institute and UK Trade and Investment, as well as national Arts Councils, the Department for Culture, Media & Sport, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the devolved Governments. BBC World Service is also represented on the Group.

The purpose of the Group is to enhance the impact from UK cultural diplomacy activity internationally, by providing a forum for sharing forward plans, opportunities and common policy issues, and where relevant identifying joint approaches and investments. This enables relevant members to work together as effectively as possible to support UK and devolved Government objectives.

The Group meets regularly to share plans and ideas around major UK cultural landmarks and anniversaries, such as the forthcoming WWI centenary, the 2014 Commonwealth Games and the 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare coming up in 2016, and to seek out opportunities to collaborate where appropriate.

The British Council manages and administers the Group arranging for different members to Chair in locations around the UK. It met most recently in June 2013 in Cardiff, and will meet again in November in London.

September 2013

BBC World Service, British Council and British Museum – Oral evidence (QQ 63-92)

Evidence Session No. 4

Heard in Public.

Questions 63 - 92

MONDAY 15 JULY 2013

Members present

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

Examination of Witnesses

Martin Davidson CMG, Chief Executive, British Council, **Peter Horrocks**, Director, BBC World Service, and **Dr Jonathan Williams**, Deputy Director, British Museum

Q63 The Chairman: A very warm welcome to our three witnesses this afternoon. I will not introduce you, because we know very well who you are. You have in front of you a list of the interests that are declared to give you a good idea of all the different aspects of the interests and involvement of Members of this Committee in this broad area of study and inspection. I hope that is helpful. Just a bit of logistics: if a Division is called, I shall have to immediately adjourn the Committee for five minutes. One always hopes it will not happen, but it may happen, so just to warn you about that.

As you know, we are concerned with the concept of soft power and British influence. There are many different phrases to describe how and why this is becoming a more significant part of our affairs. The excellent paper that comes from the British Council—from Mr Davidson’s stable—states, which I rather like, that “soft power involves the things that make people love a country rather than fear it”. That is quite a good starting point. Can we begin by each one of you giving a short statement on what your understanding of soft power is and how it affects your work, and whether it is more important or less important? Later on we will go into why it has become more significant and everyone is talking about it. But first just give us a feel of how you see that it connects up with the interests and priorities of the country in which we all live. Who would like to start? Mr Davidson, you are in the middle, so you start from the middle.

Martin Davidson: Thank you very much, Lord Chairman. We would define soft power as a nation's ability to build trust and make relationships of value through sharing its most attractive attributes. The British Council is only one part of that set of soft power instruments that the UK has. In our case, the attractive instruments that we seek to engage are our language, which is one of the most powerful attractors to our country; our education system; and our arts and creativity. There is a fourth area that I think is also extremely important, which is the way in which our society is organised, and if we have time, I will come back to that in a moment.

There are also a wide range of other very important actors in the whole area of soft power. The Premier League, for example, is extremely important and one of the most attractive aspects for people right around the world when they look at the UK. Our wider sports agenda is also seen as hugely attractive. Broadcasting, of course, is a major attractor, and not simply the World Service—I will leave it to Peter to talk about that—but more generally there are probably very few countries in the world where you are not likely to see a BBC programme. There is also our scientific research, our commercial arts, our design systems, and you only have to bear in mind that in Formula 1 eight of the 11 teams are based and designed here in the UK. I would think that also aspects of our military are seen as a soft-power engagement, not least the way in which the military and civilian organisations react and interact with each other. There is also of course the Royal Family.

Within the areas that the British Council covers is our language, and we estimate there are 1.5 billion people in the world learning English at this time. Many of them are looking to the UK for an involvement. In education there are something like 0.5 million foreign students at all levels studying here in this country and who go back with a changed attitude towards us. Our arts and creativity are also huge attractors. Right across the board, in all areas of the arts, the UK is seen at the forefront of that agenda. Our acceptance of difference, our tolerance of different views, our diversity: all are seen as important aspects of the way we organise our society, along with the rule of law, a certainty of how society operates, and also pluralism, the opportunity for individuals to take part in that society. All are critically important.

Within the broader context we believe there are three critical aspects that are important to consider. The first is that Government has a very limited role that it can play in the area of soft power. If government fingerprints are all over the activity then, almost by very definition, it is seen as less trusted, less open, less honest and moving more towards the propaganda area. But it does not mean that the Government has no role. We would regard Government as having a critical role in creating the environment and conditions within which soft power can be operated. Not least this requires movement of people, and simple things like visa policy make a huge difference to how a country is seen and whether or not people are able to move backwards and forwards. Supporting and helping create the different instruments of soft power that a nation might have, but at arm's length, is a critical component of effectiveness in soft power.

The second critical element is mutuality. We cannot expect others to be interested in us if we are not interested in them. Increasingly, if you talk to China, if you talk to India, if you talk to a whole range of other countries, they want us to be involved and looking at them and seeing them as of interest to us, just as much as presenting ourselves.

I think the third area is that this is a long-term, slow-burn activity. It is not an activity that turns itself around within a few years but rather something that 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?"

Q64 The Chairman: Thank you very much. You have raised a lot of points that we will come back to, but may I go to Mr Horrocks now?

Peter Horrocks: Thank you very much, Lord Chairman. I would absolutely associate myself with the definition that Martin Davidson gave and the definition of Joseph Nye—whose work I know you have already looked at—of the ability of a country to get what it wants through attraction rather than coercion or payment. Of course for a broadcaster attracting audiences comes naturally, and it might be worth explaining to the Committee the way in which the BBC's main channels in English describe themselves to audiences around the world. We do not use Britishness. We describe the World News television as coming from “the world's newsroom”, our new newsroom at Broadcasting House in London. We describe the World Service as “the world's radio station”. So, there is a sense of ownership by the world of something that is obviously a British-funded asset.

Next April the jurisdiction of the BBC World Service comes completely under the BBC Trust who will be funding it through the UK licence fee rather than through the grant-in-aid that the World Service has received from the Foreign Office. It recently published a draft operating licence, which is the governance document from next April for the World Service. It describes the editorial agenda of the World Service in this way: that it should provide a global perspective on the world, not one based upon any national or commercial interest. So, the BBC Trust is saying explicitly that we should not be taking a British or national commercial interest. How, therefore, can we be a contributor—as we believe we are—to Britain's soft power, that paradox? Well, it is because of the mutuality or the exchange of ideas, which is such an important characteristic of global debate. In particular, through digital, we believe the BBC in all its activities provides Britain's biggest digital export. But digital is about two-way: it is multi-layered; it is multi-polar. And that is what we believe our audiences around the world are looking for. The result of that? We recently announced the new audience reach for the BBC's international news, its global news reach, of over a quarter of a billion people, the largest audience ever. Despite the cuts that we received a couple of years ago, the World Service is now also at its highest ever level, and BBC Worldwide has an audience of about 100 million alongside that, plus, we believe, an enviable reputation for the quality and impartiality of our news. That creates value to licence fee payers who benefit from the BBC's reputation in terms of the interviews that we can get and the money that BBC Worldwide, our commercial arm, creates. It also does come back to the UK and creates reputational benefit for the UK, because audiences around the world, of course, understand this is something that the UK is providing. That generosity of spirit, described by Kofi Annan as “Britain's greatest gift to the world”, is reciprocated, although we have a global perspective as our editorial driver.

There are many ways in which we can assess that direct benefit to Britain, but I will give one example in terms of commerce. A survey of international business leaders, conducted a couple of years ago by an independent polling organisation, indicated that business leaders who consumed the BBC were twice as likely to regard Britain as an attractive partner to do business with than those who did not. There is other evidence I could provide the Committee with.

So, we can attract people to Britain precisely because we are not pursuing a British agenda. We are, however, communicating British values and, of course, we reflect fully news and culture from the BBC. Therefore the paradox creates the ability for us, with our fellow organisations, to be the strongest of soft power.

Q65 The Chairman: Thank you very much. Dr Williams, you are the centre of a gigantic hub of culture and activity worldwide. How do you see the subject?

Dr Williams: Thank you, Lord Chairman. I have learnt an awful lot about what soft power is from reading the proceedings of this Committee, and it seems to me that the definitions, the discussions that you have had, have laid some very useful parameters. Certainly in thinking about what soft power might be, in trying to develop my own abstract definition, what I am about to say may be somewhat academic. But that is what I am, so I have to be true to myself. That is an appropriate thing to say, because one of the key things about soft power is that its exercise is based—and this is a point the Committee has touched on—on the notion that, whatever the message about the country that may be broadcast, it has to be consistent, credible and coherent with everything else that the world knows about the country concerned. I think that is a really important point when we think in the abstract about what soft power may be.

I think what my two colleagues have said is absolutely right: that if it is anything, soft power is based upon what a country is, its essence, its attractive power, its ethical and its cultural characteristics. It is not about what we do to the world or what we produce. To the extent that it can be instrumentalised, either for state or government purposes, it needs to be based on a message, which is credible, coherent and consistent with everything else that the world knows about the kind of people that we are and the kinds of institutions that the country has.

Let me say a little bit about the British Museum; an awful lot of what I am about to say is going to be strikingly similar to what we have heard from my colleagues. As many of you may know, over the last 10 years or so the British Museum has sought to describe itself, and really be, a museum of the world, for the world. In some senses, there may be thought to be some sort of contradiction or tension between our name, British Museum, and the notion that what we are in fact is a museum of the world for the world. This is a transformation in our own understanding of ourselves that my director, Neil MacGregor, has managed to create within the museum and also broadcast effectively to audiences within Britain and around the world. He has done that by taking us back to our Enlightenment origins. Here I am going to sing the praises of Parliament, taking us back to the extraordinary way in which it has set up the British Museum as the original arm's-length cultural body upon which all other similar bodies, museums, galleries, opera companies and ballets throughout the common law world have since been modelled; setting the museum up as a trustee institution, incorporated as an independent legal personality, empowering it to act on behalf of beneficiaries, beneficiaries not defined as citizens of this country but left entirely open. I think this is the extent to which the debates around soft power, if not soft power itself exactly, have begun to have an effect and real impact on the way in which we have seen ourselves and understood our role as a museum: over the last 10 years we have increasingly actively identified the beneficiaries of the British Museum's trust as the citizens of the world.

What Parliament did in 1753 was to take a unique collection of things—books, antiquities, fossils, everything—from all over the world and make them publicly accessible for free—and we still are free to this day—for the benefit of the whole world, with the intention of creating a new kind of global citizen. That was Parliament's vision 260 years ago, and it is that vision that in partnership with our colleagues in the BBC and the British Council and many other museums and galleries around London and around Britain we have been increasingly re-excavating and reviving in order to make a reality of our claim that we are a museum of the world for the world, founded by Parliament for the benefit of a global audience, 260 years ago. That is a vision Parliament provided us with, which we have been seeking to make a reality of in the 21st century.

While I do not think my museum or other museums would see themselves as instruments of soft power, it is clear that the debates around culture and its role in the global conversation have had a significant impact on the way in which museums and galleries such as mine and other major British public institutions have shaped their self-understanding, particularly over the last 10 years or so.

The Chairman: Thank you very much indeed. That is very comprehensive from all three sources and authorities. I know my colleagues would like to question, in particular, the many points that have come up, but they are going to come up anyway in our further discussion. Lord Forsyth would like to come in.

Q66 Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: I have a question. Mr Davidson, when you talked about the attractiveness of Britain—you mentioned our culture and everything—you did not mention science, engineering, the City of London, financial services, any of those aspects. Was that because the list would have been too long?

Martin Davidson: I did mention the scientific research, which I think is a critically important element. There are many different aspects, and I suppose that issues around banks and so on at the moment do not make that the most popular attractor around the world. But I would agree with my colleagues who said that it is really about credibility. In what areas is the UK seen as both a global leader but also a credible leader? Thailand has recently announced that it wishes to brand itself as “the kitchen of the world”. I am not sure we would do terribly well branding the UK as the kitchen of the world, but there unfortunately—

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Forgive me; London is a major financial centre.

Martin Davidson: Absolutely.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: The City of London is not just about banks. It is a major contributor to our economic well-being. It is recognised throughout the world and we are in firm competition with New York. It is a bit surprising that it is not top of your agenda. Or do you not think that because there has been some adverse publicity surrounding the banks it should be something that you are trying to correct?

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: Edinburgh is also quite a big financial centre, and none of you mentioned Scotland at all in any of your presentations.

Martin Davidson: I have been having conversations with the Lord Mayor, both the present and the future one—

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: The Lord Mayor of London?

Martin Davidson: The Lord Mayor of London, precisely about this area of how the work that we as an organisation can do can support the City as a financial centre, so we do absolutely see the consonance there.

The other point about my organisation—and indeed shared by my colleagues—is that we are all UK bodies. We see ourselves as responsible to the Governments in Edinburgh, Belfast and Cardiff just as much as we do to the Government here in London, and we put a significant amount of effort into talking to those Governments about what their soft power agendas are, just as much as we do here.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Lord Chairman, may I just add one other question, which is to Mr Horrocks?

The Chairman: Yes.

Q67 Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: I have always been a great supporter of the BBC World Service because I felt that it provided a British perspective on what is going on in the world, and with that the values associated with impartial news and so on. I have been quite surprised by this doctrine that says you do not use the word “Britain” and that you have to operate as a global organisation because, paradoxically, that would make you less credible. The licence payers in Britain expect you to be promoting Britain and its values. As for the idea of dropping the name “Britain” or the “UK” from the news bulletins, is that not something that you think might put you at risk, in terms of getting support and funding from British taxpayers or licence payers?

Peter Horrocks: No, I do not believe that, and if that is how you understood what I was saying, I may have mis-described it. Everything is BBC-branded, of course, and everyone knows that the BBC is the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: No, you said the news service—

Peter Horrocks: Yes, and the BBC Trust has said that we should take a global perspective in the way that we deal with the news. But we absolutely reflect British values, and British values of fairness and impartiality are absolutely the bedrock.

If I can go back to your point about economics and the way that Britain’s role in the global economy is communicated to the world, the fact that London is such an open financial centre, you will hear of course far more British experts on all of the BBC’s airwaves, both on radio and on television. We will be talking to UK politicians, including many people in this room. So, a British understanding of global issues is absolutely something that we are communicating, and British culture plays a very significant part in that global offer that we have.

Q68 Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: But why is it not branded as global news from the British Broadcasting Corporation or from London?

Peter Horrocks: Well, it is. If you look at “BBC World News”, for instance, it uses a skyline showing London. I can talk about last year. Our marketing and our editorial campaign around the Olympics, which we did not have the sports rights to, were under the label “London Calling”. It was all about how London is a wonderful, diverse and open city. That was extremely attractive content to our audiences around the world. The reason we do not put Britishness and British as the hallmark of it is that other countries have services that are explicitly about reflecting the national political agenda—we can perhaps talk later on what the Chinese and the Russians and the Iranians are doing in this regard—and their services are regarded as being propaganda, and that is not effective in terms of attracting people around the world. So, we can have that proper even-handed global perspective but reflect British knowledge, British expertise, British culture and British values, so being impartial, but also being an attractor to Britain. That is the logic of our editorial offer.

Q69 Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: It seems to me that traditionally the huge cultural institutions that you represent have always seen their task as promoting the cultural values of the United Kingdom, yet more recently there has been an obligation placed upon you all to try to earn a bit of a living for Britain as well, not just to promote our values. Is there an understanding in these institutions, and others, that that is now at least a part of the obligations placed upon you by the taxpayer? Or is there still a feeling inside the institutions that perhaps this is a little bit something they do not want to touch; that somehow this is a step too far and cultural values will dwindle if there is something commercial and some quantification of helping Britain earn a living more effectively through your work than before? As a side question to that, with the rise of some pretty dominating and maybe narrower

values in parts of the globe at the moment, are you going to put a bigger push behind cultural values from here, and can that be quantified in any way at all? It does seem to be a difficult time that we are going through in some regions at the moment, very contradictory to our particular value system. What are you doing about that? Would you define it as soft power or not?

Martin Davidson: First, around the financial environment, there are two aspects to that. One, of course, is the internal financial environment of each of our organisations. We in the British Council are now required to find something like 80% of our total turnover through our income generated from non-governmental sources.

The Chairman: Is that 80% of your turnover or 80% of your revenue?

Martin Davidson: 80% of our turnover.

The Chairman: The turnover, okay.

Martin Davidson: So, that is about £780 million of turnover. The Government grant is now just over 20%. That again drives a significant cultural shift within the organisation. We have to have very effective commercial income-generating individuals within the organisation, but it is absolutely vital that we also see ourselves as a public service: not either/or but both those things at the same time. Sometimes it is difficult to persuade publics overseas, who are not used to the mixed funding model that is usual in this country, to see that. But that is one of the reasons why in our case, for example, as well as teaching for income we also put in a huge amount of effort into providing English language materials for public education systems right around the world free to the user. That is a very important balance.

Of course there is also recognition that different bodies within the UK will use for particular purposes the long-term trust and influence created by the work that we do. At the moment, those purposes will include the prosperity and long-term health of the British economy just as much as the wider cultural influence of the UK. I do not think that my colleagues see that as a problem in any sense whatever. Indeed, I think we all recognise that if you are going to draw public money, then you actually have to be able to demonstrate a public good that flows from that. But I think the danger comes if we are pushed into a very instrumental approach, which suggests that you do X in order to raise the income flowing to a particular institution or a particular business environment. For example, at the moment we have done some very useful work, I believe, with DCMS and with colleagues here and others, in looking at the range of cultural events that will be taking place in 11 countries around the world over the next three to five years, including India, China, Brazil and other countries. We are asking the question, “Well, how do we use those big cultural events that are taking place, which are taking place because the British Museum, the V&A, the British Council and other organisations want to do them? How can we use those and ally them with other areas of work?” We are having a conversation with the UKTI—for example, there is an idea of a very substantial design exhibition in Mumbai in about 18 months’ time—on how can we put a British design marketing agenda around that and, indeed, a design education agenda around that, so we actually make the most of these events that are taking place. I think that that approach of using what is already happening and what is already planned, but using it in a way that can support the wider commercial and prosperity agenda, is something that, certainly in my case, my colleagues are very comfortable with.

Q70 Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbots: One question about the focus: the British Council produces a wonderful map of dots and stuff, and there is a lot in Mr Horrocks’s stuff on the BBC. Is our role of soft power to do a little everywhere or a lot in the biggest countries?

Martin Davidson: I suppose my answer to that would be that it is a rather standard 80:20 principle—you should put 80% of your effort into 20% of the places—but that it is important for the long term for the UK that we are engaged with other parts of the world. Two or three years ago a lot of questions were being asked about whether or not we should continue in North Africa. Now, nobody would say that we should not be involved with North Africa. It clearly is critically important. We never know quite where the agenda is going to move. So, that 80:20 principle seems to me to be broadly right, but the UK is well served by having the capacity, not just from my organisation but more widely, to operate on a global basis. That does seem to me to be very, very important.

Q71 Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts: Could I just ask Peter Horrocks this? In your letter circulated to us about the World Service, you had a category in there of languages of particular need.

Peter Horrocks: Yes.

Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts: Some of them seemed to me to be quite marginal in terms of numbers. I wondered how you reached that and how you saw that fitting into our soft-power plans.

Peter Horrocks: There are two categories in terms of the non-English languages: the larger languages, which I think you were referring to in your first question; and then the languages of need. For instance, services to Somalia or services in Arabic that would be heard by people in Darfur are services that are quite substantial to audiences in Afghanistan. Most of those are delivered cost-effectively through radio, which is a very cost-effective way of getting to large numbers of people. That urgent need, in countries where there is no other credible news source at all, is a very important part of what the BBC does. However, languages that go, for instance, to the BRICS countries I believe are increasingly important for us. So that is the way in which the BBC can gain trust for Britain through the editorial approach that I set out earlier. Professor Nye has spoken to us about this and says, “The BBC plays an important part of that strategy, a point of entry that is not mistrusted, a point of entry to British influence. If you are a citizen in Brasilia or Beijing, you want to know what is true about a certain event, and the BBC is the gold standard”. So, we are focusing greater resource on those major languages. Of course we cannot cover every one of the world’s languages—we reduced from 32 to 27 languages two years ago—and in order to be effective in broadcasting terms you certainly do need to have focus.

Q72 The Chairman: I would love to move on to this question. You have mentioned several times Beijing and the wider world and the fact that your audience is 250 million out of 6.5 billion, so you could say it is wonderfully large for one country, but it is pretty small in the world scene. Baroness Morris, would you like to pursue this theme? Are other people taking over the airwaves? Are we still where we were?

Baroness Morris of Bolton: The marketplace in global soft power is becoming increasingly competitive, and I wondered if you saw yourself losing ground to the likes of Al Jazeera in the Middle East or China Central Television in Africa. Then, to slightly widen that out from just television, we have also seen a huge increase in government-sponsored cultural activities such as the Confucius Institute. So where exactly do you see that with regard to the British Council? Then, generally in all of this, how do you intend to carve out a distinctive position for yourselves that enhances our cultural values and helps the UK’s soft power?

The Chairman: I can see how the British Museum has done that just off the back foot, and amazingly has carved out a fantastic global niche. But for our other two colleagues here

perhaps there is a doubt in the air as to whether we are quite what we were. Are we losing out in the cyber-dominated, totally connected world, or are we still carrying weight? Just reassure us on this.

Peter Horrocks: I would not want to downplay that threat.

The Chairman: Sorry, can you think of the answer to that for a few minutes? We have to go and vote.

The Committee suspended for 10 minutes for a Division in the House.

Q73 The Chairman: Apologies for that break. There was a question hanging in the air: is this the world we knew, where the BBC was the voice of freedom in the world? Since 1934, the British Council seemed to have the field almost to itself, but suddenly it is getting a bit crowded. Are we still where we were?

Peter Horrocks: We certainly are not where we were and, although I am proud of the strong performance that the BBC World Service in particular has had, I would not be in the slightest bit complacent; in fact, I would probably be the most worried person in the room about the fragility or potential fragility of our audience position. As you say, it is largely because of the competition that we are now seeing from other state providers in particular. Let me give a couple of illustrations of that. The Chinese, through their efforts, are using their vast financial resources. A few years ago, a \$9 billion budget for Chinese international broadcasting was announced, a multi-year budget, but still a vast budget in comparison to the resources that we have. In Africa, for instance, that is being used to support the change to digital television, paying for the infrastructure, helping to organise the frequencies and then using China's financial muscle to pay for access to the airwaves, including in some cases squeezing out BBC output. We provide our output for free for local broadcasters to be able to transmit on their television or radio stations. The Chinese pay people to take that, so although those broadcasters may well believe—I am sure they do—that the BBC's quality and impartiality are greater, they will sometimes choose to take the Chinese content because the Chinese are paying them. That is not something we can afford or that we choose to do. The Iranians are getting into this. They have even launched a Spanish language channel from Iran. There are also the Russians, of course. Then there is Al Jazeera, which is really a state-funded organisation.

You asked how we can still maintain a strong position and be distinctive. We can be creative, we can draw on all of the resources of the BBC and our colleagues across the BBC, using the technologies, especially digital, and we are particularly proud of the success we are having in digital. But the most important thing is to stay true to our editorial values. That is why I talked about impartiality as being the absolute bedrock. Of course most audiences around the world realise that news from China or Russia is news that comes with a Chinese or Russian flavour. Al Jazeera has had some recent experience where the commentators believe that Qatar's foreign-policy interests in terms of supporting Islamists in a number of countries has had an impact on Al Jazeera in Arabic and its editorial agenda, and that has created a backlash around the Middle East. So it is absolutely crucial that you modernise, that you use the resources as effectively as you can, but you stay true to your values, and that remains our distinctive position.

Q74 The Chairman: What about the British Council going strong since 1934?

Martin Davidson: There are many new players on the block. China is obviously one and the Confucius Centres have set up 350-odd centres in the last 10 years. 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. In Africa, China is applying a very, very large number of scholarships, certainly in the tens of thousands, for African students to study in China. So these are big, competitive players, but China is not alone. Turkey has launched the Yunus Emre Institute, developing its soft power especially into the Middle East. South Korea is a very substantial player in this space; Taiwan has started similarly. So it is a much more crowded space, but I think it is important not to pretend that there has not been competition in the past: the Germans, the French, the Italians and the Spanish have all been substantially significant players in this space for a very substantial period of time.

We have to always ask the question: are some of these new players doing things that are interesting and that we can learn from? I think some of the approaches that the Confucius Institutes have taken to teaching Chinese are interesting, and indeed we are not ashamed to have a look at them and copy them where there are good ideas coming through. But we also have to understand that the UK's approach does have some very real and substantial advantages, not least, we would argue, the arm's length. I think the Chinese have a significant problem in that the fingerprints of government are very clearly on the activity and that raises substantial suspicion. Of the areas that we have advantage in, first of all is the approach towards mutuality: that we are quite explicitly interested in what other people have to say as well as trying to project ourselves. The Chinese approach and the approaches of most of the other players are very one-way. Second is the range of functions that we have available to us and the sheer strength of the UK's institutions in this area. Thirdly, frankly, we get an enormous amount of benefit for really very little money compared with what other countries are spending in this space.

Q75 Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: Martin Davidson, I thought you were going to be helpful for a minute when you were talking about learning from the Confucius Centres, but then you went back into mode—if you will excuse me saying so, each of you sounded like three male members of the British establishment saying what a wonderful job you are doing, which does not help us with our study. What we want to look at is how we can do it better. Have each of you never sat down with your staff and said, “How could we learn from France or from China or from Germany? What can we do? What other things ought we to be doing? How can we collaborate with other bodies?” You do not sound innovative. You do not come up with good ideas. You always just seem to be saying what a wonderful job you are doing.

Martin Davidson: Well, it is a challenge. First of all, I think you cannot turn yourself from an organisation functioning with more than 50% of government grant to one functioning with 20% unless you are innovative. It requires you to go out and do things in a completely different way. One of the big challenges for us is how we deliver something that people are prepared to pay for. This is not simply big, rich companies; these are individuals, 350,000 or more young people around the world, prepared to spend their own money on learning English with us because we do it better than other organisations. So I think we have a significant agenda around innovation and we certainly do not pretend that we have it all right. I think we look at the Confucius Centres and ask the question: what do they have to teach us?

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: What conclusions have you come up with?

Martin Davidson: We have come to a number of conclusions, not least in establishing our new teaching platforms in Pakistan, in Iraq and in extending them in Sri Lanka to Jaffna, where we are copying a number of the approaches that the Confucius Centres have taken, particularly using local teachers, which is something that we have not done before. We work

very closely with the French and we have launched a new series of cultural seasons, which is very much drawing on the French example. Unfortunately, we do not have the amount of money that France puts into it, so we have to rely very heavily on non-governmental funding to do that.

Q76 Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: You have said that twice now, about reductions in funding. Do you just accept that? Can we help in going to the Government and saying, “The British Council could do a great deal better if you gave them more money for scholarships”? Do not accept things as they are. We are not here to accept things as they are. We are looking at what they might be.

Martin Davidson: Absolutely, and of course we would like more money, but, to be absolutely frank with you, for me the biggest agenda over the last five years has not been to tilt against the windmill of government cuts but to transform the organisation so that it can not just live with those cuts but expand and develop against that background. I hope that as we move forward we are going to move into a position where the Government will invest in scholarships, particularly investing in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly investing in supporting those countries wanting to develop themselves, particularly investing in how society has organised itself. I believe those are critically important areas, and I would want the British Council to be part of that, although not the sole recipient of that, because there are many other organisations.

Q77 Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: Do you argue that that could save our Government money elsewhere, deploying troops to difficult areas in which problems might not arise if we were doing more in terms of scholarships and cultural activities?

Martin Davidson: It is enormously difficult always to prove the negative, but certainly our belief very strongly is that soft power, well utilised and well deployed, is a substantial and significant saver of other forms of intervention.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: Because this Committee has been set up to look at it, I would have thought each of you would have thought, “Hey, this is an opportunity to put our case”, and then we will report to Government. That is what Select Committees are about.

Peter Horrocks: Can I have a go?

Q78 The Chairman: Mr Horrocks, just to speak to Lord Foulkes’s question, bear in mind the world is now totally connected up on iPads and iPhones and everything else. How are you going to cope in this entirely new electronic landscape?

Peter Horrocks: I appreciate Lord Foulkes’s question, and it is the kind of question I would like World Service presenters to be asking to get the debate going. Accepting that these organisations need to change, the World Service had to make some really difficult cuts a couple of years ago. We swallowed that, we got on with it and we have bounced back. Sometimes these organisations can be seen through rather a sepia-tinted view of what they may have been some years ago. The competitive world that we have just been discussing is going to require us to make choices. Under the BBC Trust’s strategic control, I hope that politicians and those who are concerned about organisations like the BBC World Service will accept that those decisions need to be made in the broadcasting interests of the audience and not through an over-political prism. So, that might mean if there are services, for instance, that are too small at some stage in the future, we may have to close some services in order to maintain our effectiveness. We will need to innovate and change, and that might mean changing the balance between radio and television and online. Our real competitors are going to be—already are—Google and Facebook and mobile providers, not

so much the Voice of America or indeed Iranian broadcasting, because that is the way that audiences in Africa and Asia are going to be getting their news. So we must understand that we might need to make choices that will reflect that different way.

In terms of the funding, clearly the responsibility of the funding of the World Service is now moving to the BBC, and the BBC Trust will need to make those decisions. But there are ways that Government can help the BBC's international activity in a supplemental way. For instance, the Department for International Development does some excellent work through the BBC's development charity, BBC Media Action, to support programming in places like Somalia and Afghanistan and providing a place for debate, where politicians can be challenged by their publics in a way that does not happen in those societies.

Then the last thing—and this is looking ahead to the future of the BBC in the debate that will happen around the BBC's charter over the next few years—is that for the first time the publicly funded global part of the BBC, the World Service, will be part of the licence fee, and there will be a discussion about the appropriate level of activity. Clearly the political debate around the BBC in the UK is often influenced by views about the BBC's role—whether it is too large, and how it affects competition in the UK. From a global point of view, in relation to the BBC as a national champion that can help others in the creative sector—for instance, the independent production sector benefits hugely from the activities of BBC Worldwide—I think politicians, as they debate the future of the BBC, considering its UK role and its global role together, may see things that could be helpful there.

The Chairman: I am going to ask Baroness Hussein-Ece to follow up on this particular point.

Q79 Baroness Hussein-Ece: Thank you very much. Just following on from the questions that you have had from Lord Foulkes as well on this subject, do you not think that social media—because you have touched on that now—has become much more influential, particularly in parts of the Arab world that you mentioned and other places like that? People are no longer passive recipients of packaged, presented news tied up in a bow: “This is the news”. It is much more instant with social networks, with Twitter. We saw the in the Arab spring what was called a Twitter storm. We and all the world were getting instant news about what was happening on the ground and not having to wait for news bulletins or programmes. Do you not think that particularly the BBC is losing out on this? I am questioning the media outlet. The BBC is not really keeping abreast of these changes.

Peter Horrocks: That is not fair, I am afraid. No, that is not fair.

Baroness Hussein-Ece: Because if there is an appetite for more around the world now, if, as the Lord Chairman said, the world has become much smaller now and news is very instant, do you not think that the BBC could potentially lose out if they do not keep abreast of these major changes?

Peter Horrocks: Of course we could potentially lose out, but our audience is at its highest level ever; our digital audience is growing substantially. But it absolutely does change our role in exactly the way that you say. It is 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.

Let me give you an example of what is happening in Turkey. The BBC's Turkish service broadcasts in television, not in radio. We have decided not to broadcast any more via television, because the distributor kept interfering with reports that they regarded as being controversial. So, we are now only available online. But what the team can do is to help the Turkish society to know what is trustworthy news and to host a debate about the future of

Turkey, because through social media you have one group of people who have one set of fierce opinions and another group of people with separate fierce opinions that they do not discuss with each other. So the BBC's service in Turkey is conducting programmes, discussions, that talk about the future of Turkey and which judge which news is reliable. People are coming to the BBC Turkish service in vast numbers because we are modernising and changing our role. It is not a one-way role. It is a two-way role and one where the BBC is trusted by audiences around the world to host that conversation.

Q80 Baroness Hussein-Ece: I just want to respond on that. Obviously I follow the Turkish news and what was going on there, and that is the case. But there are parts of the world where perhaps they do not have that embedded in the same way, so they are relying on their own people on the ground to get the news and information from. There were probably traditionally ways with trusted commentators from their own background and community. I just want to make one comment. I think obviously we are all big fans of all three institutions, particularly of the BBC, but do you not think the BBC did lose a bit of trust in the aftermath of Operation Cast Lead, showing a bit of bias there in refusing to broadcast the appeal for Palestinians in that way? It lost a lot of credibility and kudos. Certainly I have heard a lot of people in the Arab world say that you showed some bias when you did that. That is just one example.

Peter Horrocks: I do not particularly want to go through all the ins and outs of that. All I would say is—

Baroness Hussein-Ece: It is an example of how easy it is to lose some trust.

Peter Horrocks: No, absolutely, and I appreciate that some members of the audience did lose trust. That trust in the Arabic world has come back. Our audience levels in the Arabic-speaking world are the largest component of the increase in the BBC's audience that we announced only a few weeks ago. It was because of our commitment to being even-handed. We knew that running that campaign, that promotion of aid support for one side in that conflict, could be seen to compromise our impartiality. That is why we took that difficult decision. I appreciate that not everyone agreed with it and it did have a detrimental effect in the short term, but the long-term benefit of being impartial counts, and that is why our audiences have come back up.

Q81 Lord Ramsbotham: My question is stimulated by a remark of yours, Martin, when you talked about the fingerprints of Government, because all three of you have outlined how you see the role of your organisation in projecting British values, which you have arrived at individually. But at the beginning of our deliberations, we were told that the 2010 Foreign Office business plan includes the development of a long-term programme to enhance UK soft power, co-ordinated by the National Security Council. Are you conscious of that, and do you welcome the fact that the National Security Council is the organisation trying to co-ordinate the project of just the things that you have been outlining to us?

Martin Davidson: I am aware of the involvement of the National Security Council around some of these areas. I think it bears on what is the role of Government and what is the role of other organisations in this whole area. I can see that there is a role for Government—indeed, would welcome a role for Government—to grow soft power, which for me is around putting more resource in some of those areas that Lord Foulkes talked about and what I was talking about a few moments ago. It would be around helping define where the UK's wider interests sit. But I think if the Government then seeks to deploy that soft power, it is going to fail along the way. I would draw a distinction between creating the conditions that allow that soft power to be grown and the attempt to deploy it. My organisation's view

is very clearly that we have to be of the UK, not of the Government of the day, and that overseas target audiences are extremely conscious of and very clear in drawing the distinction between the two.

Q82 The Chairman: Can I bring Dr Williams in again, because my own experience with the British Museum is that you and your director, Neil MacGregor, have been expanding enormous influence worldwide without, I suspect, referring very much to the National Security Council or anybody else. Have you had any conscious guiding principles in the way in that the British Museum has now become, as it were, the museum of the world?

Dr Williams: These are conscious guiding principles that the trustees have drawn from their statutory obligations laid down by Parliament. They have an obligation to make a reality of global ownership of the collections for which they are responsible. Those are our basic principles, and from them flows everything that we do, to make those collections available both here in London and throughout the world through a series of physical loans of things—4,000 objects lent last year alone—and also increasingly in the digital world, with 27 million visitors to our website last year, and that is continuing to increase. So, the guiding principle is that this is a collection that the trustees hold in trust for the world and that they have to take every new opportunity that each new generation offers to make a reality of that obligation.

The Chairman: Have you run into a lot of historical baggage problems? We were warned in earlier evidence that Britain has invaded practically every country on the planet and we have one or two slightly awkward incidents in the past to live down.

Dr Williams: What that means is that Britain has a long and rich and complicated series and nexus of relationships with countries all over the world. The British Museum and its collections are one of the legacies of those many different relationships. What that provides us with now in the 21st century is an opportunity to revisit those relationships and refashion them for public benefit, both in this country and in the country concerned. One example: just now we have finished the second year of a leadership training programme for India's future museum directors, a programme supported by the Indian Government. The Indian Government came to the British Museum to ask us to assist them in putting together a high-level leadership programme to enable Indian state museums to partake in the global conversation around collections and cultures, and that has been a great success so far.

Peter Horrocks: That baggage of history need not be a problem. It is an editorial opportunity. So, for the World Service, Commonwealth countries form by far the largest single component, and the World Service is a place where those problems of the past are worked through. For instance, with the revelations over the last few years about what happened in Kenya with the Mau Mau, the World Service of course has investigated that and given a substantial amount of airtime to hearing from Kenyans who expressed concern about what happened. It is the fact that it is discussed openly and without any fear or favour that makes our output attractive to people in that part of East Africa.

The Chairman: Thank you. Lord Janvrin, would you like to come in?

Q83 Lord Janvrin: I think it is more of the same. It is around this whole question of the independence of your organisations and retaining that independence yet still being in need of public funding support. My question is that if you are arm's length cultural bodies or arm's length institutions, are you not at arm's length from all the key decisions that really affect how you can operate? I am thinking in terms of within the British Government, whether it is over visa policies or tertiary education or whatever. Do you have any input into those kinds of discussions, and how can we improve that kind of joined-up Government in the future to

ensure that those kinds of decisions that may be taken in a domestic context have huge repercussions for you and indeed the country in trying to deploy soft power?

Martin Davidson: I think, for the British Council, critical to this is that we see ourselves as operating in partnership with a wide range of organisations. Of course we have an extremely long history of discussion with the Foreign Office, as an NDPB of the Foreign Office, as well as being a chartered organisation and a charity. So, the conversation that I have with the Foreign Office is around the nature of where are the major foreign policy objectives and what it is that the British Council can do in order to support those, but not in how we do it and the way in that we do it. We regard that as being the operational independence of the organisation, and critically important for our credibility across the world. But we obviously have to have conversations with UKTI, with DBIS, with the universities, and with the great institutions, all of which have to be part of the discussion about how we do things.

We do indeed have conversations with the Home Office around issues like visas. We are working very closely with the universities around student study visas, for example, because these are vitally important aspects of how the UK is perceived overseas. You only have to look at how the Indian press reacted to the idea of a visa bond to see how extremely negative the overseas perceptions are of this country from the way 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. It is critically important for us, so we do have to have those. Some of those conversations take place below the radar and some of them take place in a rather more public place, and I think it is effectively a question of what is going to be the best way of having those conversations at particular times.

Peter Horrocks: It is not the BBC's role, of course, as an editorially independent organisation, to be advising or inputting to Government on those broader policy questions. The BBC World Service has always been editorially independent. One of the great advantages of the structural change that will happen next April when the funding moves from the Foreign Office to the BBC licence fee is that one of the charges that, for instance, the Iranians and the Russians have periodically made against the World Service is that it is in the pay of the Foreign Office, therefore it must be dancing to the UK Government's tune. It will be even easier to dismiss that because of the change in funding. However, another thing that we are altering editorially, partly as a result of licence fee funding, is that we want to show to people who are paying in the UK the benefits of the World Service—not just around the world, but coming back into the UK. So, increasingly you may be hearing and seeing on the BBC's airwaves in the UK our international correspondents, the ones from the language services, who are delivering bilingually much more than they used to. For instance, with visas, increasingly that is reported around the world by people from India or Kenya or wherever it might be, who will have a very direct understanding of that. Of course we reflect the other side of the story as well in terms of the need for those restrictions from a UK Government point of view, but reflecting the world back into the UK through our editorial activity can also help people to be more aware of the international dimension of UK policy decisions.

The Chairman: Lord Forsyth, would you like to say something?

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: I wanted to change the subject slightly.

The Chairman: I think time is going by, so go ahead.

Q84 Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: I wondered if you could give a specific example of a project undertaken or something that you have done that has directly contributed to the UK's influence abroad? Supplementary to that is: how do you measure this? Dr Williams

talked about hits on the website. That need not necessarily indicate success in achieving British influence. This concept of cultural value: I do not understand what “cultural value” means. How is it measured, and can you relate that to a specific example? That is for all three of you.

Martin Davidson: I could kick off. I think one programme that we are very proud of is our *UK Now* season in China. That ran last year from April to October, specifically looking at the cultural relationship between the UK and China in the Olympic year. We had something like 800 artists performing in 29 cities to 4 million people across the country with very, very substantially greater media coverage. It cost us about £1 million to put together. We gained a further £3.5 million from British business in order to put it together and about £10 million of input from the Chinese side. So, that was a very specific piece of activity, which was to explore the UK with China in this very important year.

Direct impact is always very difficult to be able to identify, but we have talked to the commercial sponsors of the activity—and those included companies like Jaguar Land Rover, Diageo, Burberry—and they have all identified a specific increase in interest in their brands in China as a result of that. The British Ambassador has also reported that he has seen a significant shift in the way in which the Chinese look at the UK as a creative hub rather than simply financial or interesting but rather faded part of the world. So, there are those sorts of outcomes. But I think one of the problems we had with this is that it is extremely difficult to be able to identify a causal link between a particular piece of activity and a shift in—

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Sorry to interrupt you. If my addition is correct, you spent £20 million on this project in total in China. In measuring the effectiveness of that, comments by sponsors and comments by the British Ambassador are very useful, but normally if you are spending that kind of money you would be expecting to have more quantitative information as to whether or not you want to do it again, for example.

Martin Davidson: Clearly there is the anecdotal and the quantitative. For example, we measure the quality of the comments that appear in public through media and so on, so there is a well-founded mechanism for doing that and identifying the value. We look at the numbers of people who have attended and so on.

But I think I would like to just move on to the second part of your question, which is around, “What is the value of all this cultural activity?” A piece of work that we have done has identified specific value very clearly. We have asked that question in 10 countries: “Are people more interested in working or doing business with the UK as a result of having been involved in an event of that kind?” On average there is a 30% increase in willingness or interest in doing business with the UK. The largest increase comes from some of those countries where we have the greatest interest. For example, in Turkey, it is something like a 30%, 35% increase. In Russia it is nearly a 50% increase. In China it is about a 20% increase. So, there is, across the board, quite clearly a linkage between people’s willingness to do business with the UK and the experience that they have had through these types of activities. That is what I would argue has been the cultural value of the sorts of events that we are doing.

Q85 The Chairman: Dr Williams, your turn; tell us about a project and how you think it has had an impact and helped.

Dr Williams: Perhaps I can talk about what, for us, was a fairly remarkable project and I think interesting given the context of our conversations around international relations: the loan of the Cyrus Cylinder to Tehran in 2010. Iran, as we all know, is a country with which Britain has limited international contact and no diplomatic representation, as I understand it,

and there is also of course a fraught context and difficult international conversations. The Cyrus Cylinder, just to fill in a little bit, is a really remarkable object, not from Iran, interestingly, but originally found in Iraq. It is an inscription recording the great deeds of the ancient Persian King Cyrus and his restoration of the various rights and temples and peoples within his empire. For many years, this has been a national icon in the Iranian context. It is the kind of object that every Iranian schoolchild learns about. It has appeared on Iranian stamps and coins; it is a really important thing in the Iranian public conversation. For that reason, the trustees decided that it was important that they share this object, which is entrusted to them, with their beneficiaries in Iran.

Because of longstanding relationships with the national museum in Tehran, sustained by colleagues in our department of the Middle East, we were able to have a kind of conversation that other bits of the British public sphere have perhaps found more difficult to have, and that enabled this unique thing to be lent for a period of some months to the national museum in Tehran, where it was seen by about 1 million people. That is just a number of people, rather like my 27 million hits on the website. But the very fact of the achievement of this loan and, equally as important, its return was of importance. The object, by the way, is now on a five-venue tour of museums across America, where it is stimulating a very interesting series of conversations around the value and the significance of Iranian and Middle Eastern cultures across America, and next year we are going to be lending it to Mumbai, where it will coincide with the World Zoroastrian Congress. This is just an indication of the kinds of projects that the trustees are clear that they want to undertake. It was absolutely not without risk. It was a risky thing to do, but they felt that they had an ethical obligation to do it.

[Interruption]

If the Greek Government were ever to ask for a loan, then the trustees would consider such a request.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Forgive me for appearing to be negative—I think it was a great thing to do—but my question was about an example where you could demonstrate that attitudes towards Britain had been improved. I have no idea how this was received in Iran, but I can equally imagine people saying, “What on earth are these people in London doing with this article, which they took as an Imperialist power with no idea with what its history was?” That was a good thing to do and 1 million people went to see it, but what is the evidence that that has made people more inclined to take a positive view of Britain, and how do you measure that?

Dr Williams: We do not have that evidence, and to be honest the British Museum’s primary interest in lending things around the world is not in order to further public understanding or Iranian sympathy for or understanding of Britain, as such, as an entity or an international state actor.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: So, how is that related to soft power, then?

Dr Williams: It is related to soft power insofar as the loan of this extraordinary object from a great international institution in London to the national museum in Tehran achieved a level of communication between the public sphere in this country and Iran that is very, very difficult in other aspects of public life. It is not really about soft power, but what it is, at the very least, is maintaining a channel of communication between Britain and Iran – within the public sphere around the area of culture, which is otherwise clearly rather difficult to sustain at this moment in history.

Peter Horrocks: Can I give one specific piece of evidence, again relating to 2012? The BBC's audiences consumed a lot of Olympics content, as you would expect, but, as you say, just consumption does not prove the point. We have an online panel of those who use the BBC around the world, and when we asked them after 2012 two-thirds of them said they found the BBC coverage improved their perception of London and the UK in general and more than 80% of them said they were now more interested in visiting London or the UK as a result of it. Of course that is not just the BBC's coverage; that is the whole effect. But there was a demonstrable effect, and those were people who have consumed through the BBC. As I referred to earlier, the surveys that we have done relating to people who consume the BBC—their positive perceptions of the UK are significantly higher than those who do not. I can share that data with the Committee. As I said earlier, that is not our primary intention. Our primary intention is to inform audiences through the global perspective, but it has the effect of creating those benefits for the UK, and we have comprehensive evidence in relation to that.

The Chairman: With time running out, I have two quick questions from Baroness Nicholson and Baroness Hussein-Ece, and then I want to ask Baroness Armstrong to lead on the final subject; as brief as you can, please.

Q86 Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: Thank you very much. It is a follow-up to Lord Forsyth's question. Rather hesitantly, I am wondering if you should not, perhaps collectively or individually, look at more sophisticated and further-reaching analyses of the impact of what you are doing. For example, the Iranian example is so easy to quantify, but you did not touch on the obvious points, which is that there is a vast, highly-wealthy Iranian diaspora globally. We only have a proportion of it here. We would like to attract far more, and certainly as soon as sanctions go we want Britain to be in there first of all. Those things can be quantified, and you could have been analysing who came and perhaps a sample of it—who saw, who talked, who wrote and all the rest of it. If you take the World Service, Britain is *primus inter pares* globally, for example, on music. The World Service, the BBC, is one of the biggest promoters of UK music—probably of any nation's music ever. We have been *primus inter pares* with in music for the best part of 30 years. Are we going to last on that? Are you analysing that? Are you seeing what your input is, what is the impact of the Proms, for example; and Martin Davidson's contribution on music in the British Council? Are you in fact not perhaps, as I was suggesting in the beginning, a little bit too hesitant, perhaps a little bit embarrassed, about thinking about money, other than earning a living, other than running the show? You are not really using the quantification that you could be using.

Could you not look in a much more sophisticated way at quantifying what you are doing and its impact for the UK, which should lead to bigger investment from the UK into the institutions? We are looking into the past. The British Museum was largely filled with its wonderful products—wonderful items—a long, long time ago. We are not making huge investments now. You have spoken already about a smaller budget—I think somebody did—at the moment. If you want to get more, then I would suggest far more sophisticated analysis, which could answer so quickly the sorts of questions that Lord Forsyth has properly put.

The Chairman: A brief comment on that.

Peter Horrocks: Certainly the BBC's cultural role is absolutely crucial, and of course Lord Hall, as the new Director General, with his background, is very focused on that. The BBC has a section of the BBC website around the world called BBC Culture. It covers the stories of the British Museum and the Tate Gallery. It has a huge amount of British cultural content

on there. That is growing very rapidly. It gets advertising support. It is commercially supported rather than through public funding, and it is doing very well, because Britain's culture is attractive, it fits with the BBC's editorial values and it brings a commercial return as well. We have that information, and we can share that with you. So, in digital, it is much easier than in some of these broader activities to be able to survey. The costs of surveying around the world are substantial, so I would suggest that looking at digital performance as one indicator, and a proxy for some of these activities is quite useful in terms of assessing cost-effectiveness.

Q87 Baroness Hussein-Ece: Mine is just a quick follow-up from the Cyrus Cylinder, from what Dr Williams was saying, and it also part of what Lord Forsyth was saying—that you had such success when you lent it. Over a million Iranians went to see it. It is going round the world. But then has that been followed up? It seems to me that you have these programmes of lending artefacts that came from those countries in the first place and are of great significance to those countries. They go and see them. They all go home again. What happens after that? Is there any follow-up? Is there any sort of programme? Are there any exchanges? It seems to me that once you have made that contact—as you said, you have made a very good contact; you have communicated—what do you do with afterwards?

Dr Williams: That loan transaction was based on a pre-existing very long-term relationship, and that relationship continues. We have ongoing academic programmes together with the National Museum in Tehran, and that will absolutely continue. We are all about long-term relationships. The British Museum has been around for 260 years, and it is going to be around for an awful lot longer. We will only be able to be the museum we can be for Britain and for the world through developing rich relationships with partner institutions all over the world; absolutely.

Baroness Hussein-Ece: Does it develop into anything else? I know we are talking about partnerships and relationships and what you did was obviously very significant and very important for the people of Iran who arguably are saying, “Thank you very much for letting us have a look at something that was originally ours and it is very important to us—more important than it is to the British”. But what do you do with it afterwards? Do you develop some sort of exchange programme? Do Iranian young people come here perhaps? What do you do with that relationship?

Dr Williams: Absolutely. We have Iranian scholars working with the British Museum. We would not be able to do what we can do with our collections without that input. Of course, that will continue. We will be constantly looking for opportunities with that museum and with museums across the world for loans and exchanges. We are a very porous, open-ended and collaborative institution. Just to repeat myself, we are nothing without the relationships we have across the world and that relationship in Tehran is a pretty unusual relationship within the British context, and it really adds another dimension to what we can do with our fantastic Iranian collections. Clearly we need to reflect the Iranian perspective on the collections that reflect upon and come from the Iranian past. But we also want to create a global conversation so that we get the Chinese perspective on the Iranian past or the American perspective or whatever it may be. That role of being a cultural junction box I think is a role that all three institutions before you today would like to see themselves playing, and at our very best we do that pretty successfully. I cite that particular instance, because it is a really unusual one within the context of the British Museum. We have relationships in every continent, but that one is really special to us.

The Chairman: Would you like to add anything on this?

Martin Davidson: Just to respond a little bit to Baroness Nicholson's question and challenge, there are two publications that we will share with the Committee. One is called *Trust Pays*, which looks at the extent to which people's trust in the Government of the UK and in the people of the UK is changed as a result of the broader cultural work that we are all engaged in. It shows a very significant shift in both of those indices. I hasten to say that is done not by us but by an external agency.

The other one is *Culture Means Business*, which looks at the impact on people's willingness to do business with the UK as a result of this work. Again, as with the World Service, this does show a significant and real shift in people's willingness to do business, to visit the UK and to study in this country as a result of this work. I do think it is important that we are able to demonstrate that sort of impact from the sort of work that we do.

The Chairman: That does lead well into Baroness Armstrong's question.

Q88 Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top: It certainly does. We are interested in the level of co-operation between you as partially publicly funded bodies and other partially publicly funded bodies. And if I can also ask a supplementary, as we are coming to the end, is there one thing that that you think this Committee should be recommending in terms of its overall remit of the role of the British Government in improving soft power?

Peter Horrocks: The level of co-operation and partnership: I think probably from the BBC point of view it is editorially opportunistic because of the need for us to be providing a separate editorially-based judgment and because of what I set out a number of times in my evidence. If we did it simply because there is a campaign and therefore it needs to be on the World Service, our audiences would see through that. It has to be an editorial judgment. We can do a lot more in terms of the co-ordination, but with the British Museum, for example, all the things that we have heard about were reflected. Martin and I were in Egypt a couple of years ago with a fantastic event that the British Council laid on looking at Darwin's legacy and debating evolution in an Islamic context. That made fantastic programming for the World Service. We can do those kinds of bi-lateral collaborations. When the Public Diplomacy Board existed, the World Service was an observer on that. Anybody that brings more information together that allows us to be able to make editorial judgments on behalf of our audiences around the world will be welcome. There is already a cultural diplomacy group that does some good work. The Council takes a very significant role in that—and I am sure Martin can talk to that—and the BBC can be supportive of that.

To your second question, in relation specifically to the BBC and looking ahead, I would say that the most important thing would be proper understanding of the weight to be attached to the global role of the BBC and how that influences the overall political perspective towards the BBC in terms of the long-term future of the World Service and its ability to be able to act as a magnifier for all of the other aspects of British soft power.

Martin Davidson: We work closely with the BBC, with the British Museum and with a wide range of other institutions. As an organisation, while we have direct ownership of our English-language work, in the other areas of work we can only deliver anything of value by working in partnership with other organisations, whether those are the great museums and galleries or the great universities or organisations like the BBC. As Peter has said, we have already identified a number of areas in the past where we have worked closely with the BBC, including for example around the Olympics where we did a great deal of work on using the Olympics as an education link between the schools in this country and schools overseas. We are working with the British Museum at the moment on taking their Pompeii exhibition, *Pompeii Live*, around the world to something like 50-odd countries.

Dr Williams: Over 1,000 cinemas.

Martin Davidson: 1,000 cinemas. So, finding ways of working together is absolutely critical.

Could we do it better? Yes. I am quite certain that we could, and that is one of the reasons why we have brought together this cultural-diplomacy group to ask the question “How do we share knowledge about what is going on already and find ways of creating links and contacts?” Part of the problem is that there is a vast amount going on between this country and other countries, and simply understanding the quantum and understanding what is happening, looking at how we can bring that together, is a really important agenda. That is why we have worked with the organisations on the cultural calendar. There are admittedly only 11 countries, but the amount of work that has gone into that has been considerable.

The question now is: so what? What are we going to do having found out that this work is going on? That is where we are having the conversations at the moment of the kind I described a little bit earlier. How do we use the design exhibition, to do a trade show around that or to do an education exhibition around that? If there were two things that I would ask the Committee to consider—if you are giving me the chance for one, then go for two—I think they are, first of all, to reinforce that this area of work is important. It matters to the UK. It is something we are extremely good at but there is significant competition arising around the world. The second one is also to encourage this greater exchange of knowledge about what is going on so that we get some of the connections—the cohesion, the co-operation—which I think would make a great deal more of what is already happening than we do at the moment.

Q89 The Chairman: You slightly pre-empted what I was going to wind up with. I was going to ask each of you to answer a simple question. We are a Parliamentary Committee, and we should be reporting to the Government. The question for us will be: what have we learnt from these spearhead organisations such as yours which you believe, and I think it is widely recognised, are doing enormously powerful and influential work? What more would you expect? Or what less would you expect of the Government in terms of getting out of your way rather than into your way? To complete this session could each of you give us a few minutes on what you would like to see of Government and Government Departments and the Government structure in furthering your work? Let us start with Dr Williams.

Dr Williams: Thank you. Just to answer Baroness Armstrong’s questions around collaboration, I guess the best example I have of collaboration, particularly with the BBC, is the *History of the World* project. The latest figure on that is that 32.5 million people around the world have downloaded podcasts relating to that project, and the book has been translated into 13 languages and not just the usual European languages. It has gone into Chinese and Turkish, and it has become a global phenomenon. We could not have done that without the collaboration and the platform that the BBC have provided us with. Neither would we be able to have made what will become such a global success of our *Pompeii Live* broadcast without working together with the British Council. That said, we can all do much more, and we can all do it much better. But the support that we get from embassies throughout the world and from UKTI—we would not be able to grow what is becoming an increasingly important part of our global presence, our international commercial touring exhibition programme, without the kinds of support we get from other public bodies that allow us to go and talk to new potential partners and venues across the world where we can stage exhibitions in order to both generate revenue for the museum, for Britain, but also fulfil the trustees’ mandate of sharing their collections.

Making friends and partners and building the museum's reputation in countries around the world is then of course what drives inward tourism. One in four visitors to London comes to the British Museum, and one in 10 visitors to the UK comes to the British Museum. Add all the other museums and galleries to that, and you have a significant proportion of people coming to Britain largely because of our cultural offer and our cultural attraction. So, driving that inward tourism is an important part of the cultural benefit that a very active and vibrant cultural sector brings to the country.

I am sure my colleagues will agree with this: one of the things that we would most benefit from is Government looking again at questions around visa restrictions. It is clearly a very important matter for the future. There are huge opportunities. We see them from my own sector—for the UK benefiting from burgeoning audiences in China and India and around the world, and a different kind of visa regime would allow the UK to capitalise on that.

Martin Davidson: I suppose I have already spoken about a number of the areas which I think are important. I would echo the issue around visas. I think Government has to recognise that in addition to all the digital work, and there is a huge amount that goes on digitally across all our organisations, the exchange of individuals matters hugely. Creating the conditions that allow that exchange to take place is vitally important for the long-term health and prosperity of this country. So, encouraging movement and exchanges of people is critically important. I do think that as a country we have underestimated the importance of scholarships, especially, I would suggest, in some of the newly emerging parts of the world. That is both encouraging those countries who already wish to spend their money on spending people to this country as well as helping others come.

The final thing would be creating the conditions that allow organisations to make more of the expertise we have in this country but particularly helping to focus that into areas that are of greatest importance to the UK. So, I would suggest, as I said a little earlier, helping British institutions engage with sub-Saharan Africa and the capacities of those countries to develop themselves is a vitally important aspect of this. So, it is not simply something you do in the developed and wealthy world. It matters hugely in the developing world as well.

Q90 The Chairman: Mr Horrocks, you sounded as though you are happy in your new locality separate from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Are you happy in it, and do you want that to be developed more? What is your shopping list from Government?

Peter Horrocks: I think it is going to work for us. The BBC Trust and the BBC chairman, Lord Patten, are extremely supportive of that international role. We clearly do not know what will happen in a few years' time when the BBC's charter comes up for renewal. But I believe that if we can show that we are taking the UK's values to the world, and crucially that we are bringing the world back to the UK in the way I was describing—the way that we are using our language service teams to be reporting back to the UK, because it is about that mutuality, that exchange, that network, that the digital technology can provide—I would ask the Committee and hopefully Government to understand that to be effective in that world we are talking about being competitive with the Googles and the Facebooks and the Twitters. Those are all US companies.

For the UK to be able to punch above its weight versus the Chinese, the Russians and the American technology companies, we are going to need to have scale; we are going to need to have creativity, and that is a crucial thing that is required here. It is not always Government that can be creative itself. It can create the conditions for that. The Creative Industries Council, in which the BBC is playing an important part in terms of its international role, I think can play a part. And the Government can help to create the conditions for

brilliant content that we can then take to the world. So when the Olympics is organised brilliantly, and it was amazing material, the BBC can then take that around the world. It is creating the people who act as the exemplars. I was thinking who they are from the BBC's point of view: John Simpson in news; Sir David Attenborough in factual programming; maybe Jeremy Clarkson—not necessarily everyone's choice—as a cultural representative. But that triumvirate and having the strength of the creative organisation which can then take those kinds of emblems of Britain to the world is fantastic for all of us, and we need Government to create the conditions for that to be possible.

The Chairman: Two final questions: Lord Hodgson and Lord Foulkes.

Q91 Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts: I would ask Martin Davidson one very quick question. You stressed the importance of scholarships and access to our educational facilities. We get quite a bit of feedback about the unsatisfactory nature of UK undergraduate education; about the way that UK students are not finding it all that they hoped it was going to be. Do we do checks on people who have come here as to how satisfactory they have found it and how well it has worked for them? If it is bad, we ought to be learning about it.

Martin Davidson: There is a range of satisfaction surveys of students done both at undergraduate and postgraduate level. On the whole the results of those are very good. I have to say that the students are becoming increasingly demanding as we go forward.

One thing perhaps we have not touched on that I do think is important though is to what extent are we supporting young people from this country going elsewhere. A critical issue for me is that we have something like a 20:1 mismatch between the number of foreign students coming here and British students going overseas. So if we do want to engage properly with China, then we need people who can speak Chinese, who have been to China, worked in China; and the same with India and the same with Brazil. So, one of the big issues in exactly the same way as Mr Horrocks has talked about—talking in Britain about what we understand about the rest of the world—is that we need young people also going overseas; that soft power has to be seen through that lens as well.

The Chairman: That is a very important invention now that the Far Eastern universities are getting to the top of the world university league. It is our generation that needs to learn from them.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: You have very kindly come to give evidence before we have put out the official call for evidence. I wonder if you wanted to go away and consult with some of your excellent staff, the young ones and the women in particular, and come up with some ideas about things that you are not doing or other people are not doing, that you might do and we might do. Could you do that, do you think?

Peter Horrocks: I would be delighted to.

Martin Davidson: Yes.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: Would you?

Dr Williams: Yes.

Q92 The Chairman: I have one final, final question that I am going to give myself the freedom to ask. Is it a help or hindrance to all three of your magnificent networks that we are part of the European Union network ourselves; that we are rather close to Washington and the United States; that we are members of the Commonwealth network? They are three identifying labels stuck on Britain today. Do they help or hinder?

Peter Horrocks: I think they intersect. But it is the fact that the UK and this city have a global perspective that is the most important thing—that overarching view that Britain, because of its history, the Empire, the spread of the English language, can have cultural institutions that are global before they are British. But by that help, the Britishness of course can each take advantage of those, whether it is the Commonwealth or the EU or the transatlantic relationship. But it is only by staying resolutely global, I believe, that these organisations can be successful.

The Chairman: Do you have a word on that?

Martin Davidson: I would echo that. I think that the fact that we are as globally connected a country as any is a huge advantage to us. I would also say that London is without question one of the most attractive aspects of this country: not alone, but this city has an extraordinary attraction around the world, and people come here because of it.

The Chairman: Dr Williams, final point.

Dr Williams: I think from the British Museum's or, more broadly, the museums' and galleries' perspective the Commonwealth and the American contexts are very beneficial to us because we work in both areas very extensively with partner institutions, national museums, that are set up in exactly the same way as we are with a similar arm's length relationship to Government. We have a relationship with the national museum in Zimbabwe, which is governed by trustees. We have relations with similar trustee bodies all over the common law world. We speak the same cultural language. We have the same understandings of what the role of these cultural organisations is within our particular countries but also globally.

As for the European context, that is also extremely important for us. Many of our great things are from European countries. Next year we are doing a major show on Germany and German history and culture. We have talked a lot about building cultural understanding in this country and across the world of countries in the Far East and south Asia, but there is also a job to do to build cultural understanding in this country of some of our nearest neighbours. Right now we have a partnership ongoing with the National Museum of Denmark to reflect upon an aspect of a history common to all the nations of these islands, and also northern Europe—on the Vikings. The largest Viking ship ever discovered is going to be visiting London early next year.

So, in that sense the British Museum absolutely finds the American and the Commonwealth contexts very benign ones in which to work, because we speak the same language and we start from the same premises. But we also feel there are big opportunities and big needs for us to build cultural understanding of some of closest European neighbours as well.

The Chairman: I think that is an excellent note on which to end, with the Vikings, and I would like to thank you all three very much for coming on this hot afternoon and answering all our queries and questions with great expertise and learning. Very many thanks to all three of you; most grateful.

Martin Davidson: Thank you.

Peter Horrocks: Thank you.

Dr Williams: Thank you.

Behavioural Dynamics Institute – Written evidence

SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Soft power can be highly effective – but rarely is. This submission examines the current low level of effectiveness, suggests some common reasons for failure, and then proposes a more rigorous approach, before offering thoughts on high level decision-making and the private sector.
2. Soft power is too focused on communication. Traditional marketing is woefully ineffective within the commercial sector, and worse still in the governmental arena. Military communication efforts provide good examples of the general performance, but rigorous measurement of effectiveness is needed.
3. Other than rigorous evaluation, common flaws in influence efforts include a lack of focus on objectives, poor target audience selection, the pursuit of consistency over targeted messaging, an emphasis on attitudes rather than behaviour and the use of inadequate and inappropriate research.
4. Rather than focusing on bureaucratic structures, we recommend 6 widely applicable principles for a better approach. These will allow the effective and orderly planning of strategic communication campaigns, vastly boosting reliability and reducing waste.
5. Too often, soft power is narrowly conceived, leading to the exclusion of promising potential solutions. The principles outlined above could significantly improve foreign policy decision-making.
6. Specialist expertise is required, and at present, the industry struggles to provide it. More must be done to identify the most effective practitioners.
7. The Behavioural Dynamics Institute is a private, not-for-profit, non-partisan institute that fosters multidisciplinary collaboration to investigate influence and complex human group or societal issues where behaviour change is key. The Influence Advisory Panel (x-iap.com) is an initiative of the BDI. We also assist our commercial partner, SCL, in the design and analysis of field research that directly informs strategic communication efforts by governments.

SECTION 2: INTRODUCTION

8. **Section summary: Soft power can be highly effective – but rarely is. This submission examines the current low level of effectiveness, suggests some common reasons for failure, and then proposes a more rigorous approach, before offering thoughts on high level decision-making and the private sector.**
9. We contend that soft power can be highly effective – but that it rarely is. We contend that this low return on investment is not limited to government efforts, but is rather a crisis across the whole field of influence, because that field relies on faulty assumptions and a misguided focus on communication, sustained by poor metrics.
10. The ability to persuade foreign actors to ‘do what the UK wants’ is a critical capability that is fundamental to the country’s prosperity. The current low level of effectiveness should be an urgent concern.
11. Current soft power approaches focus too much on communication, and draw principally on marketing theory. This is a mistake: soft power is much wider, encompassing all possible non-violent solutions (including economic power). Indeed,

throughout this debate, it should be borne in mind that there is no easy distinction between hard and soft power. Both are merely the exercise of available actions, and good strategy is derived by matching tools to objectives, rather than preselecting tools regardless of aim. Once an objective has been decided, the full range of means should be considered.

12. The next section of this submission provides evidence with regard to the current low level of effectiveness. We then suggest some common reasons for the failure of soft power efforts, and then propose a more rigorous approach. The final sections of this submission briefly explore the role of soft power in high-level decision-making and the ability of the private sector to contribute.
13. These conclusions are derived from a wealth of research conducted and synthesized by the Behavioural Dynamics Institute, including the study of primary research data gathered by our commercial partners SCL in consultancy projects across more than 50 countries. However, where possible we have cited publically available sources.

SECTION 3: CURRENT EFFECTIVENESS

14. **Section summary: Soft power is too focused on communication. Traditional marketing is woefully ineffective within the commercial sector, and worse still in the governmental arena. Military communication efforts provide good examples of the general performance, but rigorous measurement of effectiveness is needed.**
15. Soft power, as presently construed, is largely an exercise in communication, drawing heavily on marketing theory. Yet traditional marketing is not working, even in the commercial arena for which it was designed.
16. A series of studies by the Fournaise Marketing Group has revealed fundamental lack of satisfaction with marketers' efforts. In a 2013 survey of 1200 senior managers, 78% agreed that advertising and media agencies "are not performance-driven enough and do not focus enough on helping to generate the (real and P&L-quantifiable) business results they expect their marketing departments to deliver." Research by McKinsey suggests that consumer behaviour is changing in ways which make traditional marketing techniques even less relevant; we contend that they were not especially effective in the first place. The author of one of the key critiques of modern marketing, Greg Stuart, explained "I spent the first decade of my career as an agency media guy...I felt like a charlatan the entire time...I knew in my heart of hearts that we collectively, not just Greg Stuart, did not know what we were doing in spending clients' money."
17. Small wonder then that failure rates are even higher in the governmental arena, for which marketing techniques were not designed. Enormous sums are spent upon government communication, from employing press officers to dropping leaflets on Iraqi civilians to teaching children the Green Cross Code. Yet the effectiveness of all this is in considerable doubt.
18. The military experience in Afghanistan is instructive. A paucity of data means that it is not possible to directly analyze results for the UK military, but US efforts have been relatively well analyzed, and are comparable. In 2003, the Department of Defense's 'Information Operations Roadmap' concluded that "Currently, however, our PSYOP campaigns are often reactive and not well organized for maximum impact." Little has changed, and similar conclusions still appear in reviews of the effectiveness of US soft power deployment. Christopher Paul, in his review, noted that "Countless studies, articles, and opinion pieces have announced that US strategic communication and public diplomacy are in crisis and inadequate to meet current demand." Arturo Munoz identified nine principal messaging themes used by US forces in Afghanistan. Of those, he rated three as 'effective' between 2001-2005; after 2005 he identified no US message whose effectiveness was more than 'mixed'. Much of the communication

effort has wrongly focused on changing Afghan attitudes rather than behaviour; it is therefore chastening to discover that even those attitudes have been moving in the wrong direction: in one annual poll, the proportion of Afghans awarding positive ratings to US work in Afghanistan fell from 68% in 2005 to 32% in 2010.

19. One should not conclude from this that effective military influence is impossible. There are examples of success. Christopher Lamb has identified two communications operations which resulted in direct and immediate behavioural change: a leaflet drop and broadcast effort at the start of the war in Afghanistan which led to the surrender of 1000 Taliban fighters in Kunduz Province, and the promotion of a weapons buy-back scheme in Iraq in 2004, which achieved impressive results. Causation is always difficult to establish, but there is no doubt that there are many more such case studies out there. The task is not impossible, and if done better, soft power efforts could be vastly more effective.
20. As more data becomes available, a similar story is likely to emerge in analyzing civilian governmental communication efforts. The Government Communications Plan notes that there are 1,910 specialist communicators across government, plus another 1,394 in state-funded 'arms-length bodies and non-ministerial organisations', together spending at least £237m. As well as their day-to-day work, the plan provides an incomplete list of 46 specific communication campaigns that the government will undertake. That figure is certainly an undercount.
21. Some of these campaigns will be effective; some will not. We noted above that data on British military communication efforts was lacking. The same is broadly true of civilian efforts. Rigorous evaluation is rare. The House of Lords Science and Technology Committee published a report in 2011 on behaviour change; they found that "A common concern raised by witnesses was the need for greater consistency in the quality of evaluation of government behaviour change interventions, with many suggesting that this was a significant area of weakness." Measuring effectiveness in communication is extremely difficult, but it is too important to ignore.
22. There is a lack of expertise in evaluations and a lack of patience or funding to conduct them. Perhaps above all, there is a depressingly common tendency to conflate process with outcomes. Some particularly unfortunate examples were observed in the evidence of effectiveness presented for FCO public diplomacy efforts around the Olympics. A DVD was produced for South African audiences about the London Olympics: as evidence for the campaign's success, the British High Commission cited the following: "The media coverage produced a solid impression of a modern dynamic Olympic event. All of the TV coverage used footage from the DVD. The Mayor of London and swimmer Natalie Du Toit were interviewed in front of the DVD branding."
23. More positive examples exist. The THINK! campaign on road safety is frequently cited as one of the most effective government communication campaigns. The claim may be true. It is certainly one of the most rigorously evidenced campaigns. Over the past 5 years, an impressive body of behaviourally-focused research has been built up. In this it is an example worth emulating.
24. Though more evidence is needed, and rigorous evaluation is urgent, we assess that many communication campaigns fail, but that some succeed. A central concern must therefore be boosting reliability. In the following sections, we examine the common reasons for failure, and propose a more effective approach to soft power and influence.

SECTION 4: REASONS FOR FAILURE

25. **Section summary: Other than rigorous evaluation, common flaws in influence efforts include a lack of focus on objectives, poor target audience**

selection, the pursuit of consistency over targeted messaging, an emphasis on attitudes rather than behaviour and the use of inadequate and inappropriate research.

26. As previously mentioned, the most common failure of campaigns is the lack of an ongoing process of rigorous evaluation of effectiveness. However, certain other errors recur in soft power and influence campaigns, leading to their failure. This section outlines some of them, and cites examples of recent UK campaigns that have made these errors.
27. One especially common flaw is a lack of focus on objectives. Campaigns are frequently tied to fuzzy objectives, with little explanation of how the campaign is likely to achieve the stated objective, little effort to demonstrate why a particular campaign is the best means to achieve that objective, and little focus on what concrete difference it would make to the public, or to HMG stakeholders, if the aim were achieved.
28. One small intervention in Palestine serves as an example. The post provided funding and support to a female car racing team. The intervention aimed to achieve the following: 'challenge negative perceptions about the UK in Palestine; present the UK as socially inclusive, open and collaborative; capitalise on improved perceptions of the UK brought about by our support for the Speed Sisters project to re-frame policy conversations and enhance the UK's reputation; support objective 1 of the Occupied Palestinian Territories country business plan – specifically to 'Implement an engagement and communication strategy that enhances the UK and international community's reputation as honest brokers'; Support wider campaigning for MENA Partners for Progress.'
29. This is not a focused campaign; it is a nice idea supported by a pick and mix of worthy sounding objectives, with the clear implication that the idea preceded the objectives. That does not mean it is a bad initiative. It may have done a lot of good. But it seems unlikely that it could achieve all of the objectives listed above, and in austere times, greater focus is needed.
30. That same example also illustrates another common flaw: it picks a vague target audience. To take the target audience first, the stated audience was "young Arabs particularly those involved in rally driving and motor sports and Arab women." These are broad categories: young Arabs and female Arabs encompass an enormous range of lives, and there is little reason to believe that the same communication campaign would persuade such a diverse group. The unfairness of picking the Speed Sisters campaign should be recorded: it is only one example among many, and not a particularly extreme example at that.
31. A related error is to put consistency above targeted messaging. The GREAT Britain campaign is a major UK Government effort that falls into this trap. It hopes to reach "nearly 90 million people across the 14 cities in our nine target markets", communicating about 11 different subjects. A prospective tourist in Delhi will not be persuaded by the same messaging as a businessman in Berlin, and thus the pursuit of consistency has weakened the effectiveness of the campaign.
32. It is moreover often assumed by influence plans, but not demonstrated with reference to research, that the selected target audiences **are sufficiently salient to the stated objectives and sufficiently influenceable**; i.e. that they can be persuaded to change their behaviour, and that if they did so the objectives would be achieved.
33. Perhaps the most common failure of all is the targeting of **attitudes, rather than behaviour**. It is a central assertion of traditional marketing that if you change attitudes, real world behavioural change will follow. The reliability of that assertion has been repeatedly and comprehensively debunked in everything from hotel admissions to happiness. Attitudes sometimes precede behaviour, but often do not. Since it is the

behavioural change that is ultimately wanted, that is what must be researched. Very often, simplistic views of attitudes lead to a misunderstanding of likely behaviour. Research in Saudi Arabia has repeatedly demonstrated the clear divide between enthusiasm for Hollywood and distaste for US support of Israel, while in China, young people dislike US support for Taiwan – but still fight to study at its colleges.

34. Another exceptionally common error is designing campaigns **based on inadequate or inappropriate research**. Too often campaigns are based on a bright idea, perhaps discussed with a few experts, rather than rigorous research with the target audience. When evidence is used, it is often a simple polling result suggesting the area in which the problem lies: that is inadequate, given how many decisions must be made on any campaign. Returning to the Fournaise research cited earlier, 72% of surveyed CEOs agreed that “they soon realised Ad & Media Agencies were not as data- and science-driven as they had expected, relied too much on gut-feelings, hearsay, wrong methodologies and questionable information.” Very often, the necessary research will not be purely quantitative; numbers can be misleading, and qualitative research has considerable strengths in this field. It is not worth picking out particular UK soft power campaigns in this regard; almost none meet this test. Creativity is a poor substitute for evidence.
35. These common flaws are visible across commercial and governmental influence campaigns. They are responsible for enormous waste of money and time. Below, we outline a better approach.

SECTION 5: BETTER APPROACH

36. **Section summary: Rather than focusing on bureaucratic structures, we recommend 6 widely applicable principles for a better approach. These will allow the effective and orderly planning of strategic communication campaigns, vastly boosting reliability and reducing waste.**
37. Christopher Paul summarizes beautifully the way in which bland and impractical recommendations recur. He counts nine separate reports of US strategic communications that call for ‘leadership’. It would be hard to disagree. 20 studies, by Paul’s count, called for increased resources, an unlikely prospect at present, and 19 called for better coordination, another point from which few would dissent.³⁶ Rather than getting bogged down in arguments over bureaucratic structures or funding levels, we propose six principles which can be applied to soft power and influence efforts at all levels and across all departments.³⁷
38. **Principle 1: Effective influence attempts to alter behaviour, not simply attitudes.** Influence should attempt to achieve a specific, measurable and unambiguous behavioural objective. Campaigns aimed at creating and increasing Afghans’ positive attitudes towards ISAF, for example, were implicitly aimed at stopping a whole host of non-desired behaviours, from fighting to donating money to growing poppies. Yet SCL research which looked at one such behaviour in isolation – the planting of IEDs – uncovered that the reason for this behaviour had nothing to do with ‘liking’ or ‘disliking’ ISAF soldiers. Fieldwork uncovered that many young Afghans in fact dreamt of going to the United States, and planting IEDs was one of the few activities that paid enough money to allow them to save up for their ambitions.
39. **Principle 2: Influence is most efficient and effective when it targets self-identifying social groups, because behaviours (and attitudes) are determined by the social context.** Cultural diplomacy directed at Chinese people is likely to fail, and so too is cultural diplomacy directed at Chinese males aged 18-32,

³⁶ Paul, Christopher, ‘Whither Strategic Communication? A Survey of Current Proposals and Recommendations’, RAND, 2009, p.1, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2009/RAND_OP250.pdf

³⁷ These proposals were originally developed by Dr. Lee Rowland, and may be described as ‘the BDI approach’.

because that is an externally-imposed demographic category, not a self-identifying, cohesive group. Far more useful is cultural diplomacy aimed at Netizens, because they have a shared culture.

40. **Principle 3: Influence efforts must be attuned to local culture and circumstance to have any chance of success.** Conclusions must be ‘audience-centric’; they must adopt the perspective of the target audience. The best way to do this is through rigorous social science research. Three white British bureaucrats in a London office will not come up with an effective way of persuading Indians to buy British products. Asking a few British citizens of Indian origin for their opinions is little better. Qualitative and quantitative research designed by influence specialists and conducted by Indians in India is far more likely to generate effective cultural diplomacy strategies.
41. **Principle 4: Some pieces of cultural knowledge (for instance, motivations) are far more valuable than others, because they are diagnostic.** That is, they help eliminate a great many possible hypotheses and approaches, meaning that you reach the correct solution more quickly. For instance, if the paramount aspiration among Rwandans is to own a house, then cultural diplomacy efforts focused on the success of UN efforts to help people buy a car or start a business will just be ignored. Therefore, by finding out one piece of information, two potential campaigns can be eliminated, or reshaped (starting a business can be sold to Rwandans as being the fastest way to homeownership, or mortgage loans for business owners can be made vastly more attractive and achievable). The BDI measures a bank of research parameters drawn from social psychology and related disciplines; these have proven far more effective than seeking a general cultural understanding.³⁸
42. **Principle 5: A holistic understanding of a problem can often yield counter-intuitive but more effective solutions.** This means that quantitative research is not always the most useful technique. Though it can provide hard numbers that are simple to understand, it should be preceded by semi-structured qualitative research that allows for a full investigation of the social group at hand.
43. **Principle 6: Influence efforts without data-driven and audience-centric measures of effectiveness are a waste.** Situations change, and after a few years, even the best cultural diplomacy effort may stop having an effect. Measuring effectiveness regularly means that you know when this has happened, and can make adjustments accordingly. Vitality, you must measure effectiveness – not just how many hours of programming you broadcast into Myanmar, or how many people listened to it (which are in fact measures of action and measures of performance), but how many people changed their behaviour accordingly.
45. In general, a soft power effort should proceed in the following manner: an overall aim is determined, and this is distilled into specific behavioural objectives, perhaps supported by initial primary and secondary research. For each objective, the most salient and measurable self-identifying and cohesive target audience is selected, and primary research is conducted upon that group. This research will be in-depth and multi-stage, and will test a range of research parameters. Meanwhile, a baseline will be established to determine the effectiveness of the campaign. Analysis of the wealth of data thereby produced will allow the design of specific, fully articulated and actionable recommendations, which may or may not be communications-focused. The campaign will then be conducted, and its effectiveness is then measured.

³⁸ For more on these research parameters, refer to Rowland, Lee & van den Berg, Gaby, ‘In Pursuit of a Contextual Diagnostic Approach to Behaviour Change’, Behavioural Dynamics Institute, September 2012, <http://www.bdinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/LeeGaby.pdf> and Wein, Tom, ‘The Perfect and the Possible: Seeking a Frugal Model of Behavioural Change’, Behavioural Dynamics Institute, October 2012, <http://www.bdinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/PerfectPossible.pdf>

SECTION 6: A NOTE ON STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING

45. **Section summary: Too often, soft power is narrowly conceived, leading to the exclusion of promising potential solutions. The principles outlined above could significantly improve foreign policy decision-making.**
46. At the beginning of this submission, we stressed that when exercising power to achieve an objective, all possible tools should be methodically considered. Too often decisions which are fundamentally operational – decisions on the means to be used – are made at the same time as decisions on the objectives to be pursued.
47. The approach we have outlined, from concrete objectives to measures of effectiveness, via evidence-led strategy, is applicable well beyond communications. We believe it has considerable potential as a decision-making tool at the highest levels of government.
48. Most – perhaps all – foreign policy actions aim to influence a group or individual to act in a certain way (even the most brutal wars aim for surrender rather than annihilation). Adopting the principles described above would provide a structured thinking process that insisted on consistent reference to the evidence, thereby improving foreign policy decision making in general.
49. While ministers have an absolute right to involve themselves in all details of the organizations they head, they would likely achieve better results, in soft power and elsewhere, if they adopted a ‘mission command plus approval’ approach, in which they granted more room to those with a detailed understanding of the evidence to determine the best course of action, within the parameters they set.

SECTION 7: A NOTE ON INDUSTRY

50. **Section summary: Specialist expertise is required, and at present, the industry struggles to provide it. More must be done to identify the most effective practitioners.**
51. In conclusion, it should be noted that effective soft power is a challenging, technical discipline, requiring a detailed understanding of research methods and the findings of social psychology, as well as considerable flexibility to achieve results in challenging environments. Specialist expertise will therefore often be required. In the long run, the Government may wish to consider bringing this expertise ‘in house’, as they have done with IT. In the meantime, however, much communications and soft power work will continue to be outsourced.
52. It should therefore be borne in mind that many so-called communication specialists in the private sector also lack this expertise, and make many of the same errors as those outlined above. It can be exceptionally difficult to differentiate between the genuine article and opportunistic bluffers. The BDI consequently recommends the development of rigorous standards of communications procurement and accreditation which focus on the issues and errors identified above.

Dr Matt Beech and Dr Peter Munce, University of Hull – Written evidence

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Introduction

1. This submission deals with the specific issue of the UK's relationship with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). It seeks to bring to the attention of the Committee the impact that a potential withdrawal from the Convention might have on the range of soft power options available to the UK.
2. The present policy of the Coalition Government as contained in the Programme for Government is not to withdraw. A Commission was established by the Coalition in March 2011 to 'investigate the creation of a British Bill of Rights that incorporates and builds on all our obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights, ensures that these rights continue to be enshrined in British law, and protects and extends British liberties'³⁹. However, ECHR withdrawal is an option being seriously considered by senior Conservatives as a potential policy option for any future Conservative government.

Tensions within the Conservative Party

3. There are significant tensions within the Conservative Party about UK membership of the ECHR in particular the influence in the UK of European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) jurisprudence.
4. During a debate in the House of Commons on the impact of the ECtHR's decision in *Hirst v UK*⁴⁰ which ruled that a blanket ban on voting for prisoners was a breach of article 3 of Protocol 1 of the ECHR a number of Conservative MPs expressed their discontent at the Strasbourg Court's decision. One Conservative MP during the debate argued that, 'The bottom line for me is that there would be less shame in leaving the European convention on human rights than in giving prisoners the vote'.⁴¹
5. During a debate in the House of Commons on the 7th February on the issues surrounding the deportation of Abu Qatada another Conservative MP said, 'What the British public want to know is this: if we cannot secure the reforms that we need from the European Court of Human Rights, will we withdraw from the

³⁹ Programme for Government, p.11

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/78977/coalition_programme_for_government.pdf (last accessed 18th September, 2013).

⁴⁰ (No. 2) - 74025/01 [2005] ECHR 681 (6 October 2005)

⁴¹ Philip Holloborne HC Debs 10 Feb 2011 vol 523 cc 537.

European convention? In the absence of that commitment, the Home Secretary will simply be spitting in the wind'.⁴²

6. The most senior Conservative to express discontent was the Home Secretary, Theresa May who in a speech on 9th March, 2013 said that, 'by 2015 we'll need a plan for dealing with the European Court of Human Rights. And yes, I want to be clear that all options – including leaving the Convention altogether – should be on the table'⁴³.
7. Not all elements of the Conservative Party agree with this direction, most notably the Attorney General who warned that if the UK withdrew it would risk being viewed as a 'pariah state' by the international community⁴⁴. Previously, whilst in opposition he stated that withdrawing from the Convention would, 'Send a very damaging signal about how the UK viewed the place and promotion of human rights and liberties and would be an encouragement to every tin pot dictator such as Robert Mugabe, who violates them. Nor, if a UK government intends to behave in an ethical manner, would withdrawal solve many of the problems now blamed on the ECHR itself.'⁴⁵

Background to the ECHR

8. The ECHR is an international treaty devised by the Member States of the Council of Europe and was drafted by the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly Committee on Legal and Administrative Questions, which was chaired by the Conservative politician Sir David Maxwell – Fyfe.
9. The Convention has recently celebrated its 60th anniversary entering into force in September 1953. The UK was one of the first to sign the Convention in 1951. The Council of Europe was founded in 1949 and now has 47 Member States from across the continent of Europe including those new democracies that emerged after the break – up of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall. It is an international organisation, whose primary objective is to, 'create a common democratic and legal area throughout the whole of the continent, ensuring respect for its fundamental values: human rights, democracy and the rule of law'⁴⁶. The ECHR is highly regarded and considered as one of the crowning achievements of the Council of Europe by a range of international human rights lawyers and scholars.
10. In recent years the power and influence of the Court has grown significantly due to reforms in how the Court operates, the Eastward expansion of the Council of

⁴² <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201212/cmhansrd/cm120207/debtext/120207-0001.htm> (last accessed, 18th September, 2013).

⁴³ <http://conservativehome.blogs.com/thetorydiary/2013/03/full-text-of-theresa-mays-speech-we-will-win-by-being-the-party-for-all.html> (last accessed, 18th September, 2013).

⁴⁴ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/9596949/Britain-could-become-Belarus-if-it-abandons-human-rights-legislation-warns-Attorney-General.html> (last accessed, 18th September, 2013)

⁴⁵ Speech by Dominic Grieve MP to the Middle Temple, 'Can the Bill of Rights do better than the Human Rights Act?' 30th November 2009 <http://www.dominicgrieve.org.uk/news/can-bill-rights-do-better-human-rights-act> (last accessed, 18th September, 2013).

⁴⁶ <http://www.coe.int/aboutcoe/index.asp?page=nosObjectifs> (last accessed, 18th September, 2013).

Europe and a desire on behalf of the judges to view the Convention as a ‘living instrument’.

Questions for the Committee to consider

11. This evidence has outlined the serious concerns Conservatives have about and poses the following question for the Committee to consider:
12. Is it in UK national interest to withdraw unilaterally from the ECHR? If so, what sort of example would the UK be setting by withdrawing from the ECHR even on a temporary basis? What credibility or moral authority will the UK have to raise concerns about states that fall short of internationally accepted standards about the protection of rights?
13. The implications of the UK’s withdrawal from the ECHR need to be properly thought through and all aspects of the debate seriously considered. In other words, in an era of international relations when soft power options are increasingly relied upon by states in the pursuit of their foreign policy objectives can the UK really afford to leave itself open to accusations of double standards in an increasingly fragile and uncertain global order?
14. British withdrawal from the ECHR would provide the United States with a human rights problem. How can future American-led initiatives and interventions include Britain as a primary partner if the international community (particularly Russia and China) assert that Britain is casual about human rights?
15. The United States seeks to utilise both soft and hard power when encouraging political liberalisation in authoritarian regimes and emerging democracies. What about the human rights problem of Britain? Surely the United States would have to robustly address this fact in some manner and one highly embarrassing for Britain.
16. The problem of Britain withdrawing from the ECHR presents the United States with an awkward human rights problem. One that has implications for how it relates to its other foreign policy priorities. Of these a notable priority is its relationship with China. The traditional approach to China has been to encourage trade and cultural exchanges in the hope that this emboldens reformers in the Communist Party and leads to a western facing Beijing that respects human rights. However, in recent years life in China has improved for many but summary violence and abuses continue. The United States knows this and seeks to engage the PRC on these issues. How effectively will the United States be in presenting the western example of universal human rights recognition if Britain withdraws from the ECHR? Surely, this weakens the American diplomatic position as Britain is their primary diplomatic and military partner.
17. The UK government believes that the best way for China to achieve economic prosperity and stability in the future is for it to protect fundamental rights and uphold the rule of law. How would the Chinese government perceive UK withdrawal from the ECHR and how would this affect UK-China trade relations?

18. Does withdrawal from the ECHR not place Britain in a weaker position with Russia? As Britain would be voluntarily giving up a degree of moral authority on the issue of human rights. The British case for persuading and, at times, confronting Russia over its record on human rights and civil liberties would become redundant as the force of Britain's argument would be rendered impotent.

Conclusion

19. In a multipolar and globally interdependent world states need all soft power options available to them particularly one as politically significant and symbolically important as being a signatory to the ECHR.
20. Withdrawal from the ECHR could have major foreign policy ramifications for Britain. Chief among these is a degree of isolation from the United States. Britain will not be seen as an exemplar of advanced democracy that values human rights. Britain's relationship with its European neighbours will change to the point where its contributions to debates about diplomatic and social issues will be respected less and deemed to be outside of settled norms. Withdrawal from the ECHR in terms of British influence would be a retrograde step.

September 2013

Ian Birrell, Columnist and Foreign Correspondent, Jonathan Glennie, Overseas Development Institute, International Alert and Transparency International UK – Oral evidence (QQ 126-151)

Ian Birrell, Columnist and Foreign Correspondent, Jonathan Glennie, Overseas Development Institute, International Alert and Transparency International UK – Oral evidence (QQ 126-151)

Evidence Session No. 7

Heard in Public

Questions 126 - 151

MONDAY 29 JULY 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT

Lord Howell of Guildford (Chairman)
Lord Forsyth of Drumlean
Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts
Baroness Hussein-Ece
Lord Janvrin
Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne
Lord Ramsbotham

Witnesses

Ian Birrell, Columnist and Foreign Correspondent, Contributing Editor for *Mail* and *Mail on Sunday*, **Jonathan Glennie**, Research Fellow, Centre for Aid and Public Expenditure, ODI, **Mark Pyman**, Director, Defence and Security Programme, Transparency International UK, and **Phil Vernon**, Director of Programmes, International Alert

Q126 The Chairman: Welcome, and the first and most important thing is: jackets off if you so wish—it is up to you. Thank you very much, all four of you, for coming. You have before you, because it is an obligation and a proper thing, information about the relevant interests of everyone who is a Member of this Committee, so that will help you know what our particular concerns are and where we are coming from.

As you know, the official label for this Committee is to examine soft power and Britain's influence overseas, a very wide subject which we are seeking to narrow through a series of hearings right through the autumn, before we report. I am going to start with really the obvious question, for each of you, if possible with a short summarising reply before we really get going. Bearing in mind that of course hard power and soft power—military power at one end and kinds of diplomacy and persuasion at the other—are not opposites in any way, they are all parts of the same spectrum, which is a changing one from merely the traditional division between gunboats and diplomats. It is not like that any more. My first and opening question really is, to each of you, do you see your activities and your operations—and you are in a sense at the spearhead, the sharp end, in many of these areas—as in that spectrum? If so, where in that spectrum? Or are they not in that spectrum at all? Going left to right, could I start with Mr Pyman of Transparency International on that broad question of how you see your work and the hard, soft and smart power—whatever you like—fitting together, if at all.

Ian Birrell, Columnist and Foreign Correspondent, Jonathan Glennie, Overseas Development Institute, International Alert and Transparency International UK – Oral evidence (QQ 126-151)

Mark Pyman: As an NGO, I hope we are not doing too much of the hard power side. What we are doing does have a soft power element, because we are working in any number of countries overseas and, although we are a global international organisation, it is never in doubt that we come from the UK. We can see the influence that we are bringing to bear and, yes, I do think it has a soft power component to it.

The Chairman: Actually, having said I would go left to right, Mr Birrell, do you mind if I come back to you at the end because you are, I hope, going to offer us a critique that may be slightly different? So I shall go straight to Jonathan Glennie and ask him for the observation on the general question.

Jonathan Glennie: Would the Committee like to hear a very brief opening statement that I have prepared that basically does answer your question?

Q127 The Chairman: Yes, of course. That is absolutely fine.

Jonathan Glennie: I apologise; I have not printed it, so I am going to read from this laptop, which is going to be really annoying for everyone, but it is very short.

Firstly, thanks for inviting me. It strikes me that this Committee is asking questions of great importance to my line of work. Let me try and summarise my view on the relationship between aid and soft power from an internationalist perspective, which I think is the inevitable perspective for someone who works, as I do, in poverty eradication, human rights and sustainable development.

It is hard to exaggerate the mega-shifts in what I call “the geography of power” currently under way. We all know about the BRICS, and some of you will even have heard of the CIVETS, but countries like Peru and the Philippines will soon be among the 30 largest world economies, according to HSBC predictions. Developing countries and emerging countries are beginning to dominate global economic growth, and their political power is increasing as a consequence. They are also the home of rapidly increasing reserves of global savings—almost 50% of world savings, according to the World Bank—and therefore, of course, the source of growing foreign investments, including aid and concessional loans.

Even the smaller, low-income countries—less powerful countries—in places like Africa and elsewhere are finding a new assertiveness. Why? Because they are now living in what colleagues at ODI have termed an age of choice, in which many more external financing options are available to them than in the past, both private and public, as well as a huge expansion in domestic resource revenue in many countries. And they are looking to new examples of how to develop. As the exaggerated market fundamentalism of the so-called Washington consensus is tossed into the dustbin of history, poor countries no longer want to be the US or France only. They look to Brazil, Vietnam and, of course, China, and the term “Beijing consensus” has been coined—not a phrase I agree with, but it implies that countries are looking much broadly for examples and help than ever before.

For Britain, we are gradually going to become less powerful, continuing the trend since the end of the empire. Power is zero sum. Where we used to get our way, increasingly even poor countries are saying thanks but no thanks when they do not like the modalities or the conditions attached to our aid or trade relationships.

One response to this ebbing away of power has been to seek to defend our advantage—not just Britain, of course, but OECD countries in general. But as an internationalist I am naturally inclined against this approach. In fact, it is right and desirable that other countries become more wealthy and more powerful—that is the logic of working in international development. In seeking to increase the wealth of poor countries, inevitably they will

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become more powerful, which inevitably leads to us becoming relatively less powerful. I want a world in which we all share roughly the same standard of living, and I care as much about the interests of other peoples as British interests, especially given how immensely well off we are compared to the rest of the world. Notwithstanding that we are going through a crisis, we are still among the 30 richest countries in the world in terms of income per capita, and one of the 10 largest economies.

I have only got a couple more paragraphs to go, my Lord Chairman, so I will be very brief. Soft power is sometimes couched as another means, along with hard power, to promote Britain's interests and security. But I would like to emphasise the importance of promoting values. The UK has played a role in promoting great causes with its aid, from civil rights and democracy, especially women's rights and gay rights, to free healthcare and education, and peace in conflict countries. But it has also used the power of aid in ways of which we should feel ashamed—forcing countries to privatise key industries and basic services, forcing them to eliminate subsidies to crucial industries, et cetera, flying in the face of the evidence but suiting the interests of British corporates.

The temptation in the aid business has been to use aid as if it was hard power—in other words, paying for strategic advantage and economic preferment. There are many examples of this historically, from the US cutting aid to Yemen, one of the world's poorest countries, when it failed to support the first Gulf war, to China today only giving aid—I do not know if you know this—to countries that do not recognise Taiwan as an independent country.

But the nature of soft power is that it is somewhat more nebulous—less direct. The UK is almost unique in its worthy insistence that aid is not used for political or economic gain, and it is right that that is so—the best aid relinquishes control to recipients who take the lead in spending it. It does not always work, but it is more likely to, and the respect earned is the soft power we are talking about. So, no, I do not believe aid should be used to promote our own interests. I think it should be used to promote international public goods and universally agreed values, which implies a move away from bilateral objectives and towards a more rules-based international public finance regime.

To finish—and thank you very much for your patience—in my view the question is not about how the UK can safeguard its power and interests, but how it can help the world transition to one in which power is spread more evenly, for the good of all.

Q128 The Chairman: Right, thank you. That states your position very clearly indeed and raises lots of questions which we will pursue. Mr Vernon, would you like to have a go?

Phil Vernon: Thank you, Lord Chair. If it is okay, I will do something a bit similar, but maybe a bit shorter in answer to your question.

The Chairman: A little bit shorter, because then I want to get to Mr Birrell.

Phil Vernon: I would just like to say, first of all, that at International Alert we are a peacebuilding organisation, so we are part of the aid sector but a specific niche within it. I think we are about 18% funded by the British Government—

The Chairman: 80%?

Phil Vernon: 18% funded by different parts of the Government. I would like to think we are pretty independent, so if we are talking about the soft power of the UK Government I think that our work is probably not very much part of that—but of the soft power of the UK as a nation, probably yes, and I will come back to that in a moment, if I could.

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Soft power is perhaps the achievement of one's aims and ends through non-coercive means—through not purchasing, through not bribing, but through attracting and perhaps co-opting, in the better sense of the word “co-opting”—as Joseph Nye says. I think he also says—I think I would agree with Jonathan—it is highly relevant to the current situation and the situation in the world. If the currency of soft power is, as Nye says, values, culture, policy and institutions, it seems to me that one's soft power is embodied in the choices one makes and the actions one takes. So it is not what you say that you say but what you do which gives you power.

I am not so sure about power being a zero-sum game. Power is not a commodity. One can really only talk about power vis-à-vis a particular objective or situation. I think one can look at soft power vis-à-vis a particular goal or aim. If it is fair to say that the United Kingdom Government and people have, as a long-term aim, a world which is increasingly liberal—in the general sense of the word—and democratic, prosperous and peaceful, then soft power is a very good way that this country can contribute to achieving that aim. A world that evolves in that way is not a linear process; that evolution is history—it is difficulties happening in the world. If the world becomes more liberal and democratic, it is not something that one can instrumentalise through coercion or through purchase, so soft power seems highly relevant to it.

Is aid part of soft power? That was one of your questions. The answer is yes, no and maybe. I think Winston Churchill is said to have said about the Marshall plan that it was the “most unselfish and unsordid” act by a great power in history. I know it is controversial whether he said it about the Marshall plan or about lend-lease, but if he did say it about the Marshall plan, that quote embodies the complications of your question. Obviously the Marshall plan was not only unselfish, but it was to some degree unselfish. That opens up some of the complications of the question “Is aid a soft power instrument?”

The act of giving, especially during a time of economic difficulty has got to be something that attracts people. If you divide aid into three areas—very briefly, my Lord, if I may—although all aid is political, humanitarian aid is probably the least controversial type of aid. The more humanitarian aid this country gives to people in difficult circumstances, the more I think a good press is going to accrue to this country, which gives us power and capital. I think development aid is a bit more complicated, but development aid that this country gives is not just money. A lot of what we do to support people in places like Uganda, Tunisia and Egypt is not just about money; it is support of other kinds, so we are contributing to progress in other ways. The third thing is that, through the aid budget and through our actions as a country, we are supporting the international system, which creates an enabling environment for a better world—a more prosperous, more peaceful and more democratic world. So I think, yes, there is a soft power element to overseas development aid given and supported by the UK.

Q129 The Chairman: Right. Mr Birrell, what do you think about that?

Ian Birrell: Well, it is interesting that we talk about humanitarian aid as being uncontroversial, because if you go to Haiti, of course, you can see a country which even before the earthquake three years ago had four times as much per capita in terms of aid as the Marshall plan gave to Europe, yet incomes have declined by a third, despite having so many more charities operating there than anywhere else. After the earthquake, there was huge resentment at this army of aid workers who came in and all lived in \$5,000 flats and drove around in new cars while the people were suffering; in fact, the legacy is intense bitterness at how, according to the Prime Minister, 40% of the aid money went on

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supporting the aid workers who came to save the country—and failed to do so so dismally that so many people are still living in abject squalor and without homes.

If we look at the issue of soft power, it is an interesting question because it of course implies that soft power, when it comes to aid, is also all about the donor and not the recipient. One of my key arguments is that it is, of course. This very question and session underlines that. I think that Britain has huge advantages worldwide in soft power. If you look at the obvious things like the English language being so dominant; if you look at things like our education links; even if you look at newer things like music—I speak as the co-founder of Africa Express, a very successful project bringing together African and western musicians—and of course Premier League football, which is so dominant across Africa, the continent that I know best, Britain has these enormous advantages, along with issues such as our historic traditions of tolerance and democracy. Unfortunately, the way that the whole aid agenda has been allowed to dominate over the last 30 years, combined with a mixture of patronising attitudes which came out of it and an arrogance about our own brilliance, really, in terms of many of our institutions, gets translated when you see it abroad as looking down at a lot of the countries that we are meant to be helping.

My issues with aid, in particular, I suppose can be summarised threefold, one of which is that while we preach against welfare dependency at home we are encouraging it abroad. We are doing so in a very, very regressive, devastating manner which is all about us coming along and telling people what to do and not listening to people on the ground. That actually often has disastrous effects. Secondly, we are supporting some of the most barbaric regimes in the world with our aid money. That is hardly a good way to spread British influence and power, when you are subjugating people and backing regimes which are guilty of appalling human rights abuses and democratic theft. Thirdly, there is this idea that Britain has put forward over the last 30 years—particularly our politicians and a couple of pop stars—that we can save the world and that we are the saviours of the world. This has been continually propagated with the idea that these countries are in need of our salvation—that they are sort of basket-case countries that are helpless, that they are dominated by starvation and conflict, that poverty is endemic everywhere, and that conflict is everywhere. That has the negative effect that actually people do not want to trade there and do not want to go there. They see Africa, particularly, as a horrible place of extreme violence, when the reality is so different. That is putting off trade, putting off people going there for holiday and putting off links, and therefore it is undermining our soft power.

On top of that, I would say finally that we talk all the time about soft power, but it is often contaminated by hypocrisy. We talk of democracy when our own electorate is growing increasingly disenchanted. We talk about improving tax regimes when our own tax regimes have been so controversial in recent months and years. At the end of the day, there is the issue of how we would feel if scores of young Africans came here and started telling us how to run our own schools and hospitals. Of course they would not be allowed to come here because our visa policies do not allow them to, but were they to be allowed to we would not like it. That is as true in Africa. I hear more and more across Africa—you can see it with academics, with the young middle class, with politicians—that people resent the aid and the aid industry, which is growing so fast, and they resent the patronising and anachronistic attitudes that lie behind it. That is very damaging to our British interest long term.

If I can, I will throw in just one last thing, which is to consider one country: Nigeria. Out of the top 10 recipients of British aid, it is getting the biggest rise in percentage terms of any of them—going up 116%. This is a country with the fastest-rising growth in champagne consumption in the world, which has just started its own space programme and is about to

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start training astronauts, and where our own aid watchdog has said how ineffective a lot of the British aid going there is. Still we are pouring the money in, but at the same time we are turning away their students who want to come and study in our universities, and we are just about to introduce a bond of several thousand pounds to deter the sixth highest-spending consumers coming to our shops. It is utter insanity, and it shows the ridiculous, twisted and contorted nature of British policies towards the developing world that we have ended up with, where on the one hand we think we are saving them by giving them aid, and on the other we are saying to them, “Don’t come to our country to learn—to come to our universities—don’t come here to trade, and don’t come here on holiday”. To me, that shows everything that is wrong with our British soft power approach when it comes to aid, trade, tourism, development and immigration.

Q130 The Chairman: All right. I am going to give your neighbours a chance to take another view, shall we say, because I think that this creates a good contrast of views about the whole scene. Before I do so, I think that Members of my Committee might like to ask a question or two. Who would like to go in first?

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: I would just like to follow up what Ian Birrell said. The two points that you make, which fit together so well, are, first, that aid is resented—you mentioned that you think that is clearly the case; there are many and prolific examples of it—and, secondly, that we in a sense have depicted ourselves as saviours of the globe. That strikes very strong notes with me, yet Mr Glennie is suggesting that we should put a great deal more money into non-accountable multilateral expenditure in order somehow to help liberal democracy in the world. What is your answer to that point?

Ian Birrell: Well, I do not think that you impose democracy from outside; I have never thought that and I never will. If we want to help democracy, we should tackle the things that we can do at home. One of the biggest problems that Africa has is capital flight, with money being creamed off, whether by tax evasion, corrupt politicians or whatever. Where does a lot of it end up? It ends up in Britain, in British property, with British legal firms washing it and British banks hiding it. Why do we not start cracking down on the things that we can do at home, instead of lecturing the world on what it can do? If we could do that and start exposing a lot of these people who are stealing the money from their own people, it would have a huge impact on democracy.

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: But that is a bit of a red herring, because we are looking at soft power overseas.

Ian Birrell: But that is soft power, because soft power is also about, rather than lecturing people, actually doing something. Here is something that we could do at home but do not. Were we to do it, that might get a lot more credit abroad than telling people how to run their own countries all the time.

Q131 Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: My question is for Mr Glennie about his opening statement. Distinguishing between development aid and humanitarian aid—and leaving humanitarian aid on one side—how do you think it can be justified to ask people, perhaps on low incomes, to pay taxes without any indication of a return for them, for their economy and for the country? If it is because you think that there is some moral duty for doing it, would it not be better to raise these funds through the NGOs and others by people making voluntary contributions? Surely the Government are taking money by force from people for this purpose. Is there not an absolute moral duty to show that value for money is being obtained and to show that there is some benefit to the people who are having to make that contribution, particularly when times are hard?

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Jonathan Glennie: I would like to answer a couple of Ian's points, but the answer to that point is really yes and no. Is there a moral obligation to demonstrate to rich Britons that there is a return on the taxes—

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: I did not ask about rich Britons; I asked about taxpayers.

Jonathan Glennie: Sorry. I am speaking about rich taxpayers in Britain—

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Most of the money from the taxpayers comes from people on low incomes.

Jonathan Glennie: I am sorry; I was trying to make an analogy. Is it okay for wealthy taxpayers in Britain to subsidise the living standards of the very poorest in Britain? Should those wealthy taxpayers expect a clear return on that or is it simply the right thing to do? Should London help to subsidise the poorest parts of Wales and some parts of the north of England? Should London expect a return on that or is it simply the right thing to do? My argument is that it is both. It is the right thing to do. I do not think that rich countries should expect a return on their help for poor countries. Nevertheless, they do get a return. I believe that when other parts of Britain are doing well, London also—in a somewhat nebulous way, admittedly—benefits. I believe that when other parts of the world are doing well, Britain also benefits, especially as we now live in a world where there are planetary resource limits and we all have somehow to divide our resources fairly and sustainably. I think that it is absolutely okay for Britain to support poorer countries without a clear, immediate return, even when we are going through economic turmoil and tough times, because our turmoil is nothing compared with the economic turmoil and tough times that other countries are going through. The response to people living on very low wages, with lowering wages and increasing inequality in this country, is to deal with our own policies. We have immense inequality in this country, so let us deal with the British policies and not—David Cameron is right about this and says it again and again—try to bring the rest of the world into it.

Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts: I, too, have a question for Mr Glennie. I think that you said that we have been in the habit of using aid as a type of hard power and that, instead, aid should be used to promote what I think you called universal values. Who sets the universal values? Is it not patronising if we are setting them?

Jonathan Glennie: Admittedly it is a difficult academic question, but the UN Declaration of Human Rights is signed by almost every country in the world and, broadly speaking, those are the kind of universal values that I would say should underpin all our international co-operation. Since that declaration was made, there have been a series of declarations that, again, most countries of the world have signed. So there are, I would argue, some quite clear universal values, although I admit that it is a very difficult question—some countries sign them without really believing in them. We deal with that the whole time in international development. It is a complicated area.

Q132 Baroness Hussein-Ece: I want to go back to what Ian Birrell said. You were obviously being very challenging to us, which is very welcome, as it gets us thinking.

Ian Birrell: I thought that I was being quite moderate.

Baroness Hussein-Ece: You were challenging what we have heard so far in these sessions. One thing that resonated with me was when you talked about some of the aid programmes having the patronising attitude, “We know best”. That has always been a problem historically with this country, because of its colonial past, I suppose, especially with Africa. I was in the Sudan recently—I must declare all my interests, which are on the list. We have had a briefing

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from DfID about what it has been achieving and its outputs. You could not argue with some of the things: 5.9 million children in primary education per year; immunisation—

Ian Birrell: Do you want me to deal with that one first?

Baroness Hussein-Ece: I have just given you a couple of examples. If you stop people in the street in this country, generally they will say, “It is surely a good thing to provide education rather than dishing out aid. These are things to empower people to do better in their own countries. Immunisation and all the rest are surely a good thing”. I hear what you are saying about visa restrictions here, which is an issue that comes up quite a bit. In terms of DfID responding, by the time that it has recalibrated its priorities or strategies, things have moved on in some of these countries and it is not quite keeping up. That is the first point that I wanted to ask you about. Also, my experience of talking to Ministers, MPs, various people and NGOs that I met when I was in the Sudan is that they want more investment. They want Britain to do more; they do not want Britain to go away. Even as a former colonial country, they are saying, “They are not supporting us in developing business to make our people prosperous, coming out of the conflict. We need business investment”. They did not talk about aid so much, but one of them said, “We want to go back to the golden days when we had a marvellous relationship and you supported us to become potentially a rich country with our energy, oil, gold and so on”. Do you think that we are not balancing those two things? The old slogan is “Trade not aid”. Should that be what we are looking at?

Ian Birrell: I think that it is slightly too simplistic just to go down to trade versus aid, but certainly trade will do far more than aid ever will. Mo Ibrahim said only this week that aid was never going to help Africa to develop. It is very easy to trot out statistics without bothering to look at what lies behind those statistics. Let us look at the one on primary education. Last year, I was asked to go out to Kibera by some of the people working for British charities who were so horrified by the patronising attitudes that they saw from the British charity workers. Kibera is billed as the biggest slum in Africa, but in fact it is not. In the middle of it is a fantastic primary school, which Gordon Brown once visited to proclaim how brilliantly this money was doing in terms of primary education. In fact, what happened there was that free primary education came in, but there were no extra teachers, no extra classrooms and no extra books. The school, which is very famous, is right in the centre of Kibera. It used to offer a fantastic and inspirational education to the kids in the area, but standards absolutely crashed because the number of kids going there doubled. What then happened was that all the rich kids left and went to private schools, which increased inequality. Now some of the poorest kids are setting up their own private schools, because standards have fallen so much. So, yes, we are putting more kids into primary education, but actually the standards are worsening.

This is not just me saying it. The independent aid watchdog said that £1 billion went into education in three east African countries but standards did not rise at all, for the same sorts of reason. They said exactly the same about Nigeria. It is easy to trot out these statistics from a department whose only interest is to give away ever bigger sums without ever monitoring effectively how that is being spent and turning a blind eye to unbelievably bad human rights abuses. We should look behind the statistics at the evidence.

It is all much more complex, of course. Is it just about trade? It is not just about trade. We can do many other things, such as the ones that I have highlighted, including dealing with visas and clamping down on corruption where it comes to our shores. But it is part of the equation. The problem is that we have been so blinkered over the last 30 years by this aid

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obsession. To some extent, I think that it is a weird colonial guilt, which has made us end up in a strange form of neo-colonialism today. The legacy of that is that we are missing opportunities. Look at what countries such as Turkey and Brazil are doing in Africa. It is incredible how much they are achieving—it is not just China. Yet we, who used to do more trade with Africa than anyone else, are being left behind because of this obsession with saving Africa through aid.

The Chairman: But is your point, Mr Birrell, that our aid does not work or that the whole principle of trying to improve a nation's reputational position by aid and development programmes is wrong? I am not quite sure. Or is it both?

Ian Birrell: It is both. I think that aid is regressive and does not work and I think that increasingly it is resented and is bad for the British image. So it is both.

Q133 The Chairman: Now Mr Glennie.

Jonathan Glennie: I think that Ian is a brilliant writer and I agree with a lot of what he said just then. I just want to throw in the fact that I wrote a book called *The Trouble with Aid: Why Less Could Mean More for Africa*, not because I want you to read it, although if you wish to it is a very good book, but because I want to demonstrate that I am not sitting here as a mega aid lobbyist. I have criticised aid a lot, but nevertheless my view of Ian's work—I have told him this—is that he is a polemicist. He has a line and he draws all the evidence that he can to follow that line. It is simply not okay to dismiss all the evidence, of which there is a vast amount, that aid has sometimes worked to deliver education and health in many parts of the world. I used to work for Christian Aid. We spent £1 million a year in Colombia. I can verify—Ian will disagree—that that aid meant a lot to the displaced communities in the north of Colombia and the poor women's groups that we worked with in Bogotá. That is one tiny example, but my point is this: aid is very complicated. That is where I agree with Ian. I also agree that there is this big saviour complex. I think that we have totally exaggerated the importance of aid. The tax regime change that Ian is backing is something that we worked on at Christian Aid long before anyone else picked it up. I fully agree with all that stuff, but I do not think that it is okay to say, "All the effort of aid over the last 30 years is nonsense and rubbish". That is just not true. Ian says that everyone resents aid. There is some resentment towards aid, yes. People in government do not like being told what to do and they are quite right not to. A lot of people see the long-term, cumulative effects of aid, which is to do with aid dependency. There is a brilliant book called *Time to Listen*—not written by me. You should look for that. It speaks to a whole bunch of aid receivers, who recognise the good that aid does. They also point out a lot of the problems with aid. That would be my slightly more balanced line.

Q134 The Chairman: I am just going to ask a soothing, moderating question in my proper role as Chairman before we go on with this theme. Building on my original question, do all four of you believe that something has changed? One of the reasons we are here in this Committee is that we have a sense, largely supported by outside opinion, that the conditions of Asia, Africa and Latin America have changed, that the political outlook has changed and that there is a rising not merely economic but intellectual and political power in these nations. They look at Europe as being the cock of the roost for the past few hundred years and they say, "We've had enough of that". Whether you think that aid is patronising and the wrong thing or whether you think it is doing extra work—both propositions are true—are we in completely changed conditions from, say, 30 years ago? Can I have a view on that?

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Phil Vernon: There is a very simple answer to that and it is yes, absolutely. Things have changed massively and are changing. I think that the way you have framed this inquiry is a very interesting way of looking at that issue. I am not here to defend aid. I am not actually here to present the idea that aid is a factor in soft power, but I think that the world has changed and that Britain's role in the world is changing and will continue to change.

The Chairman: So that means that, if we are to do anything at all, we must couch whatever we do—humanitarian development or anything else—in terms that are different from the language of the aid lobbies of 20 or 30 years ago.

Phil Vernon: Absolutely. In a way, I would not be an adherent of the UK's soft power objective. I am a big fan of liberal democracy, but I am not a Whig. As a liberal democracy, we have to admit that this country, which is relatively successful, can make a great contribution to the evolution of other parts of the world in that direction. I think that we have a very attractive set of institutions. Those—I do not necessarily mean Governments—in countries which are developing look to countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States and see things that they like, and they want to see what they can do along the same lines. We are an interesting model—although not a role model—for people to have a look at and learn from, and I think that that is part of the soft power equation. It is not the soft power for the United Kingdom; for me, it is the soft power of peaceful, prosperous and liberal democratic ways of living, for which I have a lot of ambitions for the world in the future.

The Chairman: I have just one more question and then Lord Janvrin and others may wish to come in. Mr Pyman, the word in front of you—"Transparency"—is now central to a lot of our discussion. Ten or 15 years ago it was not much use. Does that fit in with your view that we are dealing with new conditions, new values and new standards around the world?

Mark Pyman: The quick answer is that I do not know. I was not around 30 years ago in this industry, so I cannot give you a 30-year comparison. However, I am just thinking about the work that we do. We work a bit with conflict in poorer states but we work a lot more with countries that are in this rapidly developing environment, such as the Philippines, Indonesia, Colombia and India. We are involved in tackling defence corruption and security corruption. I think that I am in agreement with Phil. These countries are well aware that they are growing quickly, and they are well aware that they are going to outpace the UK by miles, if they have not done so already, but I find a huge appreciation of what the UK has to offer. It is nothing to do with patronising; it is to do with saying, "You've got skills and competences that we want to have from you". I find that sincere and genuine, and I find that it is clearly contributing to what is happening in a particular country. To take an example, Colombia has had huge problems with the guerrillas and narcotics over the past 10 years. They were well aware that one of the reasons they were failing was that the public rightly perceived that the Colombian military and the Colombian MoD seemed to be tied in with both illegal groups—it was perception, if not fact—and we worked with them for some years to try to untangle that. This has nothing to do with patronising or colonialism; they have big, serious and difficult problems, and we are a group that they think can help with those problems. That is what we find in country after country. I do not think of this as something very different from the situation 30 years ago. I think it is to do with providing really competent assistance on problems that quite often dwarf the scale of the UK's problems.

Q135 Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: The common theme coming across is more or less that aid only sometimes works, if then. However, that is not good enough, is it? This is a large sum of British taxpayers' money that we are supposedly using to help

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individuals and communities. There seems to be a thread coming through that the world has indeed changed, yet thinking of the Declaration of Human Rights I am reminded that we are not in 1947 and that many conventions have followed it, sometimes competing with it. Indeed, a common values system can no longer really be found very easily in the United Nations conventions. Coming back to the point about common values—here, we are being instructed that perhaps UK values, such as they are, are ones that people search for from us—would it not be better to have a look at what we are trying to achieve as a nation and to try to see exactly how we can analyse, quantify and determine exactly what we want to achieve as a nation, rather than perhaps as individual departments running in different directions? I feel that no one has yet said what aid actually works. Is it possible that that is because the very word “aid” is now so fuzzy, imprecise and unquantifiable that perhaps no one here can tell us what it really means, let alone which element of it works?

Phil Vernon: I absolutely welcome your question and I completely agree with what is behind it. I have also written something that was published a couple of years ago. I found it very difficult to know whether I was talking about aid, development assistance or simply “processes which make life better for people”. It is quite hard, and I absolutely think that we have to look at what we do as a nation, and indeed as groups of nations that we are part of as well. I do not think that we are alone in this enterprise. A lot of issues come out of what you have said. I work for a smallish NGO. Our annual budget this year is £14 million. I think that we do a heck of a lot with relatively little. You can call what we do aid and you can call DfID giving £100 million to a Government somewhere aid, but they are very different endeavours. Putting everything together, it is easy for Ian to say that aid is wrong. I am sure that he knows as well as any of us that there are very good examples, as well as lots of bad examples.

If I may, I shall give you just a couple of examples of our work that I think do work. We have reported on some of the outcomes in the past year. We have supported interesting new ways of working among political parties in Lebanon. We are doing that not with British support but with Norwegian support. That is aid, if you like. We are, and have been for the past three years, helping members of political parties in Lebanon to discover new ways of working on issues which get them beyond the sectarian differences that they have. It is long, slow work, but we have seen evidence of change there. That is aid.

We have helped local community members to support the resolution of conflicts in the Congo and Kyrgyzstan. In many places we have helped to increase transparency and due care in the way that mining and oil are managed in specific contexts. I could go on but these are examples of actual outcomes with evidence behind them and of changes that have happened. Most cases are not huge; they are relatively small. However, they are all part of what I think is the incremental enterprise of fostering the evolution of change, which is non-linear. You cannot preordain it. Certainly I could not be patronising and sit here and say that in the Congo it is going to change like this. With Congolese colleagues, I can formulate a strategy as to how my organisation, working with others, can support and thrust forward the changes, but I cannot preordain it. No one can preordain how history is going to happen, which is what development actually is. It is a very complicated enterprise that we are talking about here.

The last thing I would say is that it is bound to fail a lot of the time because there is no clear theory of change that one can put out there. One of the mistakes that we sometimes make is to try to over-codify the business of political, social and economic evolution. Sometimes things just happen. I think that the most we can do is to help to create an environment in which things can happen more effectively, whether through capacity, skills, a bit of money,

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capital or improved legal systems. All those sorts of things contribute, but it is definitely down to the nation and not DfID.

Q136 Lord Janvrin: This very much follows on the theme of looking at the promotion of values. You talk about liberal democracy, conflict resolution, transparency and that kind of thing. Mr Vernon, we have been focusing very much on some of your thoughts but I should be interested in hearing from some of the others. Looking five or 10 years ahead, is this the way in which we should be looking at how Britain, if you like, scopes its aid overseas? I am using the word “aid” in very broad terms. Given that a number of you have spoken about the international importance of this—the fact that you work with the Norwegians and so on—is Britain going to get some kind of benefit out of it? Where you are international organisations but are probably seen abroad as British, are you extending our soft power with this sort of international approach? In other words, I am trying to untangle what is in it for Britain—I am sure that some of you may consider that to be the wrong question but I think that you necessarily have to ask it—while, at the same time, promoting international values.

Phil Vernon: Perhaps I may quickly start off on that. I would say three things. The answer to your first question is yes. I think that is the way in which we should be thinking about scoping our support—call it aid or whatever. Secondly, is power accruing to this country? You are familiar with the millennium development goals. They are expiring in 2015 and will not be met. There are lots of reasons for that, and plenty that one can read about. I think it is fair to say that British NGOs and the British Government have been at the forefront—we have been intelligent voices—in shaping the next round of goals which are set to replace the millennium development goals. They are far more interesting than the MDGs. They are not subject/object goals; they are not about us doing things to other people or people “over there” getting a better life. They are supposed to be universal goals. They are an attempt to take the Millennium Declaration, which every country bar one, I think, signed up to in 2000, and convert it into a way of thinking about how change can happen differentially in different contexts and how the richer countries can support those changes. So I think that there is some soft power accruing to us but, as I said earlier, I think that one can only really examine the amount of power one has vis-à-vis a particular goal or end.

Q137 The Chairman: How do we avoid Mr Birrell’s concern, to put it mildly, that in these operations we might be helping undesirable regimes to do nasty things, or, because of an element of “We know best” and “We’ve got wonderful systems and we’d like to share them with you”, that we are being a bit patronising? How do we avoid those pitfalls and maximise the sorts of things that you have talked about? That question is for Mr Glennie.

Jonathan Glennie: Let me try to answer that quickly by saying what aid works. We have heard that a lot of the small aid—civil society-level aid and small interventions—works and I think that there is plenty of evidence of that. In terms of big aid, my line has always been that when you are talking about the cumulative impact of the aid as a small proportion of the recipient country’s overall finances—in other words, it is 30% or 40% of a country’s finances over a 20 or 30-year period, and that is the experience of many countries, especially in Africa—then I would argue that we are talking about the kind of analysis that Ian has given. A lot of very poor countries such as Rwanda and Liberia are seeking to reduce their aid dependency over time, and I think that that means that they can continue to use aid much more effectively, rather than just finish up with aid. How do we avoid the negative impacts? Life and history are complex. If you can take aid totally out of the equation, you still have Britain, America, China and a whole bunch of other countries supporting nefarious regimes. It has little to do with aid. Aid is one tool in the armoury of countries that sometimes want

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to support democracy and sometimes want to totally undermine democracy for their own interests. That is just life.

On whether we are working as a nation or working as DfID and other ministries, that is an interesting question. I can see the argument that says we should all be working together to achieve a similar objective. In our trade that is known as policy coherence—a nebulous term. Phil mentioned the 2015 goals. Those are going to be under the framework of sustainable development. The whole idea is that everything comes together in a kind of Utopic, wonderful new world. There obviously is a case for everyone working together, but at the same time it is quite unlikely that that is going to happen. I can sit here saying that I do not really believe in putting forward British interests and that I think we should be trying to seed interests in favour of the poorest of the world, but I also understand politics. So there is something to be said—and this was the great genius of setting up DfID—for having a champion for the poorest within government. The MoD and the FCO are always going to have slightly separate objectives. DfID has had different objectives. There is a story that Tony Blair told in a speech that he was giving to the ODI. I think he said that he was visiting Sierra Leone. He was speaking to some of the DfID people there and he asked, “How does it feel to work for the Government?”. This particular person said, “I don’t work for the British Government; I work for DfID”. Certainly in the early years, there was a very strong sense that DfID was specifically set up in order to champion causes that the overall British Government—quite understandably, because they are meant to represent the interests of the British people—might not champion in the same way. I just share that thought with you.

Q138 The Chairman: Mr Birrell, it is your turn, and then we will hear from Mr Pyman.

Ian Birrell: I think that spinning out DfID was one of the biggest mistakes that Tony Blair’s Government made, and there are a lot to choose from. All that has happened is that budgets have got bigger and bigger and bigger, and it has completely usurped the Foreign Office when it comes to foreign policy. It is driven not by any ideas of British interest but totally by the idea of giving away ever larger sums of money with ever fewer checks.

Going back to other questions about universal values, I think that there are universal values that we should uphold. The problem is that we do not uphold them. We talk about aid but you should look at what is happening with aid going to Rwanda. This is a country which has been accused time and again of ripping off minerals from the Congo, of invading the Congo and of provoking a war which has killed more people than any conflict since World War II. Scotland Yard has said that Rwanda has sent hit squads to kill British citizens in Britain. We gave aid to the Media High Council, which stopped independent newspapers being allowed to exist. We gave aid to the body which stopped rivals standing against a President who won the election by an absurd amount. We pour money into Rwanda, despite the fact that it has absolutely appalling human rights issues. I think that that symbolises exactly what has gone wrong with our aid. We talk about universal values and then display complete contempt for them. There is also Ethiopia. I have just come back from talking to people who are suing the British Government because they are among 4 million people being thrown off their land by a one-party state, which is effectively guilty of Stalinist practices. It is totally authoritarian. Again, we are giving money to officials from a one-party regime which is throwing people off the land, which is then sold to people abroad—outside investors—or given to people from the tribe which is running the Government. Again, in Ethiopia, just as in Rwanda and elsewhere, British taxpayers’ money is going on abhorrent human rights abuses, which have nothing to do with universal values which we, as a nation, should uphold and which I personally hold dear.

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I shall give you just one other case, which is Somaliland. It has been quoted in an economics paper in Stanford. Because it was not recognised, it got virtually no aid. After a civil war which left the entire country destroyed, the main capital, Hargeisa, was flattened. Most people fled into exile and then had to come back to a country which had absolutely nothing in it in probably the hottest corner of the world, given its location. Then, because it got no aid, Somaliland had no option but to build its own country, its own tax system and its own democratic institutions. They got together and, without any help from outside organisations in conflict resolution, democracy-building, good governance or anything like that, they got on and built a fantastic political system with two Houses—one democratically elected and the other based on a traditional system of elders. It took a lot of sitting around with the big conquerors to work out how to do it but, as a result, they have had elections which have gone to under 100 votes, and they have handed over power quite peacefully. That is a complete model for a country building under its own steam and without outside help. They take incredible pride in what they have done and in what they have achieved. There is even a fantastic maternity hospital, which is now exporting to other parts in the area. They have done it all themselves and they believe that they did it because they do not get aid.

Unfortunately, we are now beginning to see corruption because aid groups are moving in there, but I think that Somaliland—a country even in a place such as that with as unprepossessing a set of circumstances as that—has shown that it has managed to create something which in many ways is a model in terms of tax-raising and particularly in terms of governance. It is such a contrast to Somalia, which is just down below and has had a terrible history in recent years.

Q139 The Chairman: Mr Pyman, would you like to add anything to that?

Mark Pyman: I want to make a few slightly different points. First, Baroness Nicholson talked about achieving things as a nation rather than as DfID. In the world in which we work, which is security anti-corruption and defence anti-corruption, DfID has quite a good name. One reason is that it has worked quite hard to make things work across government departmental divides. For all its bureaucratic faults, it has the Stabilisation Unit, which operates across FCO, DfID and MoD. It is just a bureaucratic thing, but most other Governments that I speak to are hugely envious of such cross government working, because they are much more stovepiped than the UK. I think that there is a positive angle there.

The second point that I would like to make is about defining what is soft power. If I think about the analogy with the concept of 'corruption' 30 years ago, absolutely everyone had an opinion on what it was and what the remedy was. It has taken 20 or so years before the understanding of the subject has got to a sufficient depth that you can really disaggregate corruption for different countries or different environments and move to solutions. My sense is that soft power is in the same state today, and that it is going to be five or 10 years before people have a real understanding of it. It is currently the vehicle for too many of our wishes for UK influence, which I do not think is a very effective starting point.

To think about DfID in five to 10 years' time, DfID's statutory obligation is to eradicate poverty. If I remember my statistics, most poor people in terms of numbers are in places such as China, Indonesia and India; in other words, they are not in the poorest and most fragile countries - the Rwandas, the Burundis, the Haitis and the Timor-Lestes of this world. Either its priorities are somewhat in the wrong direction or it is a wrong statement of priority. I do not quite know the answer to that, but it is not quite what you expect. If India and China are where DfID should be putting its money to match the objective of eradicating most poverty, then something is wrong with the objective.

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My third point is a very small example of benefit to the UK. My team works a lot in Ukraine, with the security services and the defence environment. Not only is it a hugely corrupt nation with huge corruption problems, but a major reason why a lot of people are poor is all the abuses by the defence and security system. Even though there is limited political will at the top to do anything about this problem, there is a huge body of well meaning people in the heart of the security and defence apparatus who really want to see this problem get better. They hugely appreciate the kind of input that folk like us are giving them, to the tune of training thousands of senior officers and things like that. Phil put this in the context of small civil society things and maybe it is in that category but, to me, in terms of the influence that the UK directly gains from that, it is very tangible in a nation that has a long-term strategic interest for the UK.

My fourth point—and here I agree with what Ian said a little while ago—is that one of the problems with lots of aid is that corruption always comes with it. It is very hard for it not to. The aid agencies mostly have a pretty bad record at putting strong measures in place to limit that corruption. DfID is by no means the worst of them, but I think that this is an area where one can do a lot better. The other side of that is that the UK is, as Ian says, a centre for laundering huge amounts of corrupt cash. DfID does a bit about that; it funds the Metropolitan Police unit that deals with proceeds of crime from overseas—I cannot remember what it is called. It also funds a couple of similar units. But this is very small indeed. In terms of contributing to Britain’s image overseas, Britain as a whole could be 10 times stronger on this subject and have a lot more influence worldwide.

Finally, on the corruption story, the subject is so prevalent in almost all aid environments that it means not that you do not give aid but that you are a great deal more careful about how you give it, to whom you give it and what the conditions are with it. Awareness of that is much higher now after all the dramas of Afghanistan than it was 10 or 15 years ago.

The Chairman: Thank you very much. We have talked about whether aid is an investment and whether there is a return. Lord Forsyth, would you like to ask questions on that?

Q140 Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Just before I pick up on your point, Mr Pyman, when you say that there is a lot more we can do about Belgravia and Chelsea being in darkness because of all this money, what specifically do you think we should be doing?

Mark Pyman: There are various relatively small initiatives for chasing the proceeds of illegally gotten assets. DfID has a very small initiative and the World Bank has one, but in terms of being ready to go after people where you think the money has come into this country illegally and corruptly, investigations and prosecutions is the short answer to your question, as well as the resources to enable that to happen.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Are you saying that we are dragging our feet on that?

Mark Pyman: Yes.

Ian Birrell: I just want to add a tiny thing to that. There is quite a contrast with France. The French have recently cracked down on three countries where very obvious theft of assets was going on. They have taken quite strong action against the rulers and their families, including prosecuting them and stripping them of assets. That is quite a contrast with how little we have done in this country.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Okay. Just going back to this aid question, I sat for many months on a different Select Committee of this House—the Economic Affairs Committee—when we looked at development aid. One thing that struck me during that inquiry was that we had former officials from DfID saying to us, “We can’t spend the money quickly enough”.

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Therefore, if people are spending money without clear objectives and clear methods of measurement, you are going to get waste and damage. The impact of that was huge distortions in the local wage economy and huge distortions on tax collection and so on. We are here not really to look at the merits of development aid as such but rather to look at it in the context of soft power. What I find quite difficult to grasp is that, if people argue that aid helps with soft power, when one asks how we can measure that and what are the examples—and listening to the diverse opinions from the four of you today—it tends to be asserted, “Actually, we’ve done great things in this or that country”. But it is difficult to get metrics that enable us to quantify whether it adds to soft power or makes no difference to soft power. Mr Glennie gave me the impression from his evidence that he does not really care whether it affects soft power or not, because he sees it as something that we should do regardless of Britain’s interest. But this Committee is looking at soft power, so is aid actually helping with soft power? If so, how can we measure the effectiveness of the benefits of it both in the short term and the long term, and are we doing it?

Phil Vernon: Yes, that is the 56 something or other dollar question, I think—

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: It is \$11 billion, actually.

Phil Vernon: I think that the answer is probably that we cannot yet. This is the nub of the problem, I think. Turn back the clock 30 years. Aid was pretty simple. It was about building roads in places where we do not have roads. It was a very basic equation of investment in this in order to allow the possibility of that. Now, as we have peeled different layers of that onion over the decades, we have seen more and more of the complexity of what it means to—and I like to use this word—evolve, politically, economically and socially. I would say that I have learnt that it is virtually impossible to know exactly how to measure that. Not only that, but we will not know for some time.

Let me take the example of Rwanda as a way of throwing into sharp relief the challenge. Nobody would doubt that, if one could contribute to central Africa being a better place for its citizens, that would be a good endeavour and a good thing to do—“good” and “better” according to the values that we talked about earlier. The problem is: what is the historical process through which the people of central Africa might achieve that more prosperous, more peaceful life? We cannot know; we can only posit. Take Paul Kagame, the President of Rwanda. One can look at him and his Government and say, “This is a corrupt, evil, et cetera Government that is stamping on people’s rights. We should definitely not support him or anything that he is involved with”. One could say, as he does—and I do not know the answer to this; I have worked in Rwanda myself, but I do not know the answer—that he has a good idea of how his country, which he knows better than we do, might evolve. He believes in some sort of values as we do but, a bit like St Augustine, not yet, because he does not think that the country is ready for it yet. So he is trying to shape the future of his country, which will be more in line with our values. If you are the British Government or a British NGO thinking about whether to try to provide support to those historical processes that have yet to unfold in Rwanda and its part of the world, I think that you have a judgment to make. It cannot be a judgment made on the basis of science; it has to be more of an arts judgment. It is, “Do we think that by allying ourselves with those people who are in power currently in Kigali and in that country we can help them to create the possibility of a better future for the people of that country now and in the future, as well as in the region?” It is a judgment. The metrics are too difficult and we will be dead before it is clear. So it is a bit of an article of faith.

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Q141 Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: But just to give you an example, and I shall probably get into trouble for saying this, I remember that a couple of years ago, when Andrew Mitchell was in charge of DfID, he wrote me a letter asking whether I would like to come to Rwanda for three weeks to help to paint a school. I thought, “What a ridiculous proposal”. I am sure that, to improve things in Rwanda, there are better ways of inputting the cost of me going there for three weeks to paint a school. I completely understood why a project like that might be helpful to the Government or to Britain’s image, but I did not know whether it would be helpful to Rwanda. Did it represent a sensible way of using resources? I had my doubts, so I did not accept his invitation. What I am trying to get to the bottom of is this. My perspective is that we should not be spending scarce resources unless we know that they are going to advance our interest or that of another country and we can see the benefit. How are we meant to progress, given the sums involved? If this is justified on the grounds of soft power, where is the evidence?

Phil Vernon: It is a big challenge, and I would say that we cannot know for sure the answer to that question. It is something that will take time. What I would say, going back to the question about whether it is a British or a DfID thing, is that if one chooses to invest one’s scarce resources in that place that I was talking about, one needs to accompany the investment of the money with people of the highest and most astute political calibre. It is not a technical investment; it is very much a political investment that one is making. So if one goes for that and one decides to invest those scarce resources in the ideas and the projects of the Government of Rwanda, one has to do it with one’s eyes wide open, create a genuine political partnership and take the risks that go with that.

Jonathan Glennie: I think, with respect, Lord Forsyth, that possibly you were not invited for your painting skills; more probably, it was an opportunity for you to experience life in Rwanda rather than for you to help with building a school. That, I think, is relevant when we look at the kind of approach that we take to aid. This is where I disagree with Ian. I agree with the use of soft power when it promotes, as I said, positive values—not when it promotes our own interests, which is not something that I am particularly concerned with. With regard to Rwanda, I think that it is useful to have people who know deeply about Rwanda. I do not agree that Britain should simply cut off ties with all countries. I presume that Ian also means trading ties, by the way. There is no reason why one should cut aid and continue to trade with these heinous human rights abusers, so presumably there would be trade sanctions as well, in which case why are we trading with China? Why are we trading with the United States, a heinous human rights abuser? There are all sorts of other countries, too. We do so because engagement is often—not always—as good a thing as cutting all ties. Aid is part of that. Knowing about the country deeply and politically is a crucial part of answering your question, which is how we know whether we are making any difference. It is incredibly complicated. It would be great to have some clear evidence. New ways are emerging—the famous randomised control trials—that demonstrate which aid interventions are really working and which are not. It is a kind of social-scientific analysis. The reality is that, with these big investments, we do not know. Where is the evidence in Britain that a huge investment in whatever it is, perhaps the big railway, will—

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Exactly.

Jonathan Glennie: Fine, but where is the evidence? Maybe that is a terrible example and everyone disagrees with it, but sometimes the British Government make big investments on the basis of some evidence and there is a huge disagreement about it. There is politics involved. Indeed, in aid there are huge disagreements about which aid has worked and which aid has not worked. Ultimately, it is an analysis of the evidence and a balance of it. I do not

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believe that we will ever come to a stage where there is clear evidence one way or the other. It is partly an art.

I have a thought on the Chinese way of doing things. We have just had a Chinese delegation over in ODI. This is a simplistic way of putting it, but the Chinese way of doing it is to assess the impact of their output. In other words, when they have built the road, they assess whether the road is any good. That is a much easier thing to do than the task that DfID sets itself, which is not to assess whether the road is any good but to assess whether the road has had an impact on reducing poverty, increasing economic growth and supporting women's rights—all those important outcomes, to use the technical language, that we really care about. That is really, really hard to check. DfID quite rightly sets itself a hard task. We will always be in this mire of, "It is not clear on the evidence". My point is that we have the money to give aid. I do not think that we should be cutting aid on the basis that we are poor.

Q142 The Chairman: Did you say that we have the money?

Jonathan Glennie: Of course we have the money. We have huge amounts of money compared with the rest of the world and these countries that we are talking about.

My final point—and this agrees with what Ian and Lord Forsyth have been saying—is that we always end up talking about aid, thinking that it is the big thing, but if I was to make a list of 10 issues that Britain needs to focus on to increase poverty and to increase sustainable development around the world, and therefore to support soft power, if that is something that is a concern, aid would be down there at No. 10, possibly. It is not unimportant, but it is not as important as sorting out our tax regime, reducing our climate change emissions, sorting out the arms trade, making sure that our businesses are properly regulated or promoting human rights, which since the financial crisis we are doing less than we previously did, because we are more concerned supposedly with British interests. Those are the kind of things that we should be focusing on, not just aid.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Just to be clear about this, are you saying that aid is 10th on the list as far as soft power is concerned? Are you saying that it does not matter?

Jonathan Glennie: What I am concerned about is the impact that we have on poverty reduction, where, yes, aid is 10th on the list.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: In terms of soft power.

Jonathan Glennie: I do not know. You were quite right when you said that I am not that interested in increasing Britain's soft power. I am an internationalist; I think that Britain's relative power needs to decrease over time and that other countries should become richer and more powerful.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: I got that.

Jonathan Glennie: That means that we are going to become relatively less powerful, which in my view is progress. It may not be from the perspective of people on this Committee, but it may actually be—

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: But are you saying that aid is No. 10 on a list of soft power or are you saying that it is No. 10 on your personal internationalist list?

Jonathan Glennie: I am saying that if Britain really wants to help to eradicate poverty from the world and to support the structural transformation required so that we develop sustainably without ruining the world, aid comes down to about 10th on the list of things that we need to do. You can relate that to soft power as you wish.

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The Chairman: We must press on. I know that Baroness Nicholson wants to come in, but we have very little time.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Could we just hear Mr Birrell answer the question, Lord Chairman?

Ian Birrell: Just very briefly, while we are talking about Rwanda, I will quote the former head of Britain's aid programme in Rwanda. He said: "It is difficult to describe how surreal the industry begins to feel after you have worked in Africa. It's certainly the least effective major public sector funded by Western taxpayers". It just seems to me bizarre that people who profess to have concern for the developing world think that it is absolutely fine to carry out some kind of giant social experiment on other parts of the world, which is really what everyone is admitting that the aid game is.

Q143 The Chairman: I want to press on because we want to ask you briefly about working with other organisations around the world. Lord Janvrin, you have a question.

Lord Janvrin: Yes. It picks up quite a lot of the theme of what we have been saying. However internationalist you are, are you actually identified as a British organisation, however labelled, or can you somehow stand above that label by working with others? Mr Vernon, you mentioned the Norwegians. I am back on the theme that if an organisation, which may be labelled international but is seen to be British, is promoting international values, some benefit accrues to this country. It is part of what I think soft power is about, which is projecting values. Do those of you who are looking at some of these international benchmarks, whether it be in transparency or in other fields, think that there is a British benefit to it?

Mark Pyman: From the point of view of my organisation, Transparency International, the answer is yes, definitely. Sometimes we speak worldwide on corruption purely as an international organisation. I lead the defence and security programme worldwide out of London, and in every country we are in people say, "Ah now, is that because you're British?"—brackets for laughter at some of our defence scandals over the past few years. Leaving that to one side, it connects very directly with the question of whether they think that the origin of this particular initiative comes from Britain or not. That is seen in a positive light. So I think that, for us, the answer is a very distinct "yes".

Phil Vernon: I would say it is not something for us. We are a British organisation. We work in 25 or 26 countries and there are about 210 of us. I think I am right in saying that we have 50 nationalities working in the organisation. Most people probably do not even see us as British, even though the headquarters are in London. In some circumstances, we prefer not to be seen as British. If I take the Lebanon example, personally I am not associated with that work but I am told by my colleagues that it is quite handy that our funding there is neither British nor American, and that to some extent we can be Norwegian in that context; it makes life a bit easier for us. We made a decision, which our board of trustees debated and agreed with, not to work in Afghanistan on the basis that, as a British NGO, we would be seen as part of the occupying forces. So sometimes we see ourselves as more British and sometimes as less so, but I cannot put my finger on what has accrued to Britain because of our work.

However, I would say that success creates legitimacy and that he or she who is successful gets associated with that success. Where we have made a positive difference and where people see that we are a British NGO, that cannot be bad for Britain, but we do not make a big deal of it.

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The Chairman: It does not help or hinder that we are a member of the European Union or part of the Commonwealth family? Do either of those issues come into your work at all?

Mark Pyman: Not for us.

Ian Birrell: The only thing I would add, if I may wear my cultural hat for a second rather than my polemicist hat, is that culture is obviously a huge part of British soft power, with the creative industries being so strong. Part of the reason for that now is the diverse nature of British society, and particularly London, but it is very, very hard to continue down that path when it is so hard for foreign performers outside Europe to come to Britain to work. You might be an African musician trying to get a visa to come to this country. If you are in, say, Mali, where a lot of them are at the moment, first you have to send your passport to Dakar. You might be summoned to an interview in Dakar and your passport and your details then go to Accra in Ghana. You can be without a passport for two or three weeks, and that stops you working. It costs more than it costs to get a visa for Schengen and, at the end of it, you might not get the visa anyway because of such paranoia about immigration issues.

Those things are not unique, and it makes it very, very hard for, say, a band of 10 or 15 people to come to Britain, where they are not going to earn much money given the state of the music industry. If we are trying to push our soft power, which I think we should, one of the things we should be looking at is how to make it easier for businesspeople, performers and people like that who want to come and work with British businesses and British artistic troupes to get visas. At the moment it is very, very hard, and that is going to have a long-term impact as these countries grow very fast and become richer. Actually, our artists need to get there. At the moment their artists are not coming here or they are going to play or tour in a Schengen area where they need only one visa and it costs less, or they will go to America. If I may, I should like to prompt the Committee to have a further look at the whole issue of visa requirements. I am not saying that you need to abandon them, but it needs to be made easier for people with quite prominent names in some of these industries to come and work here.

The Chairman: That is a common theme that has come up with many of our witnesses.

Q144 Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbots: Can I raise one point? I understand what you are saying about particular groups, but equally you have been suggesting that what these countries now need is not the ability to build a road but a much more sophisticated emergence of middle-class, politicised individuals. Is Britain's soft power helped or hindered by the fact that we often permanently recruit people to come and serve here in our National Health Service? We recruit nurses. I am told that the NHS has recruited in Malawi and that there are 330 nurses for 12 million people in Malawi. Does that help? It helps us here—I understand that—but does it help our soft power?

Ian Birrell: I refer you to a report by Michael Clemens at the Center for Global Development. He looked at this issue and found that their staff coming here is actually very beneficial to the countries concerned and that the idea that we are stealing their staff is all a bit of a myth. What happens is that a lot of them go back from here much better trained. They send back remittances and it makes it a more attractive industry. The Philippines is of course the best example of this. But actually it is a complete myth and it merits further looking at.

Jonathan Glennie: Just on that last point, I agree that Michael Clemens's work has thrown up some interesting questions about this, but I think that it would be dangerous just to

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dismiss the whole brain-drain problem as a myth. It could well be a problem, although I do not know the answer.

Ian Birrell: The other point is that surely people have a right to go where they want. If people want to go somewhere, who are you to comment? Would you tell a doctor in Birmingham that they could not go and work in Glasgow because it might not be good for people in Birmingham? Surely people have a right to travel where they want and to work where they want.

Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts: I would say two things. First of all, do I have a right to say to a doctor from India on a visa, “At the end of it, you’re finished. You go back.”? All I am saying is that physical geography does apply some constraints on us. It is an acknowledged fact that England is now more densely populated than the Netherlands and that our population is going to increase by the equivalent of 14 cities the size of Manchester in the next 12 years. So that does something for us. I am not quite sure what it does for our soft power but there is a public policy issue there.

Ian Birrell: I am very happy to get into the immigration debate, where I suspect I have different views from you, but I do not think that that is necessarily what the Chairman wants.

Q145 The Chairman: I do not think that we want to get into that. Baroness Nicholson, you want to talk about how these gentlemen and their work comes up with the grimmer aspects of nation-building and development that we have seen in recent years.

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: Yes. The problem with some of the answers that we have heard—and they have been very interesting indeed—is that there is no real commonality, except to say more or less that aid is not working other than in small doses and in very small elements, which runs counter to the view of multilateral aid and Britain’s enormous amount of aid going that way. What about the concept of aid used as capacity-building and institution-building? At the moment, I am really only interested in the reference to “official aid”. I do not really think that it is any of our business what private aid does. It is the official aid flows that I think we are really interested in. How can those be used in terms of Britain’s overall goals of capacity-building and institution-building in order to provide unstable nations that could be a danger to us with greater stability and perhaps more investment either in Britain or vice versa? How can overseas aid be used, if at all, for that?

Jonathan Glennie: Another part of your question concerned whether we should be including private aid in our purview. I wanted to reply to the point about our relations and to the question about capacity-building. I do not know what we mean by private aid but I think that NGOs should be included within the purview of this Committee. In so far as soft power relates to Britain’s brand and reputation, I think that the work of British NGOs is absolutely integral to that.

Q146 Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: I beg your pardon. Could I quickly interrupt on a point of accuracy? By private aid, I meant personal donations. Britain is the second highest personal donor on the globe, and that is money that people can give to be used in any way they want. I am talking about taxpayer money, whoever uses it. It can be used by NGOs. At the moment, a huge amount of it goes via DfID to Governments, where it is non-accountable. It cannot be traced and we do not know what happens to it, as reports from the House of Commons consistently tell us and as our own evidence shows. So it is the unaccountable, non-transferable use of official aid that is a major concern of mine—and, I am sure, of others as well. You have all identified to your satisfaction, although perhaps

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possibly not Ian, that small aid can be used effectively for the direct reduction of poverty in small doses, but the vast amount of official aid is not used in that way any longer. It was until about 1997 and then there was a big shift in DfID. It now goes straight to Governments, which, as Transparency International tells us, are self-evidently corrupt. Also, a huge amount goes through sub-contracting, sub-contracting and sub-contracting to very large NGOs, which gives rise to comments such as, “We’ve got to get rid of money fast”, because perhaps the public want it.

Ian Birrell: You have sort of answered your own question there, have you not? The truth is that capacity-building is as much of a sham as a lot of the other aid lobby work, as we have seen so spectacularly in Afghanistan, where there are unbelievable amounts of money pouring out in suitcases to Dubai and helping the Dubai property boom. We see it in Pakistan, and yet DfID is ramping up the amount of money being given to Pakistan, despite the fact—I think it is correct to say—that not one politician bothers to pay taxes there. Only 2 million people do in a country of how ever many it is. I cannot remember how many. Is it 900 million? The truth is that capacity-building is just the latest fad within the aid world. When it is done through the multilateral bodies, all that happens is that they often tend, like the EU, to have administration levels which would not be accepted in Britain. If DfID gave money directly to aid groups, the administration costs would be higher. Of course, a lot of the EU money goes to places such as Turkey to help their accession, so that is another part of our aid budget. This capacity-building is just a complete sham. It goes through lots of hands to get there. Very little reaches the ground, and what does reach the ground is often just endless talking shops. When I was in Kenya, someone told me that they could live off the PDs they were being offered to go to a conference every single day, often in the 4 and 5-star hotels of Mombassa. It is capacity-building for the charities; it is not capacity-building for the countries.

Phil Vernon: I am very sceptical about huge dollops of money being given to Governments that are not yet accountable to their people—not only not accountable to these taxpayers here but not accountable to their people. Let me take a country such as Uganda, where I worked for five years several years ago now. If we the British taxpayer, through the Government, want Uganda to become more democratic, there is a serious logical flaw in the idea that we should provide the money. We know that the basic idea of democracy is that taxation and representation go together, so there is a serious flaw in that argument, and I am as sceptical as Ian is on that. I think that most of us would be. However, I can accept that there is a long-term view that this is part of a process in which things will get better and we have to accept that there is a leakage during the initial period. I am not saying I agree with it but I can accept that that view does exist. It is the World Bank’s view and it is probably DfID’s view, or it was.

In several places where I have worked I have seen another kind of capacity-building which is really inspiring. This is where money flows from the likes of DfID, the US Government and others and from private donations to local NGOs and local organisations providing services in education, health and economic development—you name it. The places that I am talking about are where I have worked and they are all in Africa. You do not really have a policy dialogue. Policy is about cutting the cake. It is about who is in government, who is going to spend the money and whether you have some money. So there is not really a dialogue about which is the best policy—this policy or that policy—to provide better education for our children.

My aspiration would be that that policy dialogue should come about, and I have seen it happen. How? I have seen NGOs which have been given funding of relatively small amounts

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of money by the likes of the UK. I have seen some of the leaders of those NGOs get deeply frustrated about the fact that the policy environment within which they are working stops them being able to achieve what they are trying to achieve, which is better health outcomes, better patient outcomes and so on. They have become politicised, and I have seen some of them go into public life as politicians. So I think that there is capacity-building of a different kind, although, again, it is much harder to plan for. By spreading some of the British taxpayers' money relatively thinly—because it is not a huge amount of money—through projects of national NGOs in some of the countries we are talking about, a certain number of those leaders become politicised and they get into policy debates and start to change things.

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: But I thought that the purpose of DfID was to conquer poverty.

Phil Vernon: Well, I would go back Mark's point, with which I agree. I think that DfID's mandate is not completely correct and I think that you would find that most people who work for DfID, probably including the Ministers, would agree with that.

Jonathan Glennie: I would love to live in the world that I believe Ian inhabits, where everything is black and white, where capacity-building is a sham and where aid is a total disaster. I live in this really annoying world, where there is mixed evidence and the world is complex, where sometimes capacity-building has transformed a situation and sometimes it has been a complete sham and where sometimes budget support has really worked and sometimes it has not. I do not believe that there is evidence that suggests that budget support is less effective than other forms of aid going around the Government—I do not think that that evidence exists. Sometimes budget support works and sometimes it does not, but it is certainly more risky in one sense, in terms of fiduciary risk. As we are looking at aid effectiveness and value for money, I would like to share with this with the Committee. If you are just looking at fiduciary risk—the risk of money going astray—you can put down all the accountants you want, you can micromanage every penny and you can not devolve any power over decision-making. But all the evidence—30 or 40 years of research into this—suggests that when you do not allow aid recipients to take control of the money, you are less likely to achieve your objectives. We can minimise loss, but we are still wasting the money, even though I can account for every penny, because it does not achieve the development objectives. We have to take risks in aid and we have to take risks in relationships with Governments.

Q147 Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: Is there not a difference between control and accountability? To have transparency in expenditure is different from who controls it.

Jonathan Glennie: You have to focus on accountability as much as you can, but you cannot just have a total clampdown on who controls the money. The minute you allow other people to engage in that control, you also cede control of the accounting. That is what has happened in budget support.

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: But control and accountability are not the same thing. You can give someone control and you can still put in full accountability in auditing.

Jonathan Glennie: The problem is when they do not account for it. Of course, all those things are in place. When we give money to Uganda, they are expected to account for every penny. It is not like giving; they are expected to account for it and to show how it has gone. What happens when they do not? That is the question. Does Britain just say, "Oh well, leave

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it then”? Or does it say, “Actually, aid is a risky business and life is complicated sometimes”? This sounds absolutely terrible and you are the ones who will have to relay it to the British public, not me. I understand that.

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: So what percentage of official British aid from the taxpayer do you feel should be non-accountable and non-transparent?

Jonathan Glennie: I believe that something like 75% of private—

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: No, official aid.

Jonathan Glennie: Just a minute—this is my analogy. I believe that something like 75% of private venture capital is wasted, but 25% makes a mega change. I think that we have to move slowly towards that approach within aid. It is really hard to do, because this is British taxpayers’ money. But unless we do that, we will not make it effective. If every penny in every pound has to be accounted for and has to be effective, it is not going to happen and it is an unfortunate way to approach very complicated problems. We have to accept waste—not waste, but we have to accept that things will be lost, just as venture capitalists accept that 75%—

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: Why?

Jonathan Glennie: Because sometimes you invest in something risky that is really going to make a difference and it does not work. You have to allow aid programmers that leeway, saying, “Go and do what you think is right”. It may not work, but that is exactly what venture capitalists do.

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: Is that not what is known as corruption by Transparency International?

Jonathan Glennie: No, not at all. I am talking about giving money to—

The Chairman: I think that we must move on, as we have two more questions. Do you want to just answer that, Mr Pyman?

Mark Pyman: No, I do not think that it is the same. Let us take the example of budget aid to Afghanistan, for example, leaving aside some of the horror stories. In the years after 2004, the Finance Ministry became quite competent. Could the UK give a bunch of money to the Afghan Finance Ministry and have them be very clear about what the money was doing and where it was going? At the time, it could. So was it non-accountable and non-transparent?

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: Unaudited by outsiders?

Mark Pyman: That I do not remember, but I think you could perfectly well demand that it be audited by outsiders. The other example from my memory was when they were giving budget aid to the Liberians, where actually the way that they achieved accountability was to require dual signatures in each of the departments, as a way of being extremely clear as to how the money was being disbursed, department by department. So yes, some of it would still have been wasted—to take up the point from my left here—but actually I think that was a very strong example of accountability within giving on-budget aid. “It is possible” is the answer to your question.

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: Your definition of waste, therefore—are you meaning that it would be misspent in terms of the particular objective of the programme? What I am searching for is accountability and auditing, which is something different. You can perfectly well spend the money the wrong way, if you like it, but it will still exactly validate precisely how everything has been spent. What is your definition of waste in that context?

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Mark Pyman: The first one that you were saying, so you spend it on an objective and it happens—

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: But you can still account for it.

Mark Pyman: Absolutely, yes.

Q148 The Chairman: But you cannot pin it all down, as Mr Glennie was rightly telling us. Just one final question on this section: have any of you worked with the military?

Mark Pyman: Yes, I work a lot with the military.

The Chairman: We have had military witnesses before us saying that the military in modern forms of low-intensity warfare and post conflict have a role to play in all this. Is that your view?

Mark Pyman: Yes, it is. It is subject to all sorts of limitations, because they clearly cannot and should not be the lead player on this. Where would I start? Let me give you an example, and maybe it is a bad example in reply to your question, but let me try it anyway. We have been involved in Afghanistan for about five or six years. We have been making a noise since the beginning that says that corruption is not being taken seriously as an issue by almost anyone. The one body that has picked it up and said, “Actually, you were right and nobody is doing it properly, so we’ll see if we can do something about it”, is the military, and they actually put a string of measures in place to try to address corruption issues. They are not doing particularly well, inevitably, because it is 10 years after the conflict started, but they identified that they needed to be doing something in this area in order to give the intervention in Afghanistan any chance of success.

There is an example where the military came in rather reluctantly, but actually I think they have had rather a useful impact on this subject. I think if you are in an environment of post-conflict stabilisation, where usually the No. 1 issue is the police—who look an awful lot like the military in an awful lot of developing countries—then police and/or security force and/or military training to those police forces and security forces is absolutely one of the preconditions of stabilisation. That would be an example where I think it is completely essential.

The Chairman: That is useful. That is helpful. Mr Glennie?

Jonathan Glennie: When I was in Colombia, the British Government was providing human rights training to the Colombian military. I do not believe it was aid money as such; I think it probably came from the Foreign Office. Whether we were right or wrong, our line as British NGOs was that that should not happen—not because we thought that it was not being effective. It is a bit similar to what Ian was saying about Rwanda, I suppose. This military was indicted and implicated in very, very serious human rights abuses. That is why they were receiving human rights training. The question was whether this training was actually going to help, or whether it was providing a fig leaf and allowing them to say, “Look, we’re having human rights training” and then just continuing, which I think was our view at the time. That is the kind of conundrum that we had.

The Chairman: Yes. Quickly, Mr Vernon.

Phil Vernon: Very quickly, and bringing it back to the soft power question: I am slightly out of date, but I think what the British Armed Forces did in Sierra Leone—I do not mean the military intervention but the many years of security sector reform which we supported there through training and other capacity-building means—so far has been a success. I think in terms of maintaining some influence, if you are talking about soft power in that part of the

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world, it has been a good thing for the UK. If I compare that with the way that the United States has supported security sector reform in neighbouring Liberia, any objective observer would say we did a better job and our reputation would be better because of it. It was done in a very opaque way in quasi-military companies by the Americans, and it was done in a much more open way using the British armed services largely, and police as well, in Sierra Leone.

Q149 The Chairman: Finally, Lord Hodgson: just a final question on the other big aid givers—Japan, Saudi Arabia and so on.

Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts: We have touched on various other countries that have become major aid givers in our earlier conversations—China, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Germany. What are the consequences for our foreign policy for our soft power reputation if they are to overtake us in quantum, approach or ability? Or should we just say, “Well, we’re a small country and that is the way it is”?

Ian Birrell: I think it is a sign of the changing world that countries like India, Brazil and Turkey are becoming such players in this world. I think it diminishes the impact of British aid. Obviously, hopefully, it might diminish it a little bit more. It is interesting. Again, there are lessons that can be learned, because of course Chinese aid, which is often very heavily criticised, is done in a very different way to the way western aid is given. They see it as a way of trying to raise countries out of poverty in the same way as they have brought so many people out of poverty at home, and they try and transplant some of the techniques there—sometimes successfully, sometimes very unsuccessfully. Often it is done through loans which have to be repaid out of natural resource earnings, so it is quite a different approach. I think in some ways it is often more successful, because it is much more sort of mechanical and trade-based, but obviously going alongside it are all sorts of environmental and political issues.

Ultimately it is surely about learning from them and accepting that that is the changing world. But it does also mean, of course, that the aid industry is growing bigger and bigger all the time. I think it makes it even more a dangerous and unaccountable force in these countries, because it is growing bigger all the time. That is a problem, whereby you have such a large force involved in so many aspects of society and public services, and yet which is so unaccountable to the people on the ground. That is a problem that is going to get worse rather than better because of all the extra players coming in.

Phil Vernon: Just very quickly, I would add two things. According to Nye’s definitions—perhaps it does not matter—I think the Chinese approach is probably not soft power. It is probably much more of a sort of bribery or purchasing approach to power application. Maybe it does not matter that much. I think the other thing is that, whatever people might say in criticism of British overseas development aid—and I have got plenty to say and have said plenty about it myself—it is relatively transparent. It is relatively easy for people to find out what we are trying to do and why we are trying to do it. It is not easy to find out how much is leaked, because it is too sensitive, I think, but it is pretty easy to find out what is going on and why it is going on. In some of the other countries you mentioned, Lord Hodgson, it is much, much harder to find out; it is much more opaque and in the background. Therefore it could be more risky for the people in the countries that we are talking about.

Jonathan Glennie: I agree with that last point. I also agree that there are many, many more development actors, including official actors, round the table. I believe that Kazakhstan is the latest country to set up an aid agency. There are many South American aid agencies. South

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Africa has one. Yes, after years of attempting to harmonise some aid, it is now looking very fragmented, and that is going to be problematic in terms of accountability.

The answer to your question is that, with these arrivals of big new money—some of which is basically traditional aid, some of which is very different and looks more like trade and loans—undoubtedly Britain's soft power is going to be relatively diminished. You just have to go to any African country to see that. Once you no longer rely so much on a particular source of finance, the power of that source of finance is going to be diminished. To end on a very positive note about British aid, as I said at the beginning, its focus on civil rights and democracy—those kind of issues—has been, in my view, incredibly positive throughout the world. It is not the focus of some emerging players, and it would be a great loss if that pressure—British values in that sense—is lost to the world of development. As you know, I do not agree with our kind of slavish adherence to market fundamentalism—I think that has had an immensely denigrating impact on much of the world—but the focus on civil rights has been very positive.

Q150 Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Chairman, just on this point: I do not want to be negative, but amongst the papers which were circulated to the Committee was an article which Mr Birrell wrote, I think in May of this year, about what was going on in Ethiopia and the Gambela region. Now, it is very difficult sitting on this Committee: here you are talking about civil rights. I do not know if you have read that article or you are aware of what has been going on—

Jonathan Glennie: I am, yes.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: —but in terms of soft power it seems to me to be desperately counterproductive. It is also very hard to reconcile what you are saying with events like this taking place. To Ethiopia, we have contributed I think £1.6 billion over the period of this Parliament in aid. How that reconciles with your last statement, I find quite difficult to understand.

Jonathan Glennie: It is actually quite easy. I do not know the details of the Ethiopia land displacement case; I have read about. I have read Ian's articles and I have read a number of other articles, and it is certainly a very serious case. It is quite possible, is it not, theoretically, that that is an exception to the rule—that generally speaking Britain is a very strong adherent of civil rights in a number of countries, and that in some cases it is not?

Ian Birrell: But do you really believe that?

Jonathan Glennie: I do, especially—and there is plenty of evidence—on the focus on women's rights. Britain and others, and the west in general, have been part of a transformation in the way that women and girls are viewed around the world. That is partly to do with this aid. It is partly to do with a whole range of other issues. Let us call it the international development community, which probably sounds terrible to some people—the UN, all of those attempts to spread equality and those kind of values. There is lots of evidence to demonstrate that that has been incredibly impressive.

On Ethiopia, yes, there is absolutely no doubt that there are civil rights and human rights abuses—as there are, as I said earlier, in almost all countries in the world. I would like to hear what people think we should be doing with all the other countries in the world where these things happen. Do we just cut off ties? I do not believe in that. I believe actually that engagement can also work sometimes. Finally, in countries like Ethiopia and Rwanda, if you look at the actual economic and social progress that those countries have made, it has been absolutely phenomenal in the last 20 years—absolutely phenomenal. It has transformed the

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lives of millions of women and children especially. That is the plus side. To end this debate, let us just have that as well, not just the tyrannical human rights abuse, which is part of the story but possibly quite exaggerated.

Q151 The Chairman: That is fair enough.

Mark Pyman: Can I just come back to the question from Lord Hodgson? I think it is noticeable that for three of the four countries you mentioned—China, Saudi and Qatar—in terms of aid influence overseas, this is both about soft power and about hard power. It is not just about projecting their influence; it is also about military and security strength for those countries overseas. To me that brings it a little bit back to where you started that discussion, which is that soft power is only partly about aid, and it is partly about military and geopolitical influence. So, to take the example of China and Sri Lanka, they have given all sorts of aid to build ports. The purpose is nothing to do with helping the Sri Lankans with their ports; it is so that the Chinese have got a deep-water base at the bottom of India for the future. With the big donor countries, to me it is soft power but, actually in many of these cases, there is a military and security purpose behind it.

On the second comment—when you were saying, “What should we do with them?”—it is just a competition. That is the way I think of it. It is competing for influence and some of the countries that we work in work with, say, the Saudis and say, “The Saudis are great. They give us money and ask no questions”. Okay, but five years later they come back and say, “But we like you, because actually you give us an answer that we can use and is useful”. To me, the soft power bit here with examples of those countries takes you very quickly back to whether there is a hard power element behind it, of which the soft power is merely the front end of it.

The Chairman: I am going to halt it there, because we have kept you a very long time. It has been fascinating, and we could go on for much longer. You have stated your various cases with great articulacy, and we all know what the arguments and the counterarguments are a little more clearly than we did a couple of hours ago. So can I say thank you very much, Mr Vernon, Mr Glennie, Mr Birrell and Mr Pyman? We are very grateful to you for coming to us on this warm afternoon, and thank you again.

David Blackie – Written evidence

Soft Power: a comment

1.0 What *not* to do

I am indebted to the media commentator Kaila Colbin for this recent example of how a government committee considering how to take propaganda advantage of digital media – in this case in Israel – came to exactly the wrong conclusion. Referring in her article (in “Online Spin” 23.08.13) to the much quoted post war publication “How To Win Friends And Influence People” by Dale Carnegie, she writes:

“... it is also a book that the government of Israel has clearly neglected to read. Last week, the prime minister’s office issued a statement saying that students would be paid to say nice things about Israel online, without having to identify themselves as having any affiliation with the government.

“This unbelievably shortsighted move is almost comical in its irony. The net result is that the government has put *any* nice comment made about Israel under a cloud of suspicion, thereby doing themselves out of the benefit of having sincere supporters speak up on their behalf.

The point here is that media, and the thousands of social networks, blogs, video channels, forums etc. that most people dip into on a regular or daily basis, are highly influential, but not controllable. Just as we as individuals need to focus on what we are rather than worry about our reputations, so countries seeking influence over others need to focus above all on what they do, and not concern themselves with the message – and let the media look after themselves.

2.0 Power?

“Soft power” is largely defined by what it is not: power which is not hard, not military. But if we seek influence, whether as a nation or as a group or as individuals, we may do well to avoid use of the term “power”. We can, for example, all accept that we are influenced by friends and books and so on, but a suggestion that they therefore have *power* over us is a likely stimulus for resistance and an understandably negative response. Any individual or group or nation that crows about its soft power – such as Britain is I suspect in danger of doing - may expect short shrift from those it seeks to influence; such claims to power are instinctively rejected and, in those places where they matter, are destined to be counter-productive. Not by Nye perhaps, but by many of those who favour the term, soft power is seen as being incentivised and even coercive, and therefore a relative of hard power. But in today’s joined up world that position is weakened, and disinterested focus on quality outcomes, and discussion and analysis of this in the press, in the blogosphere and other electronic media, is more likely to generate favourable influence, politically and economically, than transparent (and probably crude) incentives.

3.0 Appropriate Action and the role of the British Council

The positive influence which is the goal of almost all of us is a byproduct of friendship, commitment, integrity, expertise and, above all, example. Where programmes are undertaken in the name of the country, whether at home or abroad, we need as a nation to be sure that we provide the best, and do the job well. Such desirable outcomes are rarely to be achieved, in my submission, by the British Council. By attaching an increasingly overtly commercial organisation, nowadays owning multiple overseas companies, to our embassies and high commissions so giving it unique status and advantage, and supporting it with taxpayers' money, by referring to this organisation at once as "part of the FCO family" and as a charity, Britain gives off a negative message, which is that this special case, and privilege for the few, is more important than the integrity and status of genuine commercial enterprise or genuine charities or genuine arms of government. The organisation is not trusted, nor indeed trustworthy, being neither fish nor fowl. Commerce, charity and government all play crucial roles in winning influence abroad, and their influence is strengthened by maintaining institutional integrity. Their influence is correspondingly weakened when those concepts are fudged, a fudge that is embodied in the British Council.

4.0 Doing good, doing it well

The things that Britain with all its resources can do as a nation to win friends and influence people are infinite. The single thing that we can do best and most easily and with the most beneficial results for us as a nation, now and in the future, is **provide education and training resources**. We do this through English language teaching at home and abroad, by offering formal programmes of qualifications in our schools, colleges and universities, through scholarships, through offerings of electronic libraries, MOOCS and specialist online courses, through the establishment of offshore branches of our institutions, and so on. For everybody's sake, however, we should not allow a money-driven state-sponsored competitor to step in almost anywhere and distort the market to the detriment of genuine British enterprise and of the quality of provision to those whose good will we seek.

David Blackie
Director
International Education Connect Ltd

August 2013

BP – Written evidence

Introduction

1. BP is one of the world's leading international oil and gas companies. Through our work we provide customers with fuel for transportation, energy for heat and light, lubricants to keep engines moving, and the petrochemicals products used to make everyday items as diverse as paints, clothes and packaging. BP has been based in the UK for over 100 years and we intend to be here for a long time to come. We are continuing to invest in our businesses so we can provide the energy the country needs.
2. The majority of international companies involved in foreign investments welcome the support of their home government in the business they do abroad. This is not unusual – Exxon and Chevron look to the support of the US Government, Total to the French Government, Shell to the Dutch Government (as well as the UK), etc. BP therefore has a particular interest in the way the UK Government supports UK businesses abroad and welcomes a number of recent reforms that have been introduced to improve the UK's ability to trade.

UK Trade & Investment (UKTI)

3. Since 2011 a Strategic Relations team has been established within UKTI to work closely with large UK-based companies. Aside from helping us with queries relating to UKTI per se, we have found this team to be extremely effective in helping to connect the different Whitehall departments that have an interest in BP's activities. We are very supportive of this Strategic Relationship Management initiative.
4. The Prime Minister's appointment of cross-party Trade Envoys is also welcome. This has given more high-level attention to key export and investment markets. The number of high-level trade delegations has been increased as a result and our country offices in these markets have reported favourably on this increased activity.
5. The organisation of trade delegations accompanying VVIP trips has also been improved. The briefings before and after the trade delegation led by the Prime Minister to India were very useful. We also recognise the benefits that can extend to large British investors such as ourselves from encouraging more small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to participate on such trade delegations, should it lead them to joining BP in investing in the substantial opportunities which exist in many parts of the world.
6. We also support the work that UKTI is doing in reviewing the operation of British business councils in 21 key markets. We have met with UKTI to discuss our experience of business councils in these markets. We recognise that they can play an important role in helping SMEs to set up business in new markets while also demonstrating the UK's, and British companies', commitment to the wider communities in which they are doing business.

BP – Written evidence

7. In sub-Saharan Africa, we welcome the launch of the high-level Prosperity Partnerships, which will see UKTI, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Department for International Development (DFID) working much more closely together in Angola, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mozambique and Tanzania. While time will be needed to assess the impact of these Partnerships, we would hope that successful innovations, for the benefit of both partner countries and the UK, might be exported to other markets too.

Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO)

8. Beyond UKTI, we have been impressed by the way the Prosperity Directorate within the FCO has offered greater assurance to companies that the FCO in London and its diplomatic posts are working extremely closely to resolve commercial issues facing UK companies around the world. FCO officials are clearly well-connected to their counterparts in departments such as DECC, BIS and HMT. The advice offered by diplomatic posts around the world remains excellent; as is the support offered by the country desks in the FCO in London.

Department for International Development (DFID)

9. In March 2013, BP's CEO Bob Dudley co-signed a letter to the Financial Times in support of the Government's decision to continue to honour its commitments to overseas aid. The UK's aid has 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. There is much private companies can learn from the approach taken by DFID; equally companies themselves have experiences of working in developing markets, which will be of interest to DFID. Therefore we welcome the appointment of private sector advisers within DFID which has seen a greater mutual understanding develop of both the work of the department and of that of UK companies in DFID's target countries. Shared experience of what works and what doesn't can only be helpful in promoting sustainable development as both companies and DFID develop programmes in support of local communities.

November 2013

British Academy – Written evidence

1. The British Academy, the national academy for the social sciences and humanities, welcomes the opportunity to submit evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence.
2. In this submission, the British Academy's contribution is twofold. Firstly, in representing the Humanities and Social Sciences disciplines, it draws on a broad research base to provide intellectual clarity and to help focus and reframe the debate. Secondly, it provides a brief account of the centrality of our national higher education and research to the UK's soft power resources.
3. Beyond this brief submission, the British Academy is currently undertaking a project on 'soft power' and is due to publish a report at the end of the year as a contribution to current debates.

What is the British Academy's understanding of soft power?

4. Soft power is analytically difficult to distinguish from influence, which has many manifestations. In particular it can be argued that diplomacy, and foreign policy more generally (as opposed to coercion and deterrence), has always been about trying to 'mobilise' soft power.
5. Our analysis starts from the proposition that soft power exists, but is not always useable by governments. Indeed, while it is questionable whether it can be mobilised in any meaningful sense, even more importantly, it is questionable whether it actually needs to be 'mobilised'.
6. We believe that maintaining a soft power position independent of government is an advantage to government precisely because it allows the myriad elements of civil society and national culture to do their work without any attempt to 'coordinate' or manage them unnecessarily. Central to this view of soft power is its primary location in the domestic sphere: soft power begins at home.
7. Rather than being in simple opposition to hard power, soft power exists in a complex and changing relationship to it. Traditional instruments of hard power can be deployed successfully in a soft power context. Indeed, it is notable that in recent years the UK military has demonstrated that an important part of its future role involves elements of soft power.

Soft power and diplomacy

8. The UK can increase its influence by pursuing its objectives via a wide range of international mechanisms as well as a broad range of ever accelerating and deepening

horizontal networks powered in part by the revolution in information technology and social media. This places a premium on understanding networks, and on accepting that individuals, networks, countries and international organisations are subject to many other pulls than the straightforward ones of national feeling and loyalty. The need for significant research in this area is clear and pressing.

9. There is a volatile quality to soft power assets which relates to the fact that soft power's reliance on reputation means that it can easily be undermined by an action in another sphere (most notably using hard power) which causes serious antagonism or resentment to third parties. Nevertheless, it is also important to recognise that soft power assets can serve to counter other unwelcome negative impressions. The UK is now a country of multiple diasporas, which in the opportunities and challenges this has brought illustrates the double-sided coin of the UK's history and influence in the world. Creative nurturing and harnessing of such challenges can turn possible negatives into positives in the long-term, and the government has an important role in supporting this process.

Aspects of soft power – looking longer term

10. As has already been indicated, it is critical to understand that the UK's soft power and influence exist beyond the narrow realm of our foreign policy. In the Academy's view, a clear distinction should be drawn between the long- and short-term soft power benefits of the UK's cultural and intellectual appeal, while also acknowledging that these are inherently difficult to measure. In the short-term, there are important commercial benefits to be gained from soft power assets such as the international attractiveness of UK education.
11. In the medium and longer term, other benefits can be enjoyed. First, the projection of Britain abroad through a combination of cultural diplomacy and the independent activities of citizens can serve to improve the country's reputation and attractiveness to all kinds of potential partners, whether inside multilateral organisations like the EU, UN and the Commonwealth, or in terms of commercial investment. But that also depends on the kinds of actions taken by private citizens. For example, Euroscepticism has led to much disillusion elsewhere in the EU, while both Paris and Washington have objected in the past to what they saw as the growth of "Londistan". Second, the promotion of global public goods such as human rights or action to deal with climate change has the potential to place Britain in a leadership role, so long as it is not undermined by the simultaneous pursuit of state interests, leading to the perception of double standards.
12. The corollary of the importance of the longer term is 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. If this approach is taken, the benefits can be considerable for relatively small sums invested. The more challenging aspect of this for government is that the most important benefits gained are often the most intangible and difficult to measure, although certain institutions, such as

outstanding universities, the BBC and the British Council, have a proven track record in this respect.

Learning from others: how much should governments do?

13. Once soft power is seen as having no necessary relationship with foreign policy, it is easier to understand American cultural success in influencing (and selling) to millions around the world despite widespread hostility to some of its foreign policy actions. The separation between the deployment of its cultural assets and its government often enables American cultural influence to prevail however public opinion may view its government's foreign policy at any particular time. Meanwhile China's government has been criticised as having too visible a hand in its recent cultural and cooperative initiatives. Nevertheless the growing popularity of Confucius Institutes worldwide demonstrates that the issue is complex, rather than a simple negative relationship between government intervention and popular appeal. The provision of basic funding at arm's length and the conduct of a sophisticated diplomacy (including public diplomacy) are crucial in enabling medium-sized countries, such as Britain or France, to present themselves well abroad, with concomitant benefits in trade, tourism, and political goodwill. Moreover, there is still plenty of scope for public diplomacy to celebrate and disseminate the products of the UK's cultural, educational, social and legal success.

What does soft power mean for the British Academy's work?

14. The British Academy's work in representing and promoting academic excellence at home and overseas can be considered a constituent part of the UK's national image and influence. Almost all areas of the Academy's remit, from law and languages to archaeology and area studies, are relevant to soft power, in that they throw light on the ways in which human beings influence each other while also generating resources that can benefit the United Kingdom as a whole. The UK's leading role in many of these disciplines is a further benefit in terms of both its capacity to attract scholars and students from all over the world and the vigour of the UK academic and research community, which provides tangible soft power gains (such as revenues from international students) but also more intangible benefits to the image of the UK as an important global intellectual hub. The Academy has maintained longstanding support for a small network of research institutes overseas.⁴⁷ The depths of collaborations that these centres foster in a range of disciplines makes a significant contribution to the UK's soft power in these countries.

⁴⁷ Details of these institutes are available at: <http://www.britac.ac.uk/intl/index.cfm>

What is 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?

15. An emphasis on the means of soft power will have implications for the kind of role that the UK seeks (or is able) to fulfil. Commentators on soft power have placed emphasis on the country's cultural resources: its intellectual and artistic heritage, the strength of its universities, and the attractions of its sport and music scene. The cultural aspects of soft power can benefit the UK in the long term through perceptions of excellence, creativity and distinctiveness, leading to admiration and to some degree a desire to emulate. In the professions there may also be opportunities for disseminating best practices and standards, as for example in the legal profession.
16. In particular, the humanities and social sciences provide the high-level skills and ground-breaking research essential to an economy driven by ideas and knowledge, to social and cultural well-being, and to the UK's place and reputation in the world. UK research, not least in the humanities and social sciences, is internationally recognised as of exceptionally high quality. But other countries are investing heavily in research and related human capital and becoming more competitive. It is imperative to maintain an enabling environment in the UK with, for example, sustained funding and measures to facilitate mobility and interaction.
17. Research is a global undertaking and strong links with researchers around the world are essential to maintain the UK's internationally renowned research base, as well as promoting lasting ties of real economic, political and cultural value. More generally, the world is changing with extraordinary rapidity, and countries of major significance to the UK – economically, politically and culturally – are assuming new positions of influence. The insights of researchers in the humanities and social sciences can help us understand these changes and how best to respond to them.

What impact do languages have on soft power and diplomacy?

18. The Academy welcomes the Committee's acknowledgement of language learning as an aspect of soft power. Together with geographical expertise, foreign language skills have long been regarded as the hallmarks of the highly esteemed British diplomatic service. The ability to speak a foreign language is a key element in the formation of relationships, mutual cultural understanding, trust and the networks that facilitate interaction and cooperation across borders and societies. In a radically different landscape of international engagement that confronts Britain today – with the rise of China, Brazil, Russia and India as economic powers and the increase in ethnic and regional conflicts – language skills can no longer be regarded as an optional adjunct to a well-equipped society and government. Rather, they are a key indicator of how prepared we are to operate within the fast changing landscape of global engagement.

19. Nevertheless, the British Academy has been concerned with the de-prioritisation of languages within government. Prompted by recent reports of declining language capacity within certain areas of government, the Academy launched an inquiry entitled *Lost for Words: the need for languages in UK diplomacy and security*. The inquiry aims to serve as a first step towards reviewing how language capacity within the UK affects the pursuit of public policy objectives relating to international engagement and security. A report deriving from the inquiry will be published in November 2013.

What more can be done to encourage British people to learn foreign languages and acquire deeper understanding of foreign cultures?

20. The Academy recognises the importance of the English language and English-language publications in advancing the UK's influence abroad. The UK's teaching, academic and research base both contributes to, and benefits from, the current predominance of the English language. What we must not do is assume that the global success of English immunises against the need for knowledge of other languages.
21. The value of languages for the individual, as well as society at large, has been well documented over a number of years. There is strong evidence that the UK is suffering from a growing deficit in foreign language skills at a time when globally, the demand is expanding. The number of students studying languages in school and at university has declined considerably, and many of the languages forecast to be of increasing importance – for trade, security and diplomacy – are not provided for within the UK's education system.⁴⁸ The Academy has been at the forefront of promoting excellence in the study of languages for over a century, and in 2011 launched a programme to address the skills deficit in language learning in UK education and research. Through its language programme, the Academy is funding research and relevant initiatives, and seeking to influence policy in these areas.

Summary

22. The British Academy recommends that a distinction should be drawn between the short, medium and long-term benefits of the UK's rich cultural and intellectual assets. Greater recognition needs to be given both to the way in which these assets contribute to the UK's influence and reputation in the world, and also to the importance of language learning. The Academy welcomes further engagement with the Committee on this area of inquiry and looks forward to contributing to the discussion and debate, including through our publications later this year.

September 2013

⁴⁸ These issues are outlined further in recent British Academy publications including *Languages: State of the Nation Report* (February 2013); *Talk the Talk* (June 2013); *Postgraduate Funding: the Neglected Dimension* (July 2012). Publications and details available at: www.britac.ac.uk

British Council – Written evidence

What is soft power and why is it important?

A country's soft power is its ability to make friends and influence people not through military might, but through its most attractive assets, notably culture, education, language and values. In short, it's the things that make people love a country rather than fear it, things that are often the products of its people, its culture, its values, its brands and education institutions.

The UK continues to seek and need a major role and profile in the modern world. As a result of history, language, trade and culture, it is one of the most internationally connected countries on earth. It thrives on those connections. They bring investors, entrepreneurs, researchers and innovators to the UK. Our prosperity and security depends on being trusted by other peoples, on our ability to continue to attract the brightest and best to choose the UK over our competitors.

The changing nature of influence in the world and the growing importance of 'Soft Power'

As Lord Howell recently said, there is a growing feeling that the entire international landscape is being transformed by hyperconnectivity, social media, and the very rapid rise of direct people-to-people social and cultural exchange - not mediated by states. This is beginning to alter the entire fabric of relations between nations.

The rise of people-to-people influence and the resultant diffusion of power away from Governments requires recognition that persuasion, influence, trust and what other people think of the UK matter to our future. In an increasingly competitive, more volatile world we will need to go beyond the traditional international relations armoury of force, diplomacy and aid, and focus on how we can attract people to the UK.

The UK is a 'soft power' superpower

As Foreign Secretary William Hague recently wrote "the UK remains a modern day cultural superpower. The UK is fortunate to have some immense assets and advantages in this area: the English language, connecting us to billions of people; links to almost every other nation 2 on earth through our history and diverse society; skills in financial services, engineering, science and technology that are second to none; and fine institutions like the British Council, BBC World Service and our historic universities which are beacons for democratic values around the world. Staying competitive in 'soft power' for decades to come means nurturing these assets and valuing them as much as our military, economic and diplomatic advantages. Government must play a full part in helping to liberate that ingenuity and talent across our national life, and to champion it all over the world."

Independent cultural bodies are the UK's best 'Soft Power' assets

The UK should continue to support cultural exchange through independent, autonomous agencies and brands like the British Council, BBC, Premier League, universities and the UK's theatres, galleries and museums. The trust that these bodies and the artists, educators,

sportspeople, curators and broadcasters they support generate for the UK builds the relationships and environment that attracts people and businesses to choose the UK over our competitors. Research by DEMOS suggests direct government involvement invites suspicion and hostility; it is people-to-people contact and reciprocity that build trust.

The UK does not wholly publically-fund or ‘state control’ cultural bodies and universities, all the UK’s best cultural bodies and universities earn income, innovate, partner and are entrepreneurial in pursuit of their mission. However, public funding remains critical to their continued success, providing the space to innovate, take creative risks and invest long term in a way that would not be possible in a purely commercial model. They are also more aligned with UK government and national policy than in countries where there is no connection. As a result of government investment, agencies like the British Council are active in strategically important places in Sub-Saharan Africa where they simply would not be able to operate were they dependent only on self-generated income. The UK’s soft power success is a direct result of this ‘mixed economy’ model.

The British Council is among the world’s most effective international cultural bodies

The British Council is aligned with the FCO through its NDPB status and Board-level representation. The British Council has retained the same mission for which it was founded in 1934 but has transformed its economic model. Government grant now represents less than 20% of the British Council’s turnover; entrepreneurship delivers the rest through ‘paid for’, partnerships and work under contract.

The British Council builds trust for the UK by sharing English, the Arts, education and support to stronger societies through work with state and public education systems and support for governance and international development. The Foreign Office grant to the British Council in 2013-14 is £162m out of total projected income of £833m. By comparison last year the German government spent over €588m towards the same broad objectives.

Directly connected through governance to the UK’s long term foreign policy interests the British Council creates the context – millions of English speakers, UK-educated world leaders, global expertise and ‘thought leadership’; and millions of people and thousands of institutions connected to the UK - which support and inform the UK’s knowledge, understanding and influence in the world.

The British Council delivers the UK’s national interest, by being aligned, at arm’s length, expert, entrepreneurial and above all for and from the people of the UK.

The British Council’s contribution to the UK’s soft power

We share the UK’s great cultural assets: the English language, arts and education with the world. The critical element in the British Council’s approach is the focus on mutuality. Soft power is not just showcasing the UK’s assets; it is sharing those assets and supporting the reciprocal exchange of ideas and culture. Through this work the British Council:

- builds trust in the people and institutions of the UK and supports prosperity and security around the world
- encourages people to visit, study in, and do business with the UK

British Council – Written evidence

- attracts people who really matter to all our futures to visit and engage with the UK

The British Council has offices in over 100 countries and has been building long-term trust, people-to-people connections and international opportunities for the UK for more than 75 years. We work in:

- Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Turkey and other high growth countries that offer so much potential for the UK's businesses and institutions
- fragile and post-conflict states like Libya, South Sudan, Iraq and Afghanistan that are strategically key to the UK's security
- marginalised environments like Burma and Zimbabwe where we build capacity and international connections for those who want access to the wider world
- Europe, the USA, Japan, the Commonwealth where we work to maintain, renew and enrich traditional ties

A 24/7 networked world means that huge numbers of important international connections take place outside traditional state-to-state relations. People trust people more than they trust governments, so connections between people often make a more significant contribution to soft power than government-led activities.

The British Council's operational independence from the UK Government enables it to connect UK teachers, learners, artists, sportspeople, scientists and policy makers with their counterparts around the world, building trust between people, whatever the state of relations between governments. That trust creates opportunities for UK businesses, artists, and cultural and educational institutions to engage with new opportunities and global markets.

Hard and/or soft power? And what about Aid?

The UK's international reputation rests on a spectrum of interventions. At one end there is development and aid where the UK is recognised as leading the world and at the other is the UK's hard power – its ability to project military force, enforce sanctions and that prized seat on the Security Council. In between there is soft power, diplomacy, trade and cultural relations. This spectrum can be simplified as: giving - attracting - forcing.

The UK has traditional strengths across this spectrum with leading international aid charities, global agencies like the British Council and world renowned cultural and educational institutions, and widely respected defence assets. The ability to engage across the whole spectrum gives the UK very significant advantages in international relations, we are able to engage with other countries on multiple levels at the same time – for example in Gaddafi era Libya where Government policy was towards the forcing end of the spectrum, the British Council maintained people-to-people contact so when change came to the country the UK had access to valuable, established networks and could respond quickly and effectively.

The spectrum is not rigidly divided. It is easy to identify the extremes but the space occupied by soft power is much harder to delineate. 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. It

can, albeit rarely, be built through military intervention. Sierra Leone would be an example of how the UK's global reputation was enhanced by the effective deployment of force. It is the capacity to work across the spectrum that allows the UK to punch well above its weight internationally. However, there is no room for complacency.

The “global race”

Other countries are playing catch up to the UK on international aid spending, are spending more than the UK on hard power assets, and investing heavily in their soft power offer. There is global competition to topple the UK from its number one position in the soft power league table. Much has been made of the Chinese government's ambitions for its global network of Confucius Institutes and international English language news services but it is not the only rapidly emerging soft power. Brazil, Turkey, the Gulf States, South Korea and others are all focussing on the potential of soft power to increase their global influence; to enhance their international reputation; and to attract international investors, students and tourists.

The UK has the best assets in the world, making it the most attractive place on earth. That is why London is France's sixth city. However, it cannot afford to rest on its laurels if it desires to retain its crown. As new entrants come into the soft power market, the UK must continue to invest and innovate to continue to benefit from the inward investment and prestige its soft power brings to the country. There are three critical challenges the UK's position:

1. The key to the UK's success in soft power is the focus on reciprocity – the sharing of our culture, language and values. The UK's greatest soft power weakness is the level of language skills amongst the UK population. While it has been hugely advantageous to the UK that one in four people around the world speak English that still leaves three in every four people that do not, people we are simply not talking to. Speaking the local language opens doors for people, businesses and institutions looking to work in new markets. It builds the trust that is so crucial in attracting and influencing. The UK needs to invest in developing young people's skills in modern languages like Arabic, Russian and Chinese to be competitive in the 21st century.
2. The UK's arts, cultural and educational sectors are some of the most successful in the world. Their great strength has been their ability to combine public, private and philanthropic income in a 'mixed economy' funding model at arm's length from government. It is vital that the UK maintains this balance in future to continue to harness the innovation and dynamism of the private sector; to provide the space to take creative risks and invest for the long term; and to enable agencies to continue to operate in places the market cannot reach.
3. The recent reforms to UK visa policy have caused widespread concern around the world, damaging the UK's reputation in countries like India and Brazil that are critical to our future success. In seeking to manage net migration, it is vital that the unintended consequence of policy is not that those who the UK most needs to influence and attract are prevented from visiting, investing or studying in the UK.

The UK is uniquely well placed in terms of soft power. It has world renowned cultural assets and internationally respected institutions like the BBC and the British Council but continued success in an ever more crowded market is not guaranteed. Government investment and

British Council – Written evidence

policy – in education, business, culture, foreign and defence affairs, and immigration - remain vital to ensuring the UK remains the most attractive place on earth.

July 2013

British Council, BBC World Service and British Museum – Oral evidence (QQ 63-92)

British Council, BBC World Service and British Museum – Oral evidence (QQ 63-92)

[Transcript to be found BBC World Service](#)

British Council – Supplementary written evidence

About the British Council

The British Council creates international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and builds trust between them worldwide. We are on the ground in over 100 countries. We connect the UK with people around the world, sharing the UK’s most attractive assets: the English language, the arts, education and our ways of living and organising society. We have over 75 years’ experience as the UK’s leading soft power agency.

I Summary

1.1 The UK has emerged as the world leader in soft power, overtaking the Hollywood fuelled might of the United States and leaving other European competitors trailing. Yet even as we celebrate coming first in Monocle’s 2012 soft power league table, the UK’s supremacy may already be a thing of the past. 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. 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 increasingly volatile present where that influence and attraction is increasingly dependent on people rather than governments. Trust and reputation are critical to international success and prosperity.

1.2 The UK is a soft power superpower with unique assets - in the English language, our arts and culture and our education and ways of living - that are immensely attractive to people around the world. How we have deployed these assets has been critical to our success to date but we cannot take that success for granted and must learn and adapt to an ever changing world.

2 The spectrum of international engagements

Giving		Attracting			Forcing
Aid	English	Relationship building	Cultural diplomacy	Messaging	Military Action
Development	Education	Cultural exchange	Showcasing	Diplomacy	Sanctions
	Skills	Convening & networking	Broadcasting	Advocacy	Coercion
	Qualifications	Partnerships & links	Trade promotion	Campaigns	
	International experiences	Trade			

2.1 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, as well as being a world leader in international development. The UK’s physical presence globally

through the diplomatic network, DfID and the MoD, agencies like the British Council and UKTI and international NGOs and businesses gives the UK a powerful platform for influencing and engaging internationally. The UK is able to work across the spectrum of international interventions, from the giving end of aid and development assistance through soft power to the forcing end of military action. Soft power is an essential plank of the UK's international relations strategy, complementary to our military forces and development assistance.

2.2 The spectrum is not rigidly divided. It is easy to identify the extremes but the space occupied by soft power is much harder to delineate. Trust and attractiveness can be built through aid projects that focus on good governance, education reform and the sharing of the UK's values. The capacity to work across the spectrum strengthens the UK's hand, each element reinforcing the potential impact of the other. At its most successful, the UK's foreign policy engages across the spectrum in multiple ways simultaneously. Sierra Leone might be a textbook example of what can be achieved by the co-ordinated engagement across the spectrum with the UK's military power needed to create the environment where development assistance, education reform, capacity building and reconciliation work could be taken forward. The world is though a complicated place, often the UK will find itself engaging in multiple, potentially contradictory interactions across the spectrum of international relations. This may be a deliberate carrot and stick approach to a country or simply reflect the multitude of contacts between peoples in a hyper-connected age.

2.3 Soft power is not a replacement for hard power; those looking to soft power to make up for the impact of defence cuts on the UK's influence internationally are being unrealistic. No one wants to be in the position where the answer is a naval deployment or boots on the ground but hard power remains vital to our international security in an uncertain, volatile world. While the recent Parliamentary vote on Syria reflects the fact that the UK's appetite for "foreign adventures" has been diminished by our experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq, British military interventions in the former Yugoslavia and Sierra Leone have delivered positive outcomes that soft power or development assistance could not possibly have achieved. Soft power sits alongside hard power and development assistance and has a key role to play in fragile and post-conflict states looking to rebuild and reconcile, as has been the experience in Kosovo for example, but it cannot force peace on warring peoples.

2.4 The UK draws international clout from its status as a Permanent Member of the Security Council and its membership of other international organisations including the EU and Commonwealth. 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. Their strength comes from the focus on shared human values of decency, respect, tolerance and equality, they stand up for the rule of law and human rights and as communities with collective decision making, they are less easily portrayed as pursuing selfish strategic aims than individual nation states.

2.5 Soft power is a powerful tool for governments looking to improve relations and keep channels open when international tensions arise. The Security Council maybe deadlocked or the UK marginalised at the EU Summit, but through soft power the UK can bring nuance, depth and renewal to government relations and continue to build trust despite political difficulties. While relations with Russia can be difficult – the British Council was forced to close our offices in St Petersburg and Ekaterinberg in 2008 following diplomatic disputes between the British and Russian Governments – the Russian people remain interested and

open to engagement with their British counterparts. The UK-Russia Year of Culture 2014 will capitalise on that interest and will present multiple opportunities for the British Government to engage with Russian ministers and officials.

2.6 The UK's capacity to work across the spectrum distinguishes it from much of the rest of the world. It gives credibility, generates respect - and a little envy - and comes with a responsibility to be activist, outward looking and engaged in the challenges of the day.

3 The meaning and importance of soft power

3.1 A country's soft power is its ability to make friends and influence people not through military might, but through its most attractive assets, notably culture, education, language and values. It's the things that make people love a country rather than fear it, things that are often the products of its people, its culture, its values, and its education institutions. Put simply a country's soft power is its attractiveness to others. According to Monocle the UK is currently first in the world for soft power, thanks in part to the global audience captivated by the Diamond Jubilee and the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics.

3.2 Sir Anthony Parsons explained the value of soft power to state actors:

It is really dazzlingly obvious ... [i]f you are thoroughly familiar with someone else's language and literature, if you know and love his country, its cities, its arts, its people, you will be instinctively disposed ... to support him actively when you consider him right and to avoid punishing him too fiercely when you regard him as being wrong.

3.3 Reputation and trust are critically important to a country's success as the certainties of the 20th century give way to a more fluid, volatile world. With multiplying players on the international stage seeking to make their mark and challenge established power structures, military power is no longer a guarantor of success internationally. International challenges like the Syria crisis and global poverty create new alliances and bring new voices to the fore. Soft power has a key role to play in establishing the UK as an honest, trusted broker in such contexts. The revolutions convulsing the Arab world require co-operation between state and other actors and interventions across the spectrum of international relations with development assistance, diplomacy, soft power and military capacity all crucial elements in delivering a safe and prosperous future across the region. To succeed in this world, the UK must act in partnership with old friends, attract new allies and persuade and win over doubters to achieve its strategic objectives. In the shifting, volatile dynamics of the 21st century, soft power is more important to the UK's success than ever before.

Hyper-connectivity

3.4 At the same time the tectonics of power are in flux, influence is moving away from governments towards individuals and civil society groupings. 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% 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, 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. Businesses and institutions looking to expand rely increasingly on the internet to reach and influence new audiences as well as to invigorate and grow their presence in existing markets. Governments and agencies have recognised the growing importance of media like Twitter, Tumblr, Instragram, Pinterest and Facebook though they have had mixed results from their attempts to exploit it for their own messaging and influence, partly because of social media users scepticism of Governmental “propaganda”. UK cultural and educational institutions are developing their digital offer to extend their reach, offering access to their collections, promoting their study opportunities, exploiting their intellectual property and sharing knowledge.

3.5 The British Council is developing its online presence to take advantage of the opportunities available in this new hyper-connected age. We benefit from our arms-length relationship with the UK Government and are viewed as a reliable, trusted player in the online world. We have an expanding online global presence, using digital services to reach millions of young people. Digital participation rose from 73 million in 2011-12 to 90 million in 2012-13. The number of people taking part in our online learning and social networks has doubled over the same period to 8.4 million. We expect this growth to accelerate further as we invest in our range of online tools and mobile apps. Our award-winning English language services on China’s leading micro blogging site Sina Weibo; our Middle East and North Africa Facebook page that is supporting 1,200,000 learners of English; and our Study, Work, Create web portal that brings together all the international opportunities available to young people in the UK in a one stop shop, are all examples of our global digital offer. We are also working with Intel to provide English language learning materials on 100 million computers by 2020 for schools, teachers and individuals to increase access to English language skills and improved technology-based learning worldwide.

Trust

3.6 Where it is successfully deployed, a nation’s soft power builds trust, strengthening ties between peoples and increasing the likelihood people will consider a country as a place to visit, study or invest. Our Trust Pays⁴⁹ research has found the increased willingness to look positively on a country can be marked, both in places with which we have traditional ties but also places with no historic or cultural links. For example in India the percentage of respondents surveyed that looked to the UK more positively after engaging with the UK’s great cultural assets rose by 24% while in Russia it rises to 29% and Saudi Arabia 19%. The research also shows that the UK benefits significantly from its historic links through the Commonwealth with much higher levels of trust than the USA or Germany in countries like Pakistan and India. The other critical finding of the research is that trust in the people of the UK usually runs ahead of trust in the UK Government, perhaps unsurprisingly so in Russia and China but also in Spain and Saudi Arabia where there is 20% difference in levels of trust. The research is clear, exposure to a country’s culture and values can improve perceptions, counter negative impressions and open up opportunities for further engagement. Successful, non-Governmental people-to-people engagement increases the likelihood an individual will choose and/or recommend the UK as destination for visiting, study and investment. Crucially for Governments, our research has found that cultural engagement - soft power - successfully deployed, measurably increases the trust in Governments, generating opportunities for diplomacy and trade.

Reciprocity

⁴⁹ Trust Pays, British Council, 2012

3.7 Soft power is most effective where the focus is on sharing and reciprocity rather than simply selling a message. It parallels how people behave in their everyday life – friendships develop through communication, shared experiences, understanding and mutual interests. Hard power intimidates, soft power engages. By sharing the best of our culture, language and education and being interested and accepting of what others have to offer trust is built up. At its simplest, the key to soft power is old fashioned good manners.

4 The UK's soft power assets

4.1 The UK has exceptional soft power assets in its culture, language and education; it's long, rich and uniquely outward-looking history; and the powerful attractions of a modern, vibrant, creative, ultra-connected, open, tolerant, stable, democratic society.

English

4.2 Our single greatest soft power asset is the English language. The value of English to the UK cannot be overstated; it is the international language of the world and gives the UK and other Anglophone countries a very real edge in international affairs. It is one of the six official languages of the United Nations, the working language of the World Bank and one of three procedural languages of the EU. The long-term economic benefit to the UK of the English language has been estimated at £405bn by consultancy firm Brand Finance with the Intellectual Property asset value of the language to the UK estimated at £101bn.⁵⁰ It is one of the key elements in the success of international financial centres like London, New York and Hong Kong. Our research has consistently found English to be the UK's most attractive soft power asset globally, with the implication that the strongest assets are those offering practical, economic advantage. Research undertaken by Euromonitor for us found that proficiency in English significantly increases the earning potential of young people in the Middle East and North Africa, varying from 5% in Tunisia to 95% in Iraq. Proficiency in English is a valued skill globally, sharing our language and creating opportunities to learn and practice speaking it is the most potent soft power deployment available to the UK.

4.3 But English is a critical element in the soft power of the UK and other states not only as an immensely attractive asset in its own right but also because it is vital to the accessibility of other key cultural assets – our education, culture and values. 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.

Education

4.4 The UK's education institutions are highly regarded internationally and are an essential element of our soft power offer. Our schools and universities attract international students through the English language and the quality of the educational experience on offer. There is a significant advantage to an international student of having qualifications from a globally recognised institution like Cambridge University; it greatly enhances an individual's career prospects in much the same way that proficiency in English offers potentially significant economic advantages. The UK higher education sector is one of the most internationalised in the world: 18 per cent of our student base is international, over 25 per cent of faculty are non-EU, and more than 80 per cent of UK institutions are involved in international partnerships. BIS estimates that in 2011 the value of education exports to the UK was £17.5

⁵⁰ The English Effect, British Council, 2013

billion with the UK the second most popular destination for international students with 13% of the international market.

4.5 The British Council supports the UK's educational institutions internationally, bringing together partners in research collaborations like the BIRAX Regenerative Medicine initiative that is deepening collaboration between the UK and Israel in regenerative medicine. The scheme is supporting high-quality and ground-breaking UK-Israel research projects to develop treatments for multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease and a regenerative therapy for type 1 diabetes. We promote the UK's higher education institutions overseas to attract international students through exhibitions and services like the Education UK website that lists more than 150,000 UK courses and our Transnational Education (TNE) service which helps UK institutions develop and effectively promote international programmes. Our dedicated staff in-country provide bespoke support to identify the best opportunities to promote courses, broker relevant partnerships, develop and execute marketing plans and establish a clear route map through the local legal and regulatory processes including quality assurance frameworks.

4.6 The successful expansion of the UK international higher education market is vulnerable to the consequences of UK Government policy. The UK is the second most popular destination for Indian nationals looking to study overseas – a total of 40,890 students in 2010–11, contributing over £850 million to the UK economy but Indians are now rejecting the UK as a result of recent developments in visa policies. Since 2011 we have seen a 20% drop in the number of students coming to the UK from India. It is a very human response to the local press coverage of the UK's recent policy changes.

4.7 Higher education is by far the biggest part of the international education market but there is massive scope for expansion across the sector. Transnational education is set to grow dramatically as schools, colleges and other entrepreneurial institutions follow the trail blazed by Nottingham University in Malaysia and open up campuses in the high growth economies of Asia, the Middle East and the emerging Southern hemisphere powers. The market for English language teaching is huge and demand far outstrips the capacity available from current providers including the British Council and the leading private sector providers like Pearson. The scale of the opportunities available are immense and we work with private sector providers through market intelligence and networking opportunities to grow their own businesses overseas.

Culture

4.8 The UK's arts, heritage and creative industries continue to play an important role in the UK's attractiveness, with institutions such as the British Museum and Tate Modern continuing to draw millions of visitors every year. Visit Britain estimated the value of tourism to the UK economy in 2009 at £115 billion, the equivalent of 8.9% of UK GDP. Museums, galleries and the historic environment are essential attractions for visitors to the UK but so too are the UK's performance spaces and arts companies. 2012 saw record ticket sales figures for London's Theatreland of £529.7 million. The 2011 Edinburgh Festivals Impact Study estimated the economic impact of the festivals at £262 million to Scotland annually with the Fringe worth £142 million to Edinburgh. Public investment in cultural assets has a very real dividend for the UK economy.

4.9 The global pervasiveness of US and UK pop culture owes much to the international success of the English language. In an age where social media is increasingly significant in shaping opinions and sharing views, English is the premier language of the internet with a 54.9% share. Globally UK artists and cultural exports are enjoying success at a level not seen in many years with the James Bond franchise, Adele and One Direction all enjoying very significant sales. Global album sales of UK artists were a record 13.3% of the worldwide total for 2012. The output from Hollywood is studded with UK talent – our actors, directors, screenwriters, technicians and studios are major players in popular culture globally. British talent dominates the publishing industry with Shakespeare followed closely by Tolkien and J K Rowling in numbers of sales. In 2011 exports by UK publishers were valued by the Publishers Association at £1,223m. Many of the world's most popular literary icons are British – Sherlock Holmes, Elizabeth Bennett, Winnie the Pooh, Frankenstein's Monster – creating great interest and passion for the UK.

4.10 Elite culture has long played a role in soft power. The UK's cultural institutions are globally recognised with tours of our orchestras, theatrical and dance companies and museums and galleries always immensely popular. Our architects, artists and designers are in demand around the world with Lord Foster, Zaha Hadid, Thomas Heatherwick and other leading figures transforming cityscapes and public spaces with the best in British design. Our influence in the world of fashion is immense with our designers playing leading roles in the great fashion houses as well as masterminding the success of their own labels under the watchful eye of Anna Wintour.

4.11 The British Council manages the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale and supports the devolved administrations' participation at the festival, showcasing the best of British art. We also support and help to co-ordinate the international activities of the UK's great arts institutions to ensure maximum impact for the UK, through programmes like our four year Transform season in Brazil where we are collaborating with the Southbank Centre, the ICA, the BFI, the Roundhouse and the V&A to take the very best of British arts and creativity to new audiences across Brazil.

4.12 Sport has a universal appeal that crosses language and cultural barriers making it the most accessible and exportable of the UK's soft power assets. And the UK is a world leader. The sporting elite are every bit as popular internationally as movie and pop stars – Andy Murray and Gareth Bale are hugely popular figures around the world. The global following of Premier League Clubs is staggering. Chelsea has supporters' club branches in Mongolia, Japan, Chile, Nigeria, Brazil, Singapore, Russia, Uzbekistan and even Iran. Football is a global game with universal appeal. The British Council recognises the global appeal of the Premier League, our partnership with the Premier League on Premier Skills has helped us train more than 2,300 coaches since 2007 and reached a further 400,000 young people around the world.

4.13 The commercial success of many of our modern stars owes much to the UK's pragmatic mixed economy approach to funding for culture. Public funding underpins the local and regional infrastructure that fosters talent – the local theatre where the next Ian McKellen learns his craft, the music programme that gives the next Emeli Sandé the creative space to practice and grow. Public support has been critical to UK artists' global impact. Equally significantly, it enables our great national companies to take creative risks instead of always producing the popular show that is guaranteed to sell out, to enable directors, composers, choreographers and playwrights to experiment and develop the skills and

experience to make the new classics of the 21st century. However, it is not all about tax payer funding. Our theatres, galleries and arts companies are incredibly entrepreneurial, they must maximise their own income if they are to thrive. Entrepreneurialism drives ambition and innovation – the Tate Gallery receives 40% of its funding from the Government with the rest coming from foundations, corporate sponsors, individual and international supporters, a 100,000 strong Membership scheme and a £4.9m profit from the Catering and Enterprise team.

4.14 The UK's heritage casts a powerful spell over much of the globe. The Royal Wedding was not just a UK or even Commonwealth event it drew a truly global audience with an estimated 2bn people in more than 180 countries following newspaper reports, photos and TV. In the build-up to the big day Twitter recorded 237 tweets about the wedding every second. The Royal Family are a soft power magnet, for many people around the globe the Queen is one of life's few constants, a pole star in an ever changing world. The value of the UK's stability, history, pomp and ceremony as a soft power asset is difficult to quantify, there are visitor numbers for the castles and palaces and viewing figures for the Diamond Jubilee regatta but the importance of history, roots, of belonging is intangible. It is nevertheless an inspiration to those countries emerging from periods of instability and conflict. The Commonwealth is also 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.

London

4.15 London is undoubtedly one of the world's most attractive cities and is an integral part in the UK's soft power. It is an irresistible magnet for people from all corners of the world, not just those with historic or cultural links. The City is an immense asset. London's global position as a leading financial hub is a massive global draw. That hub status is not simply a result of our history; other once-great centres of commerce have faded into relative obscurity. It depends on the UK's attractiveness – the English language; our convenient time zone between the USA and the Far East; a stable, open, tolerant country; an economy with transparent legal, tax and regulatory regimes; the talented people who live and work here; and the quality of life on offer: the shops and restaurants, theatres, museums and international sporting venues, the parks and architecture, the schools and infrastructure. The concentration of financial, legal and other key services and international institutions in one place, together with the capital's great cultural assets form a unique and rich offer to investors, entrepreneurs, writers, artists, academics and students.

4.16 London has a reputation for offering the best in fashion, luxury goods and services with internationally lauded hotels and restaurants. London has been the playground for the wealthy for centuries both as a showroom for the best British brands like Burberry and Rolls Royce but also as the world's auction house for everything from Old Masters to fine wines. London, and the wider UK, benefit from brand Britain, from the legendary "cool" of '60s Carnaby Street to the 21st century ubiquity of Cara Delevigne's eyebrows. London appeals to the rich and the fabulous, to the young and the fashion forward, to the mature and nostalgic. The London Underground sign is every bit as iconic as McDonalds golden arches or Apple's apple.

Values

4.17 Much of London's global success can be traced to the UK's values. 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. The Foreign Office's work promoting Human Rights is also incredibly important to the UK's reputation – speaking out against repression, intolerance and criminality builds trust with the isolated, oppressed victims of abuse and the “silent majority” that despise injustice and want only peace and a better future for their children. Government sponsored campaigns like the work on violence against women and girls are building trust for the UK and enhancing our reputation as a just, caring and reliable ally. The UK has far more internationally focussed NGOs than other countries in Europe. 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. 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.

4.18 The British Council manages the Justice for All programme in Nigeria that aims to build the capacity, accountability and responsiveness of key policing, justice and anti-corruption institutions to improve access to security and justice for all Nigerians. In Burma, we offer uncensored access to the internet, with a quarter of a million users coming to our libraries each year. People can learn English and experience UK and international culture and freedom of expression in a safe, open environment. We have initiated a programme to train 10,000 English teachers a year in partnership with Burma's Ministry of Education – this will improve the teaching of English for two million young Burmese each year.

5 Learning from others

5.1 Our report, *Influence and Attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century*, explores global approaches to soft power in depth. Many countries are recognising the importance of soft power and are developing their offer. There are long established players like the French and Germans. Much is made of China's enormous investment in international English language broadcasting and its rapidly expanding network of Confucius Institutes. There are newer entrants into the soft power “market”: Thailand, South Korea, Brazil, Turkey, Iraq, the Gulf States and many others who are developing soft power strategies and investing to grow their international reputation and clout. For most, investment in soft power is viewed as a national PR operation, a marketing campaign to shift perceptions of a country, attract potential investors, students and tourists, and/or counter the “negative propaganda” of rival states. It is about winning the “battle for hearts and minds” and the “Global Race”. This is evident in the approach of the Chinese whose massive investment in international English language TV and its global network of Confucius Institutes is designed to deliver former President Hu Jintao's aspiration to make “the voice of China better heard in international affairs”.

Soft power strategies

5.2 Countries around the world are adopting strategies for their soft power, investing in infrastructure like cultural institutes and programmes like scholarship schemes and

marketing campaigns. There are different models for deploying a nation's soft power. Western countries' cultural institutes tend to take one of two broad approaches - an arm's length governance structure that is aligned with their government's broad strategic priorities but are empowered to act autonomously, or else as a unit embedded in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and functioning very much as an arm of government. Our research suggests the former approach is more successful at generating trust as people tend to be less trusting of government "propaganda".

5.3 The lesson for the UK is that we cannot rest on our laurels, other countries are looking at what the UK has done to secure its top spot in the soft power league table and are developing their own offer. The scale of China's ambitions is reflected in the level of investment in its network of Confucius Institutes, spending rose from ¥350 million in 2006 to ¥1.23 billion in 2009 and a network of 122 classrooms and institutes in 49 countries in 2006 to a network of 826 in 104 countries in 2011. Vast resources are also being invested in English language broadcasting by China.

5.4 The UK will need to continue to innovate, to support its soft power assets. In age of limited public resources, the UK cannot simply compete £ for ¥ with China and other competitors. We 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. Knowing when to get out of the way and avoiding undermining the UK's soft power is a key challenge for Government. Governments are not as effective at building trust as people, striking the right balance between central control and an ineffective, uncoordinated approach to soft power is critical. The UK has been getting the mix broadly right but there are certainly lessons to be learned from our soft power competitors.

Les Saisons Culturelles

5.5 The long success of the French Cultural Festivals, Seasons and Years over the last quarter century, developed in collaboration between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Culture and the Institute Français, is one the UK has adopted to great effect recently. The approach targets the places that are strategically important to the UK's prosperity and deploys the soft power assets that will hold the strongest appeal to that place to build bridges, challenge preconceptions and develop further opportunities for the UK. The role of Government is significant, the announcement of the Season brings political leaders together, opening channels for diplomacy and engagement, and over the course of the Season politicians, businesses and other partners have countless opportunities to engage – parallel events are almost inevitably scheduled to discuss education, the creative industries, for networking and to explore commercial opportunities.

5.6 In 2012 we organised UKNow which saw events take place in 29 cities across China, including Hong Kong and Macao, and featured 780 UK artists performing across 170 venues. More than four million people attended events and millions more participated through the website and social media channels. Last year we launched Transform, a four-year programme of cultural exchange and collaboration between the UK and Brazil. The UK is viewed by Brazilian stakeholders and cultural organisations as a leader in terms of arts and cultural management, and policy development and implementation - particularly in articulating and linking cultural policy to economic policy. Transform is using our established reputation to develop and deepening links between Brazil and the UK to build trust and generate further opportunities for the UK. In 2014 we are looking forward to the UK-

Russia Year of Culture and to ZA/Connect, our UK-South Africa Season. The great strength of the Season approach is in the magnifying effect of a series of events, a single exhibition or performance may attract rave reviews but the impact on the UK's standing and reputation will be limited as the focus will be on the event itself. A co-ordinated programme of cultural events can powerfully demonstrate the attractions of the UK. They work so well as they are built around reciprocal arrangements. For example, the British Council's programme for the 2014 UK-Russia Year of Culture will bring the best of Russian arts and culture to audiences across the UK as well as taking the best of British creativity to audiences in Moscow, St Petersburg and other major Russian cities.

Scholarships

5.7 Scholarship programmes like Chevening bring the brightest and best international students to the UK, creating a pool of alumni who should look positively to the UK after spending a long period in the country submerged in the culture and surrounded by its people. It is a model replicated around the world. The Chinese are investing heavily in expanding provision – there are an unprecedented 12,000 African students currently studying in China a figure that dwarfs that of all the other programmes open to young Africans. It has the potential to have a very significant impact on China's future influence across the continent. By way of illustration of the potential of this investment by China, the Heads of State of Denmark, Portugal, Iceland, Norway and Turkey have all studied in the UK; a 2011 report by the Home Affairs Select Committee identified 27 such Heads of State. The UK does exceptionally well in attracting young people to study in the UK but the numbers of scholarships on offer are limited which could leave the UK lagging far behind China in terms of influence in Africa as the African economy picks up pace. There may be a role for Government to provide additional, targeted scholarships for the leaders of the tomorrow. At present we rely on attracting young people with the means to fund their own studies to choose the UK but those unable to afford the fees and living expenses of studying here will turn to China and other providers to get the education they want at a price they can afford enabling China to build trust and develop the contacts that will give them influence in the future. We will need to be much more proactive if we want to build up trust and influence and secure our market position in the "African lion" economies of the 21st century.

5.8 Engaging in schemes like Brazilian President Dilma's Science Without Borders programme and supporting UK higher education institutions to attract more of the brightest and best international students or to open up new campuses in overseas markets are models for what might be done in Africa and other places of strategic importance to the UK's future security and prosperity. With the UK's traditional strengths in higher education, links through the Commonwealth and the growing recognition of the commercial advantages of the English language in Francophone Africa and elsewhere, the UK has a strong appeal to young people but Government intervention is needed to ensure opportunities are made available to the people the UK most needs to engage with to meet its strategic needs, rather than just the ones wealthy enough to self-finance their studies.

Broadcasting

5.9 In the BBC World Service the UK has a unique asset. The trust it has built around the world for the UK since its foundation has been huge. For many people it has been their only link to the wider world. For many years it was unrivalled in its reach and impact. Technology

and the ambitions of other states has seen an explosion in competitors. The rise and rise of Al-Jazeera and the massive investment in China Central Television have been well documented but the internet and mobile services are “voices” speaking to the world, informing and colouring opinion, influencing and shaping reputation and trust. This new crowded market is one the UK is well placed to compete and thrive in. The BBC has been at the forefront of innovation in online and broadcast news and will continue to do so while the UK’s globally recognised creativity and expertise in digital services will continue to combine to produce the kind of vibrant content for radio, television and the internet that people want to see and hear. Services like the British Council’s award winning Selector which shares the best of new British music with audiences all over the world attracts international audiences as well as awards. More subtly, the independence of the BBC will see it continue to be recognised and trusted as an unbiased reporter. Al-Jazeera’s success comes in no small part from its freedom to report while CCTV’s influence overseas will continue to be undermined as long as the suspicion that it is the voice of the Chinese authorities persists in the minds of audiences. The UK will though need to avoid being too heavily reliant on the current international supremacy of English as other languages grow in importance, our competitors in Europe and the Far East are investing in Arab language TV channels for example.

Film, video games & superbrands

5.10 The free-market Americans have in Hollywood the true global Behemoth of soft power. The film industry is the reason the USA is a consistent leader in soft power and at apparently little cost to the American people. From Tehran to Taipei the blockbuster and A-list star exerts an attraction with very few rivals. Hollywood is a critical element in the USA’s soft power, James Bond and Harry Potter may be quintessentially British icons but they sit alongside Superman, G I Joe, the Terminator, Indiana Jones, Captain James T Kirk, Jason Bourne, Mickey Mouse, and Han Solo. The attractive power of these icons is huge. But it is a myth that the movie industry is free soft power for the USA. Hollywood’s great commercial success depends on the tax credits, movie production incentives, cash rebates, grants, tax exemptions and fee waivers and other kickbacks offered by US state legislatures, and international players – including Canada, the UK, New Zealand, Hungary and the Czech Republic, that can offset 25-30% or more of the production expenditure. It is more heavily subsidised than the UK’s national arts institutions.

5.11 Alongside the UK and the USA, Japan has produced some of the greatest pop culture icons of recent years. Video games and anime icons like Mario, Zelda, Sonic the Hedgehog, and the world’s second most famous mouse, Pikachu, are all significant contributors to Japan’s soft power. The Pokémon phenomenon was a master class in creativity, branding and marketing by Nintendo, one of the few global rivals to Disney, Marvel and George Lucas in the creation of enduring, pop culture icons. Gaming, gadgets and Tokyo’s soaring architecture and neon lights project an image of an ultra-modern, high tech, innovative, creative, fun and exciting nation.

5.12 But icons are not the preserve of movies, games and comic books, the US’s instantly recognisable super brands are also iconic – McDonalds, Coke, Pepsi, Nike – and a crucial element in its global attractiveness. The UK has its share of super brands and iconic figures but 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 soft power pop culture powerhouses. Fostering that talent at home and building the

businesses that can compete on equal terms with Square Enix, HBO and Sony should be a goal of a government looking to rebalance the UK economy.

Immigration

5.13 The UK Government's approach to immigration has significant implications for the UK's attractiveness. What is often regarded as a domestic issue is followed closely in Kolkata, São Paulo and many other cities round the world. UK politicians and the Home Office have at times displayed a naivety over the UK's national interests in building trust in key markets through its handling both of policy but more particularly the messaging around policy changes. Whatever the intention, the message being received overseas is that the UK is closed for business. With the very significant inward investment made into the UK economy by the Chinese, the Indians and the Gulf States, and the high volumes of students choosing the UK for study for 1-3 years before returning home, 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. Our international competitors are looking to encourage and make it easier for brilliant researchers, wealthy tourists and potential investors to visit and enrich their countries at the very time we are perceived as raising the drawbridge to deter people from coming to the UK.

6 Recommendations

6.1 We are now entering an entirely new world where influence is increasingly diffuse, and the prevalence and speed of connections created by new technology are fundamentally changing the way in which people relate to each other. Relationships between countries are changing fast. Soft power has always been important, but in this new environment it is now indispensable for countries that want to prosper and remain secure.

6.2 This fundamental change in the international landscape is increasingly placing individuals, civil society organisations and businesses as key actors in international relations. The challenge for governments is how to create the conditions whereby the people of their countries can effectively participate in this globalised international community, maximising benefits in trade, investment, security, knowledge and mutual learning and connections.

6.3 To date, the process of globalisation and growth of hyper-connectivity has been a very positive development for the UK. We have a long proud history as an outward facing nation, and the rise of the English language as the de-facto language of global business and higher education has given the UK a huge competitive advantage. The UK population is widely regarded as diverse, tolerant and accepting of difference – vital attributes in a globally connected world.

6.4 However, the UK cannot rest on its laurels as other countries are developing soft power strategies and investing heavily to compete with the established soft power superpowers. They are assimilating the lessons of the UK's success and are also innovating – for example Thailand's ambition to become the 'kitchen of the world' or Brazil's Science Without Borders programme. Monocle's reigning soft power champion is vulnerable in a number of key areas and will need to take action to remain competitive.

The relatively weak level of international skills in the UK population

6.5 As a country we are far too dependent on the dominance of the English language. English has been hugely advantageous to the UK and 1 in 4 people globally speak the language but that leaves 3 in 4 who do not. Many of those are in key growth markets with large populations like Brazil, Indonesia, China, countries whose languages are going to be increasingly important as their economic power continues to grow. With Asian economies growing fast, our competitors in Western Europe and around the world are learning Mandarin and other languages in increasing numbers while the UK continues to lag behind.

6.6 According to the Education and Employers Task Force, poor language competency is resulting in a direct loss of at least £7.3 billion per annum to the UK economy – that's 0.5% of GDP. As international trade grows, this is only likely to increase. In addition, if UK citizens cannot speak other languages they will miss out on opportunities for international learning and knowledge exchange, and risk being seen as internally focused and disinterested in other countries – the opposite of what makes for successful influence in a global age.

6.7 In a world where individuals connect more and more across international boundaries, and knowledge and networks are increasingly the key sources of attraction and influence, promoting the value of modern languages to young people is going to be critical. Yet the current trend is in exactly the opposite direction.

6.8 A 2012 European Commission study found that only 9% of English pupils surveyed at age 15 were competent in their first foreign language beyond a basic level, compared to 42% of their peers across the EU.

6.9 Language learning in UK schools has seen a sharp decline from 78% of GCSE students in 2001 to 40% in 2011 (Language Trends Survey) and although the results this year may finally mark the turning point in this trend, the 2013 A-level results continue to be a source of serious concern with a 10% fall in the number of students taking French in 2012 and falls in Mandarin, Arabic, German and Italian. This decline is also apparent in higher education. Despite a 3.5% increase in the number of students applying to university in 2013, applications to study modern languages fell by 6.7% and many institutions are looking to downsize or close their language departments.

6.10 In 2013, our Culture at Work research showed that businesses in 9 key countries (including India, China, Brazil and South Africa and the UK), place a high value on intercultural and language skills for bringing in new clients, building trust and protecting reputation. Our research has also revealed the significant disparity between the very high value placed by UK employers on modern languages and international skills, and the low value placed on these skills by UK young people.

6.11 While the government's recent reforms to the school curriculum that have placed a greater emphasis on language learning are to be welcomed, we believe that much more needs to be done in this area to deliver the kind of step change that the UK requires.

6.12 Possible options for increasing take up might include:

- Compulsory language learning, though this would not necessarily alter young people's attitudes to language learning.

- A vigorous campaign to inform parents and young people of the career benefits of language learning.
- Curriculum reform to make languages a more accessible and attractive subject to young people.

The low number of UK young people who study overseas

6.13 Equally important to language learning is the cultural understanding and familiarity that a period of studying or living overseas brings. The UK is a global leader in the international student recruitment market, attracting young people from around the world. However, it performs very weakly in terms of the outward mobility of students with only around 22,000 UK students studying overseas, while the UK attracts over 400,000 students to study in UK higher education Institutions each year, as well as several hundred thousand more in pre-HE education, vocational training, Further Education or English language training.

6.14 The critical importance of international skills and experience to the UK economy has been highlighted by the British Chambers of Commerce in a survey of over 8,000 businesses. The findings suggested that “providing firms with more training in foreign languages, and increasing their exposure to international companies would encourage more business owners to export”. We believe that ensuring that a higher proportion of the future workforce has studied and experienced life abroad would make a significant impact in this area.

6.15 As well as the clear gain for businesses through a better skilled workforce, there is significant evidence that people forming connections and friendships with people from the UK – including with UK students studying overseas - has wider soft power benefits. This is demonstrated, for example in higher levels of trust towards the people and government of the UK and an increased propensity to want to do invest, visit or study in the UK. Our brilliant young people are among the best ambassadors the UK has.

6.16 The British Council has recently launched a major new programme - Generation UK - which aims to enable 15,000 young people to undertake a fully funded study or work placement in China by 2016. Later this year we plan to extend this scheme to also offer opportunities in India. We would very much like to further extend this scheme, both in terms of numbers and countries covered in the future, and are working with private sector partners to secure funding.

6.17 Again a key challenge is getting young people to recognise the benefits of living, working or studying abroad. More work needs to be undertaken to understand the barriers to young people’s outward mobility. Poor language skills and a fear of the unknown are likely possible factors but it may also partly be a result of the UK’s own attractions – if you want to work and live in the greatest city in the world why would you choose anywhere other than London to study for your MA?

6.18 Understanding the barriers and identifying the policy responses to address the barriers are a key challenge. The UK government, the devolved governments, the education sector, the British Council and major UK businesses all have a role to play in increasing outward mobility for UK students and young people. There are plentiful opportunities for UK people

to live, work and study abroad but we need to inform young people about the benefits of doing so.

6.19 Possible options include:

- Developing a strategy to promote the very significant economic benefits of international skills and language learning are likely to be an important part of any co-ordinated activity to increase take up.
- A brokerage service to match graduates and current students with UK businesses who would like to develop their export potential to develop funding and training opportunities for young people to acquire the international skills their sponsoring partner needs.
- Given the high levels of youth unemployment in the UK the value for money possibilities for a Government sponsored scheme to enable suitably qualified young people to undertake voluntary international study or work placements that will then enhance their employability and up skill the workforce are worth exploring.

Scholarships

6.20 Providing future leaders the opportunity to study in the UK has proven immensely valuable for building trust. Chevening and Fulbright alumni have retained strong links with the UK and are assets for our international influence and reputation. Scholarships are a unique way of attracting the brightest and best to the UK and to build lasting relationships. The UK is already a leading destination for international students yet more could be done to target young people who cannot afford to fund their own studies but who are likely to rise to positions of importance and influence in future. Scholarships offered on merit to outstanding young academics in countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa would enable the UK to engage the young people who will hold key roles in strategically important countries in future.

6.21 Possible options:

- Expand existing scholarship programmes like Chevening by increasing the number of funded places available.
- Develop international public-private partnership programmes bringing together UK firms that are looking to develop a presence overseas using a model similar to the British Council's partnership with Tullow Oil. The Tullow Group Sponsorship scheme aims to build capacity in areas where Tullow's host countries experience significant skills gaps, especially, but not exclusively, around their oil and gas industries.
- Invest in the interchange of students and academics between UK and partner countries through programmes like UKIERI that has already created 600 partnerships between UK and Indian education institutions.

Visa policy

6.22 Following the introduction of new visa requirements in 2011 there has been a drop of almost 25% in the number of students coming to the UK from India and a 13% drop from Pakistan. The biggest impacts have been in Further Education and the English Language

Teaching Sector. The ONS quarterly report for April 2013 showed a 46% fall in applications from international students to further education colleges and English language schools.

6.23 While some of the fall in applications has been offset by growth in the number of students coming to the UK from China, 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.

6.24 Where our competitors are continuing to show strong growth in the numbers of international student applications, the UK's market share is slowing and the current visa arrangements are a critical factor in the decline in growth. There are real risks to the UK's research base as pioneering programmes in engineering and life sciences depend upon international students and researchers. In the longer term a fall in international student numbers could have significant costs to the UK's economy. About 90% of full time postgraduate taught students in biotech and some engineering programmes are international – long term reduction in the number of these students would threaten the UK's research base. Put crudely, the income from international students taking Masters courses is underpinning the advanced research programmes the UK depends upon to be internationally competitive.

6.25 The British Council fully supports the Government's intention to attract genuine students to the UK and we have been working very hard with the UK Government to get the right messages out to key countries, especially India. However, given the long term economic, soft power and other benefits from international student recruitment we believe that there should be a much greater awareness of the impact of domestic policy issues such as immigration policy and their impact on soft power.

6.26 It is a fact that the vast majority of students return home at the end of their course or else after gaining an extra 6 – 18 months of professional experience. They are not migrants, they are temporary visitors - paying guests – they should be excluded from the net-migration figures.

6.27 Alongside student visas, delivering a flexible, affordable, fast and effective service for visitor visas for international artists, sportsmen and –women and politicians and other leaders is key to the UK's soft power. Needless bureaucracy and red tape should not be allowed to jeopardise important intercultural engagement.

6.28 The two aspects of the visa regulations that have the potential to do the most damage to the UK economy and cost the most UK jobs are the restrictions to 'pathway' visas and the post-study work visas. We would support a review of these policies which we believe have a detrimental impact on the UK's soft power.

6.29 Possible options:

- Government should consider how to better co-ordinate work across departments to ensure a joined up approach that takes account of the international implications to the UK's influence and reputation of policies like immigration.
- Government should consider separating international students from the migrant statistics

- Government should assess the impact of visa reforms on the UK's economy and international influence and reputation and consider reviewing policy accordingly.

Maintaining a vibrant 'mixed economy' soft power model

6.30 At a time of financial austerity there is a real risk that government departments and wider public and third sector bodies will deprioritise international work to focus on their 'core' domestic roles. Whilst such programmes are relatively easy to cut, this could have long term soft power implications for the UK.

6.31 Given the growing importance of soft power, we believe Government should consider introducing mechanisms to incentivise the protection of spending on international activity by departments. In addition, to encourage more international outreach, we would suggest consideration is given to how government could incentivise public bodies linked to the arts, education and culture to increase the proportion of their work undertaken internationally and examine the potential to use tax incentives to encourage businesses to support or sponsor international cultural programmes which support UK soft power, like student exchange programmes and support international events like Expos and tours by UK arts companies.

6.32 Many of the UK's soft power assets are extremely valuable contributors to the UK economy and should be nurtured and supported by Government for that alone. While our universities and national cultural institutions – including the British Council – are demonstrating increasing entrepreneurialism in developing and growing their own income, public funding remains crucial to the fostering of young talent, the pursuit of excellence and the continual renewal of the UK's creative base. Government should be wary of cutting the relative modest funding for the arts and HE sectors as the limited short term impact on the Exchequer could have very serious implications for the economy in the long term if it damages the UK's research base or starves the creative industries of the talent necessary to drive innovation or dims the light of the country's cultural fires that does so much to lure tourists, students and investors to the UK. Further research on the value of the arts and education to the UK's soft power could be illuminating, potentially adding a significant premium to the existing economic case for investment.

6.33 Apart from the domestic economic arguments for public subsidy for arts and education, in terms of soft power, public money is also the lever by which Government can influence and co-ordinate the international activities of a vibrant, diverse creative economy to maximise impact for the UK's influence and attraction. Seasons need to be co-ordinated and the FCO and organisations like the British Council need to have the resources to administer and organise complex programmes and be able to support other participants' involvement.

6.34 Public money is needed to ensure the UK's soft power is deployed where it needs to be rather than just where it is profitable to be. It is essential to the British Council's work and presence in strategically important but fragile states where it would be impossible to generate an income to support our activities. If the UK wants to continue to operate across the whole spectrum of international relations on a global scale it will need to continue to invest public money on its soft power assets as well as on military hardware and development assistance.

6.35 Possible options:

- Further research on the effectiveness of different international strengths in soft power would enable the UK to learn from the experiences of others and take action to mitigate the risks of losing influence and reputation.
- Government should explore the potential of tax breaks and other incentives to encourage private sector support for international soft power programmes like scholarship schemes and international arts showcases and festivals that support the UK's strategic objectives.
- Government could consider funding models to support the expansion in the international activities of our great cultural institutions, potentially involving private as well as public money. For example: National Lottery money might be used to support international partnerships to bring new work to UK audiences and share the best of the UK's cultural assets overseas; Government could set up a challenge fund administered by a body like the Arts Council or the British Council to encourage organisations to develop more ambitious international touring programmes; and/or Government could bring forward targeted support to enable more institutions to take part in Cultural Seasons in strategically important countries.
- Government and agencies need to consider the potential opportunities and challenges of the explosive growth in social media and other people-to-people contacts in terms of the UK's soft power to maximise the benefits in terms of reach and impact.

7 Appendix – the British Council

About the British Council

7.1 The British Council creates international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and builds trust between them worldwide. We are on the ground in over 100 countries. We connect the UK with people around the world, sharing the UK's most attractive assets: the English language, the arts, education and our ways of living and organising society. We have over 75 years' experience as the UK's leading soft power agency.

7.2 We stand beside and complement the work of the Diplomatic Service, HM Armed Forces, DfID, UKTI and the BBC World Service, in representing the UK to the wider world. We are closely aligned with the FCO through our NDPB status and Board-level representation but, crucially, are operationally independent. Our key strength is that we work in the spirit of reciprocity – we not only take the UK to the world but we also help bring the world to the UK. We share rather than broadcast and discuss rather than lecture. In a very human way, we build trust between the people of the UK and the peoples of other nations.

7.3 We work with three main groups of people - young people in education, or starting out on their careers, the leaders of the next generation; those who are practitioners in their field, such as teachers, academics, artists and community leaders; and a smaller number of people who are leaders in their societies: in politics, business, education or the arts.

7.4 We act on behalf of the whole of the UK and have offices in Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh, London and Manchester. We work closely with the devolved administrations as well as with

the UK Government. We share the great cultural assets of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales with the rest of the world. We support the UK's higher education institutions to attract international students, promoting our universities globally. We work closely with partners like the Premier League, Arts Council Northern Ireland, the National Museums of Scotland and National Theatre Wales on projects in the UK and overseas, like Premier Skills, Derry-Londonderry 2013, the Edinburgh Festivals and the Dylan Thomas 100 Festival.

7.5 We work with the UK Government and international partners to deliver life-changing projects with truly global reach. With funding from DfID we are delivering training for 1650 teacher training college tutors in Tanzania to improve the training of 70,000 student primary and secondary school teachers. Through Badiliko, a programme run in partnership with Microsoft, we are establishing 90 solar-powered digital classrooms in six countries across Sub-Saharan Africa, training 3,000 teachers to use IT equipment and helping 100,000 students gain new employment skills. Our UK Now Festival in China brought 780 UK artists to 170 venues across 29 cities to reach more than four million attendees and was made possible through support from Government and private sector sponsors like Jaguar and Diageo.

7.6 Although the British Council has retained the same mission for which it was founded in 1934, it has transformed its delivery model to become an exemplar of the entrepreneurial public service approach that mixes public funding with self-generated income to deliver maximum impact at the lowest possible cost to taxpayers. In the current financial year the Foreign Office grant to the British Council is £162m out of total projected income of £833m. Government grant now represents less than 20% of the British Council's turnover; entrepreneurship delivers the rest through 'paid for' services, partnerships and work under contract. The grant-in-aid element of our funding model nevertheless remains vital, it underpins our presence and activity in countries that are strategically important to the UK's national interests but where there are very limited opportunities to generate income, for example in fragile and post-conflict states. It also supports the core infrastructure of our global network and enables the organisation to develop world-class content for our projects in English, education and the arts worldwide.

7.7 Our performance last year in figures:

- We reached over 553 million people worldwide;
- We worked with 10.8 million people face-to-face;
- 12.7 million people attended our exhibitions, fairs and festivals;
- In English we worked with 1.7 million policy makers, Government ministers, teachers and learners, 2.37 million exams candidates, 55.9 million website users and 143.8 million viewers, listeners and readers;
- In the arts we worked with 532,000 artists, art lovers, cultural leaders and ministers, 9.5 million exhibition, festival, event and performance attendees and 142.3 million viewers, listeners and readers; and
- In education and society we worked with 2.9 million education and citizenship exhibition and fair attendees, 5.9 million teachers, academics, education and youth sector leaders and young people and 14.7 million website users

How the British Council evaluates impact

7.8 The British Council's evaluation framework is grounded in a theory of change. Within the context of our overall strategy and purpose it sets out logically how our work in Arts, English, and Education and Society achieves positive change for our UK and overseas stakeholders. Such an approach is widely used by charities, social enterprises, government departments such as DFID and the private sector.

7.9 To measure the impact of our work we use a range of tools:

- We commission independent research. In the last year this has included the value of cultural relations activities to the UK business community: *Culture Means Business* and the impact of cultural relations in building trust for the UK: *Trust Pays*. The Trust research demonstrated that those people who had engaged in cultural activity with the UK had a higher level of trust in the people and government of the UK than those who had not. It also found that those who had engaged in cultural activity run by the British Council had a higher level of trust than those who had participated in activities provided by any other organisation.
- We conduct an annual impact survey of our global stakeholders to assess how our work contributes to professional development, institutional development, and to awareness of and sustainable links with the UK. Whilst these are not exact measures of soft power, they do indicate the extent to which people value the experience of participating in our programmes. This clearly is an important factor in determining whether they are likely to have an enhanced view of the UK after participating in these activities. In the last year we surveyed and received data from 5000 people who have participated in our programmes within the last 6 – 24 months. The results have confirmed that as a result of our work almost 80% of our overseas participants in our programmes have strengthened or created new links with the UK and 85% have increased their awareness of the UK contribution to their sector.
- We commission independent evaluation reports for our main programmes and have a system of internal reporting to understand how effectively our portfolio is delivering to its planned outcomes and delivering impact.
- We are subject to the scrutiny of government and parliament. In June, the Independent Commission on Aid Impact reported, "*The British Council's response to the Arab Spring has been considered, strategic and a good complement to the FCO's. It has a strong delivery model based on good local partnerships and beneficiary engagement and has proved effective at its core goal of skills development and individual empowerment, with some wider impact through social mobilisation.*"

September 2013

British Museum, British Council and BBC World Service – Oral evidence (QQ 63-92)

British Museum, British Council and BBC World Service – Oral evidence (QQ 63-92)

[Transcript to be found BBC World Service](#)

Dr Robin Brown – Written evidence

Introduction

1. This submission focusses on the role of government in building soft power for the UK. In particular it addresses the following issues.
 - a. How should we understand concepts of influence and soft power.
 - b. What is the current state of the UK's soft power
 - c. How should UK soft power be developed in the future.

The discussion here draws on research for a forthcoming book, *Public Diplomacies: Foreign Public Engagement in International Politics*, that explores the role of soft power strategies in since the 19th century.

What is Soft Power?

2. For the purposes of this submission influence refers to the ability of a country to get other people to support or cooperate with its external policies. Soft power is a broader concept relating to a country's attractiveness. External public engagement organizations are official or quasi-official organizations that are concerned with developing a country's soft power and influence. This used as an umbrella term to take in diplomatic, trade, cultural and broadcasting organizations,
3. Soft power is normally discussed in terms of attractiveness however it would be wrong to think merely in terms of a country's image. In practice we can see two interacting components relationships and reputation. Relationships between a country and those outside can come from many different sources for example trade, tourism, education, or scientific collaboration. Reputation comes both from the direct experience of relationships and from more generalized information about a country, for instance via the media or through a foreign country's educational system. Positive reputations encourage the formation of new relationships. Reputation can only be sustained over time if it supported by the appropriate relationships. Ideally, the work of building and maintaining relationships comes from those involved in them directly but where this is not feasible governments may provide support to create relationships which would not otherwise exist.

From this relational perspective several corollaries follow

4. Soft power is an aggregate of many different relationships. Relationships and reputations are built around many different areas of activity and may have very limited spillover. For instance a country's reputation for excellence in a particular scientific area may have little relevance beyond researchers in that area.
5. A country's reputation is different in sectors of activity and regions of the world. For instance a country may have a high reputation for the quality of its manufactured goods but not for tourism. While the Scandinavian countries enjoy a highly positive reputation in Europe and North America reputations are much less positive in the Middle East.
6. Relationships are about something, and require appropriate resources, if you don't have a flourishing cultural sector or HE institutions it's more difficult to form relationships in these areas just as a lack of military resources will reduce influence in networks around security issues.

7. Government and soft power interact in three ways.
 - a. Government policies support or obstruct the development of assets that people in other countries find attractive, for instance leading universities or innovative businesses.
 - b. Government develops mechanisms to make connections between soft power assets and foreign publics, for instance the work of the UKTI, the educational advisory role of the British Council, VisitBritain, the GREAT Campaign. Here government is facilitating the work of private actors.
 - c. Government draws on soft power assets to support its foreign policies, for instance using expertise from the NGO sector to influence foreign government thinking on an issue.
8. These three roles interact, it is much easier to facilitate where you have attractive assets in a country. Successful facilitation can lead to influence, where government by making a small investment leads to the creation of self-sustaining relationships. For instance during the Cold War the US support for performing arts, popular music and the publishing industry created networks that could then be sustained on a commercial basis. These networks then sustained interest in the US and ensured that its voice was heard. Existing connections between countries and a positive reputation ease the task of exerting influence. In turn the successful use of influence can ease the task of facilitation.
9. Because soft power is constructed in multiple networks there is no one size fits all strategy to build it. Three tensions need to be managed. Firstly, the tension between the domestic and international impact of domestically oriented policies. Restrictions on student visas may fulfil domestic policy needs but are extremely damaging for the ability to build relationships in the long term. Secondly, between the facilitative and influencing roles; what priority should each receive? Thirdly, between different policy areas. The plural nature of soft power creates major management problems. This is particularly the case for a country like the UK which has a broad range of soft power assets and wishes to exert influence across multiple regions and policy areas. The history of foreign public engagement in all countries demonstrates recurring struggles over the correct priorities and methods.
10. To summarize: we build influence by building positive and beneficial relationships and hence cultivating a positive reputation. But the influence effect of these relationships and reputations may not be fungible, but be confined to the network (set of relationships) concerned with a particular issue. This is consistent with the willingness of many people around the world to consume American popular culture but to still maintain hostile attitudes to the US.

The State of UK Influence

11. As Indicated by benchmarks such as the Anholt/GfK Nation Brand Index or Monocle IfG Soft Power Index the UK's national soft power is strong. An interesting perspective is offered by recent French debates on the *diplomatie d'influence*, these have focused on the role of specialist professional networks in influencing three areas, the specification of tenders for major projects, standard setting and the

development of policy ideas in each case the ability of the UK to operate effectively is a matter for envy.

12. The UK's current position is a product of relationships built up over a period of decades or centuries and reflects the central role of the UK in international relations, as well as consistent investment in soft power assets and foreign public engagement. However, there are challenges in the changing international environment and in the consequences of the current UK situation.
13. 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. Those same emerging powers are also investing in official public engagement networks and strategies in order to facilitate links with other countries, for instance China, Russia, South Korea, Turkey are all making major efforts to build their own networks of cultural centres. New state sponsored broadcasting organizations have emerged that compete with the BBC. The French external engagement machinery is also undergoing major revisions.
14. While general reputation is only one element of the ability of the UK to forge relations and build influence the impact of the financial crisis has been widely noted. In foreign policy circles the invasion of Iraq, followed by questions over the UK performance in Iraq and Afghanistan, plus defence cuts have all damaged UK reputation and influence. While these events may only have medium term impacts they play into a narrative of UK decline.

The State of the UK External Engagement Organization.

15. Compared with other 'big four' practitioners US, France and Germany, the basic organization of UK public engagement has been remarkably stable since the 1930s. This stability is seen other countries as a sign of the success and workability of the system. The system consisting of the FCO, a cultural relations organization; the British Council, an international broadcaster: BBC and a trade and investment promotion body; currently UKTI. Policy attention to this activity has varied over time; high in the 1950s and 1960s and low in the 1970s and 1980s. In the mid 1990s what had been referred to as 'information work' was rechristened, as 'Public Diplomacy'.
16. In 1997 the Labour government, launched a number of initiatives in relation to the UK's engagement organizations. It was believed that the post Cold War international environment demanded a new focus on public engagement strategies and that a more focused and coordinated approach was required. This work was given added impetus after 9/11 with the Wilton and Carter reviews of public diplomacy. These led to the creation of new coordinating mechanisms.
17. The interest in public diplomacy needs to be placed in the context of broader trends in UK foreign policy. Firstly, official foreign policy thinking has come to focus on a vision of what might be termed 'post-international politics' where the chief issues are 'global' such as terrorism or climate change that need to be addressed by international coalitions involving international organizations, states and NGOs. This tended to shift attention away from interstate relations. Secondly, reinforcing this

general vision was the concern with 'failed states', the successive experiences in the former Yugoslavia, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Iraq obviously drew much attention from MoD, DFID and the FCO and led to conceptual and organizational innovations to facilitate joint working in addressing these issues.

18. The arrival of the coalition government did indicate some change in direction as William Hague signalled that he wanted to give more attention to bilateral relationships, commercial diplomacy and key diplomatic skills. Despite the commitment to expanding the UK diplomatic network the pressure of spending cuts having dramatic effects beyond simply a reduction in the level of activity.
19. Under the pressure of the Olympics it appears that any general attempt to coordinate UK public diplomacy has been abandoned. A proposal for the NSC to develop a soft power strategy also appears to have lapsed.
20. Cuts in government resources have resulted in the British Council becoming increasingly dependent on other sources of funding and as such less responsive to government priorities. The transfer of the BBC World Service to license fee funding will over time produce a service that is reshaped by domestic license fee pressures and commercial opportunities. In both cases we can expect the organizations to follow the money and to become less responsive to foreign policy priorities.
21. The coalition government has committed the UK to spending 0.7% of GDP on aid as defined by the OECD DAC definition, at the same time it committed to spending 30% of aid in fragile states and in focusing aid on the poorest countries. In addition the 2002 Development Act requires DFID aid to be used for poverty reduction. Further the conclusion of reviews of aid carried out by the coalition limited the number of countries to which aid could be given. These multiple commitments place severe constraints on how aid can actually be delivered. Essentially the government is committed to spending more money in fewer countries in a way consistent with multiple policies. The FCO (and the British Council) has been set targets for their own ODA spend. Essentially as their own programme budgets are cut an increasing proportion of what remains must be ODA compliant. One of the attractions of a funding mechanism like the Conflict Pool is that it mixes ODA and non ODA budgets, in practice this reflects the fact that in conflict situations it may be necessary to spend non-ODA funds in order to facilitate ODA spend, for instance by providing security for development projects. The result is a further skewing of overall programme spending as a result of the ODA target. While the FCO does not have to meet the poverty reduction target not only are programme budgets being cut but the flexibility of what remains is being limited.

The result is that not only is the machinery used to build British influence being starved of resources it is becoming less capable, more fragmented and less flexible.

Towards a Soft Power Strategy for the UK

How can this situation be reversed?

22. The first step is a reassessment of what British foreign policy is for. Are the assumptions that have guided foreign policy over the past 15 years still relevant? What will British external policy need to look like in a Post-American or G-Zero world? Given the commitment of emerging powers to national sovereignty how does this affect the way that the UK should think about foreign policy? How will the UK

deal with radical changes in the EU whether as a result of a changing relationship between Eurozone and Non-Eurozone members or as a result of a UK referendum? Review the extent to which government priorities, departmental priorities and what departments are actually doing in the external area. To what extent are priorities really priorities rather than list of bullet points. Assess the balance between functional/issue priorities and country and regional ones. To what extent do foreign policy, development and defence policies mesh? Priorities for soft power should emerge from this reassessment.

23. Develop a cross-government soft power/influence doctrine that lays out the modes of soft power and influence that can be applied in different cases. What are the networks that can be constructed or mobilized? Here the developments around failed states provide a useful model. Because this is an area where DFID, MoD and FCO need to work together there has been considerable effort to develop shared strategies, approaches and funding mechanisms. A similar approach can be applied around the influence agenda. For instance a cross-government understanding of how influence can be used in support of external policy goals. Part of this approach is about developing routine collaboration across agencies, this needs to happen both in Whitehall and overseas. This concept will need to consider both long and short term programmes of work.
24. At an organizational level the soft power concept needs to be developed on a cross-government basis. The Cabinet Office should work with the FCO and other departments to monitor internal and external developments that affect the UK's soft power.
25. Aspirations to cooperate need to be backed up with resources. The ability of the UK government to support the development of soft power and to use influence in support of UK policy goals is dependent on adequate funding. While the FCO has been expanding its network, and presence is a foundation of influence, the reduction in programme resources, combined with ODA requirements place narrow limits on what can be done. While the 0.7% target gives the UK influence in issues around aid it gives very little benefit outside these networks. In pure influence and soft power terms some of the resources would be better employed elsewhere, for instance in building relations with emerging powers.
26. Again drawing on the experience with the Conflict Pool funding mechanism, an Engagement Pool that could be drawn on to support soft power and influence projects would be a useful way encourage greater involvement across government and beyond.
27. The success of soft power strategies both in facilitating the work of the non-government sector and in developing influence depends on the ability of non-government and government organizations to work together. It would be valuable to conduct a cross government review of the networks that outward facing agencies maintain in the UK; for instance in diaspora communities, business, NGOs, consultants, think tanks, universities. How extensive are these networks? Do they include the right people and organizations. Is there scope for different organizations to draw on each other's networks? Do these networks give the best understanding of the resources available to UK actors. External facing departments would benefit from being able to draw on the widest range of resources.

Dr Robin Brown – Written evidence

28. Government agencies with primarily domestic remits should be required to give some attention to potential international impacts of their decisions and programmes even. In particular agencies with business, education, scientific, cultural and community responsibilities have role to play.

Dr Robin Brown

18 September 2013

This evidence is being submitted in personal capacity

Centre for World Cinemas, University of Leeds and B: Film: The Birmingham Centre for Film Studies – Written evidence

1. This submission is informed by two projects currently being led by the Centre for World Cinemas at the University of Leeds: 'Film Policy, Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power' (funded by the Worldwide Universities Network) and 'Screening European Heritage: History on Film, the Heritage Industry and Cultural Policy' (funded by the AHRC and run in collaboration with B-Film: The Birmingham Centre for Film Studies). Both projects examine the way film and film policy around the world supports the use of the visual media as a vehicle for the communication of national identity and historical understanding at home and abroad. This process of communication plays a key role in the generation of a nation's soft power. For the UK, film is particularly important in this regard, with film policy being crucial to ensuring that the soft power of the nation's visual culture is fully leveraged.
2. We welcome the committee's return to Joseph Nye's foundational definition of soft power in its introductory comments. In recent years there has been a significant increase in discussion of this term. Soft power is a complex idea, defined by, and related to, a whole host of policy areas (economic policy, public diplomacy, foreign policy etc). However, it also has a distinct role within this landscape which is often ignored, particularly in popular discussions of the term where it is frequently conflated with discussions of economic imperialism and/or cultural propaganda. At the heart of our understanding of soft power is the imperative to gain international influence and promote domestic economic growth *through the attractiveness* of one's culture and values, effectively communicated to external audiences.
3. The cultural industries in general, and the media in particular, have long been understood to play a key role in the generation of soft power and are considered to be central to the UK's current position as the leading nation in the IfG-Monocle Soft Power Index. The nation's success in this year's survey is viewed by many commentators to be the result of events such as the filmmaker Danny Boyle's Olympic opening ceremony as well as the international impact of certain British historical dramas from *The King's Speech* (2010) to *Downton Abbey* (2010-).
4. We particularly welcome the committee's intention to 'learn from others' in its deliberations. The relationship between soft power *avant la lettre* and film policy is long and there are numerous examples of where it has failed to be generated. Here one might mention US foreign cultural policy in Germany in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, where Hollywood imports were used as a straightforward 're-education' tool. While the ethos of, for example, John Ford's westerns was perceived by the US authorities as a perfect vehicle to explain the advantages of Western democracy, their often racist presentation of native Americans was instead viewed by many German audiences as reflecting an ideology reminiscent of National Socialism (for further discussion see the work of Jennifer Fay 2008). Or, we might mention the European film-funding schemes MEDIA and Eurimages. While the main aim of these schemes is to support the development of a sustainable European film industry, they are also rooted in the creation of a common, if loosely defined, understanding of European identity which can both help cement cultural links across the region and enable European cultural productions to have a global impact. Unfortunately, a large percentage of the films produced by these schemes fail to find any substantial audience, either at home or abroad. Such films are often condemned as

'europuddings' which, as the scholar Randall Halle notes, invariably have to appeal to the 'lowest common denominator' in their search of a common understanding of Europeanness, and in the process fail to connect with the public (Halle 2008). Equally problematic were the efforts in the 1980s by the Basque authorities to produce a series of historical epics that attempted to dictate a wholly affirmative understanding of Basque citizenship, all of which failed to connect with spectators. Finally, one might note 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.

5. In each of these cases, policies have failed because they have attempted, at the very least, to control audiences' understanding of a given film, at worst, the creative act of filmmaking itself. In the process, such policies have tended to produce banal films that have been dismissed as propaganda, however thinly disguised, by audiences. That said, many of these industries have clearly also enjoyed success and have wielded great influence that attests to their being instrumental in the generation of soft power. Hollywood dominates the world's cinema screens due to the attractiveness of its product for a huge proportion of the global population. European funding, along with European distribution and exhibition networks, have been instrumental in the success of numerous films, not least *The King's Speech* which, along with substantial support from the now disbanded UK Film Council, was also funded by MEDIA. And, of course, for many popular commentators at least, it is now seen as inevitable that China's influence in the global media landscape is set to rise, demonstrated most obviously in recent discussions between US studios and the state-owned distribution company, the 'China Film Group'. However, the success of China in the generation of soft power via its film industry will be contingent on it learning from the types of failed attempts outlined in paragraph 4 above, and specifically in allowing filmmakers to produce work that can critically engage with Chinese society and history and, in so doing, connect with audiences at home and abroad.
6. With regard to the situation in the UK, we would like to support the findings of the 2012 Smith report on the British Film Industry ('A Future for British Film'), as well as the government's and industry's response to it. We also welcome the British Council's 2013 report 'Influence and Attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century', in particular its emphasis on 'mutuality' and the need to foster genuine cross-cultural engagement and understanding for soft power to be nurtured and sustained.
7. The success of the British Film Industry as an engine for the generation of soft power lies in its ability to i) connect with audiences, both at home and abroad through the design and marketing of films that generate high earnings and critical acclaim – in short, that people wish to see; ii) coordinate available domestic funding, working closely in collaboration with the television industry and new media platforms, and maximising training opportunities in these areas iii) engage proactively with transnational funding opportunities within and beyond Europe.
8. With this in mind, we also welcome the BFI's recently published international strategy with its emphasis on audience development activity and production. Currently, two thirds of box office returns for UK films are earned abroad. We agree with the strategy to coordinate the efforts of key cultural and film industry organisations, under the leadership of the BFI, with the aim of developing long-term relationships with international audiences. We also

welcome the development of a UK film 'brand' and the 'We are UK Film' initiative. However, we also stress the need for a flexible approach to branding in order to reflect and support the great diversity of UK film production and to ensure that the identity of UK film is led by individual creativity rather than 'top down' prescriptive criteria.

9. There is a good deal of excellent practice internationally that we might draw on to explore further the soft power potential of film. A small country like Denmark, for instance, has managed to maintain a varied film culture and produce domestic as well as international successes through a funding policy focussed on the 'bottom up' nurturing of talent, and encouraging different kinds of productions for different kinds of audiences. This, in turns, offers an example of soft power as a multivalent phenomenon that can, in fact, be utilised not only internationally but also domestically. The European art-house hit *Flame and Citron* (2008), for example, offered a differentiated and nuanced account of the Danish resistance against the Nazi occupation. In the process the film not only won foreign audiences through an emotionally engaging portrayal of the past, it also showcased a positively self-critical image of Denmark's role during the war, in turn helping to enhance the nation's international moral standing. By contrast, the domestic production *This Life* (2012) re-enacted more straightforwardly heroic acts of resistance for the national audience, to tremendous popular acclaim.
10. It is only through the continued nurturing of the industry's relationship with international audiences and the focussed marketing of UK films abroad, along with a creativity-focussed approach to film development at home, that the country will be able to maintain the international impact of its film in the face of superior levels of investment in production and marketing from other parts of the world (Hollywood, China) that the UK can never hope to match.

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September 2013

Professor Michael Cox, London School of Economics (LSE), John Micklethwait, The Economist and Lord Williams of Baglan, Chatham House – Oral evidence (QQ 23-41)

Evidence Session No.2

Heard in Public

Questions 23 - 41

MONDAY 24 JUNE 2013

Members present

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

Witnesses

Professor Michael Cox, Professor of International Relations, Head of Programme for Transatlantic Relations, Co-Director of LSE-IDEAS, London School of Economics (LSE), **John Micklethwait**, Editor-in-Chief, *The Economist*, and **Lord Williams of Baglan**, Chatham House

Q152 The Chairman: Gentlemen, thank you very much for coming to talk to us. We value your presence and ideas very deeply. I will go through a couple of formalities. You have in front of you a written declaration of the interests of all the Committee Members around you. That will give you a rough idea of where they are coming from, or where they are not coming from in some cases. Secondly, Lord Williams, I believe you indicated that you would like to make an opening statement. Professor Cox and Mr Micklethwait, feel free to do so or not, according to your inclination. Lord Williams, you got the first bid in, so please go first.

Lord Williams of Baglan: I just wanted to declare some interests. I am the international trustee of the BBC. I am also a governor of the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London, and a member of the council of Swansea University. Finally, I am a

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member of a Carnegie-endowment project on political change in the Middle East, which has taken me to Istanbul, Cairo and Beirut in the past two months. Finally, if I may, I will refer to my role as a trustee of the BBC. It is perhaps relevant to what the Committee is looking at that later this week we will announce that the BBC has reached its highest ever global audience. We have surpassed the figure of 250 million, which was the target for 2015. I am particularly pleased, given the tumult in that part of the world, that the audiences for the Arabic service and the Farsi or Persian service have grown substantially.

Q153 The Chairman: Thank you very much. That is a very telling statistic. I hope that this Committee will have the opportunity to speak with your BBC colleagues—in fact, we will—as well as with other parts of the global information network in due course. That is a very significant sign. Thank you for making that comment. Your interests confirm my view that we are very lucky to have you here, and that you are ideally equipped to share your views with us.

I will start with what sounds like a general question. As a Committee, we are anxious to corral this very broad subject and ensure that we do not just end up with generalities but focus on what is going on and what the major changes are that public policy should take account of. Are we just looking at diplomacy in new forms, or is there some new factor, possibly connected with the cyberworld and the informational revolution, that means that the whole analysis of soft power becomes much more relevant to the activities of government, to the priorities of the country and to public diplomacy generally? That is the first question, and it gives you plenty of scope. I will start with the economist. Mr Micklethwait, you are an editor who oversees the world every week. Please give us your views.

John Micklethwait: Well, I, too, should declare an interest. I am a trustee of the British Museum. In some ways that affects some of these things in the same way as the BBC.

I think that something has changed in terms of soft power. I do not think that it has changed dramatically in terms of diplomacy, which still continues to be a business of people talking to people. In terms of the way that things are projected, there has been a change in soft power. I will use the British Museum as an example. You can reach a vast number of people, all the way round the world, much more easily via digital forms than ever before. You can also see that with the *Economist*. You have ever more means of distributing knowledge and, by extension, to some extent soft power, right the way round the world. In our case, the big change is, first, the internet, and secondly, particularly from our point of view, the rise of tablets. Each week, for example, you have the choice wherever you are between receiving the *Economist* in print, on a tablet or in audio form. The German Chancellor listens to it on audio and then complains about it afterwards, or Jimmy Carter receives it on his iPad at lunchtime in Plains, Georgia, and then receives his print edition a couple of days later. That is obviously an extended commercial for my own institution. However, beneath that there is a change in soft power, which is much more immediate and direct in terms of its ramifications.

Until recently—Mick might be particularly good at putting this across—it tended to be cumulative. You collected soft power by the general extension of your actions. Now in the digital world, there has been a change—although not a complete reversal—whereby soft power can also be achieved dramatically and immediately through that digital reach. Wherever they are, people are able to see things. You can see that in the news today, and in the immediate reaction to quite small things that affects the way countries are perceived. So that opens up another avenue. The question for government is whether that is a completely new and different way of reaching things, and something that needs to be tackled in a wholly

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different way, or whether most of it is simply doing what you do anyway, but applying a slightly digital edge to it. I suspect that it is probably slightly in the second category.

Q154 The Chairman: You have put the question back very clearly indeed. It is the question of whether the Government, in the organisation of its interface with other countries and its dealing in international relations, has to revise its procedures in this age of total connectivity.

Professor Michael Cox: I do not think that I have any interests to declare, other than that I have been a professor at the London School of Economics for 11 years, Aberystwyth for seven and Queen's University for what seems like the previous 20. I take a rather different view to John's. We did not rehearse this and I do not suppose you would want us all to sing from the same hymn sheet, so I will make it a bit more interesting. I think soft power is not something you can put on and off like a shirt, or polish up like a pair of shoes to get ready for a job interview. It is something more structural. Joe Nye is the reason we are all sitting here in this room. In the original sense, I think he meant "soft power" as a structural concept. It is what a system possesses other than its hard military or economic power. It is the message about itself that it sends around the world. That is not the same thing as propaganda. It is the image of a particular country, held by a fair number of people, for good or ill. Structurally this building is the embodiment of a political idea. That is soft power. Over the weekend, I visited Kelmscott, William Morris's wonderful house in Oxfordshire, and was struck by how many overseas visitors were there. I did not immediately think, "Ah, I will be talking about soft power on Monday", but it struck me that this is structural, and part of the deeper essence of what you might call the British way of life. I half go along with John on the movements and changes that have taken place, but there are some more fundamental structural—although I would not say unchangeable—things that are embodied in civil society and the way we do things, such as having lots of bookshops and critical students, and overseas academics coming to study here. Those kinds of things are much more structural.

The second thing I would add to that is that it is very important not to make a sharp separation between hard and soft power. Sometimes we think that hard power is real power and soft power is the fuzzy stuff. Quite a lot of soft power derives from hard power. If your economy does not work, which is part of hard power, you are not going to have a great deal of soft power. If your soldiers misbehave overseas, that will weaken your soft power. If your soldiers behave well overseas, that will strengthen your soft power. I often see a kind of a Chinese wall put between the two concepts, whereas we should think of it as a totality in which one very much depends on the success of the other. By the way, when Joe Nye, who is a friend of mine, tried to formulate this idea in a modern context for President Obama, he said, "Let's not talk about hard or soft power, let's call it smart power". Secretary of State Clinton picked up on that. It is interesting to see the two coming together. Going back to the original point, there is something more structural about it than something that can be easily changed and moves from week to week.

Lord Williams of Baglan: This is a difficult question and a very broad one. It seems that soft power has had more effect on the governance of states than on international relations per se. There is a difference there. The chief actors in international relations are now almost the same as they were 500 years ago: namely, states. Of course, the number of states has proliferated. There are some non-state actors and there are international organisations such as the UN, NATO and the EU, but essentially it is about states. Where soft power has had the greatest impact is on the governance of states, whether they are rich or poor, large or small. Frankly, in some ways it has made the task of governance, whether in countries with long democratic traditions such as ours or newly independent states elsewhere, for example

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in Africa, more difficult. It has forced Governments to react at a far quicker pace than they would have done not 50 years ago but 10 or 20 years ago. Collectively, we have seen this in our own political experiences and careers over the past 20 to 25 years. That is an issue. There is also the issue that in some ways soft power, as well as informing populations, has enabled challenges to government to come at a quicker pace, sometimes in a more unorthodox manner and sometimes in a more challenging if not threatening manner. I think of the rioting in London and other cities two summers ago, and the way that the tools of soft power such as Facebook and Twitter were used by those who were so obviously discontented. It is somewhat different, but I can see something similar—I found it striking—in two of the BRICS, the fast-developing countries, Brazil and Turkey, within a month of each other. Seemingly small disputes, over a hike in bus fares in one case, in Sao Paulo, and over the Government of Turkey wanting to take over a park, were bread and butter issues of local politics, but all of a sudden, through soft power, became challenges to government. That is an issue. There is an issue for foreign ministries. They have to bring this into their diplomacy—that is a considerable challenge—and use all the tools such as the internet, Twitter and Facebook. I am not speaking particularly of the FCO, but foreign ministries generally have been one of the more traditional pillars of government, if I might put it that way. They have not had to respond to their citizens in the way that domestic departments such as health, education or law and order do on an almost daily basis. So it has produced challenges and difficulties for foreign ministries, and it is something that increasingly they have to get on top of.

Q155 Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Lord Williams, every time I think about what soft power is, it slips away like jelly. You appear to be describing as soft power the ability of people to communicate with each other and organise themselves through the internet and the various devices that can be added to it. Is that really any different? I can see that it changes the way people co-ordinate direct action, but we have had direct action since Peterloo and the Chartists. The fact that people can communicate and that things can be made more widely known is a technological development, but is it really soft power? Are we confusing the media with the message?

Lord Williams of Baglan: I see your point, and you are right that in essence it is technology, but it produces a soft power that was not there before. If it was not for technology in Sao Paulo and Istanbul, would people, not in their thousands but in their tens of thousands, have taken to the streets over an increase in bus fares or moves to close a park?

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: I see that, but I would regard that as direct action rather than soft power. To me, it is the opposite of soft power.

Professor Michael Cox: I will jump in here. I think to be fair to Nye, soft power in the way he uses it is not a jelly-like concept. I think that he meant it in three general senses. First, it is the broad model that a society has, and whether it has appeal beyond the borders of that society. Sometimes systems that you dislike may have an appeal beyond their borders. The old USSR had a message of liberation, socialism and industrialisation that had an appeal way beyond its own borders. It is not primarily the means of communication but the story you tell about yourself. Nye meant the things that any society does at any one time that cannot simply be grouped into hard military or economic power, such as bookshops, the level of tolerance, the rule of law, how you deploy your power, and how fair or unfair you seem as a society. It has a jelly-like quality, and I agree that it is not the means of communication or even the message but the story you have to tell about your society. Quite often you do not have to tell it. Joe Nye says there is a massive distinction between propaganda and a soft power story. Propaganda is what you have to sell hard. Soft power—I get back to my

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structural argument—is what you have. Sometimes even not selling it is a good form of soft power, because you do not have to keep boasting and shouting about it all the time.

Q156 Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: That is what I wanted Professor Cox to tell us a bit more about: what we say about ourselves. Michael Forsyth might have a different vision from me of the United Kingdom and what he wants to project. You mentioned this building, which is actually crumbling—you should go down the corridor and hope for the best. I would like us to abandon it and move into a modern, effective building that could be more efficient, but that is another matter. You have clarified that there are two things. One is how we see ourselves and the second is how we get that over to whoever we want to get it over to, how we get it to them and so on. Is that right?

Professor Michael Cox: Yes. This may make it 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, which gets back to the jelly-like quality mentioned by Lord Forsyth. It is rather more amorphous, like jelly, to that extent. Often it is not something you have to sell. This is why I made the point with John earlier; it is more about what your society and system are.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: We need to define that, for example as democracy and the rule of law.

Professor Michael Cox: Often others will define it for you, without you doing very much about it—although we have lost certain parts of the world and will never get them back.

John Micklethwait: Lord Forsyth is right. You can make this point about the whole of society and the way in which digital ideas are distributed, as happened—and is still happening—in Brazil and Turkey. Certainly what Joe Nye was talking about was a Government's ability to project power, sometimes within its borders but on the whole beyond its borders. I would advise the Committee with great respect to stick to that issue, which seems the most relevant. Mick and I are to some extent arguing over the edge of a pin, because I certainly agree that most of this is cumulative. It is the building, and the things that Britain has done in the past. But there is something new, to do with the interaction of these new things, that makes a difference. The bit I would argue about is that you are seeing some places making a deliberate attempt to project that. China has its Confucius Institutes, which are half-successful. They are deliberate soft-power organisations. They do a bit and give the idea that the Chinese are interested in things. The Chinese are trying to put across the idea that state capitalism is a good idea. But the main way in which China has increased its soft power—going back to what Mick first said—is entirely to do with the fact that its economy has done really well. It is much easier to use this to persuade the leaders of Russia or African countries, or any of the people you meet on an irregular basis. They are lured to China not by the Confucius Institutes but because the economy is doing well and they believe that their self-interest lies there.

From a British point of view, the reasonable question to ask is that we are generally seen—certainly Joe Nye would put this to you—as having been extremely good at soft power. We have good diplomats, the advantage of the British language, the BBC, the British Museum or whatever. We have vast panoply of things. The question now is whether we are still good at it, and I would argue that we have become lazy at it. That is the main thing that comes through to me. I will use the British Museum as an entirely self-interested example. We were looking at why the British Museum should rightfully and brilliantly continue to receive nearly the same amount of money from the Government as it currently does. I should add that the British Museum gets less money in real terms than it did in 1997, and the National

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Health Service gets twice as much. You can read into that something about the efficiency of states, which Lord Williams was talking about. The point is that I imagined that if you took the wide array of culture represented on this panel and asked any government Minister where they saw the future of Britain and Britain's strength, they would tend to come back and talk about learning, education, the media and museums. They tend to see all those things, but there is no organisation that even puts together a number for how much those industries are worth, let alone begins to campaign on their behalf. Britain generally is rather lazy on all those things. In some ways it is staggering how little we do.

The Chairman: What is it all for? The judgment surely depends on what the outcomes are. If we have grown soft and sloppy about our soft power, does that reflect the fact that we have grown soft and inefficient about our prosperity, trade and international security, because that is what it is all about?

John Micklethwait: I should let the others come in, but I will quickly say yes: it is, by definition. If you persuade students to come here and study regardless of your views on immigration, they tend to be people who are putting money into the economy. If you encourage people to come here to see the museums, watch television programmes, study or go for courses, that is all part of the same thing. It is a huge thing. If you ask most economists what the sources are of Britain's competitive advantage, they come back with the City, the high-tech end of manufacturing and various service industries. Then you come back with this wide array of culture through to learning, I suppose, in which a lot of people are employed already. There is no really cohesive attempt to look at that abroad.

Q157 Baroness Hussein-Ece: I was interested when Lord Williams was talking because I was thinking about what had happened in Turkey and Brazil over the past few weeks in relation to what we are doing in this Committee. I am particularly interested in Turkey: my family background is there. It struck me when Lord Williams was talking about soft power and the way that a message had gone across to mainly young people who were disengaged with the Government and what the Government were doing. What also struck me was the Government's inability to adapt and respond to those who were demonstrating. They seemed to be completely out of step. In fact the Prime Minister started condemning Twitter and social media as evils that were disrupting the country and that it was all a big plot. Ironically, he is a very enthusiastic user of these social networks to get across his own message.

Do you agree that the sort of new soft power of digital and social media networks reach way beyond the borders of a country and a society and holds up a bit of a mirror, as it did in Turkey and Brazil, to the particular society and its institutions? That is especially so in Turkey where there is secularism versus a conservative Islamic government. I wanted you to comment on that because we use these sorts of new network very effectively. When something like that happens, how do we respond now compared with 20 years ago? Are we using these tools appropriately to get across the right messages to help some parts of the world—some of these younger democracies—become more democratic, tolerant and to adopt some of these principles? Are we using them effectively?

Lord Williams of Baglan: Us as the UK? I think on the whole we are. One of the extraordinary things about this country that I always took great pride in when I lived in Asia, the Balkans and so on is the generally favourable way in which the UK is seen. There are an enormous number of reasons for that. People have referred to the BBC. There are our universities. In the top 50 universities in the world, seven are British. That is not bad. There are obviously many American universities, but when you look at the rest of Europe, only

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three are in the top 50—two Swiss and one German, if I am correct. Our NGOs have played an extraordinary role. Save the Children was established in 1919 just after the First World War. Oxfam was established in the middle of the Second World War, in 1942. Amnesty International was established at the height of the Cold War in 1961. Many other NGOs dedicated themselves to the care of the disadvantaged within the UK. But what is interesting is that these organisations—Save the Children, Oxfam and Amnesty International—from the beginning, looked overseas. You find very few European competitors like that. That has something to do with the tradition of governance in the UK compared with Europe, where in many countries there were strong traditions of authoritarianism that have not allowed for a full ripening of civil society. I think that we can be proud of our heritage with regard to soft power and proud too that it still makes an enormous impact across the globe. You mentioned the BBC. John is the editor of an international newspaper: its headquarters is here in London. We also have the *Financial Times*, which is another global newspaper. Now you can go anywhere in the world and get the *FT* on the day of publication. Our assets are extraordinarily rich. Whether there is more that we as the UK and the Government can do in supporting this and bringing wider attention to it may be something that the Committee could look at.

Q158 The Chairman: Professor Cox?

Professor Michael Cox: I visited Turkey recently. I was in Istanbul a week before the riots—no connection. One of the things that I lectured on to a group of businesspeople—not Turkish but international—was the question of soft power. It is obviously the case that we are now witnessing a series of disturbances in a number of urban centres across Turkey—in Istanbul, Ankara and one or two others. But what is striking about AKP—a Government with which I do not have massive ideological sympathy—is that none the less it has been hugely successful. It won one election and then it won two more. What it did, which is what a lot of Governments do not do, is increase its vote as it went along. One of the reasons that it did that, quite clearly, was the economy. The same argument that John gave for China works equally well for Turkey. GDP has gone up two or three times. Living standards have gone up by an equal amount. Living standards in poor Anatolian regions have come up. New business groups have come in from Anatolia. It is not dominated by the European elites as it once was. Erdogan himself is very pro-European, and in formal terms, in some senses, remains so. If you look at Turkey in its own region, as opposed to how it is being reported in the West, although I do not know what impact the riots and disturbances have had, it was quite striking. Turkey had an enormous amount of soft power in its own region. There were opinion polls in Egypt and right across the Middle East. You know this, John. You had some in your own journal.

What was very interesting is that Turkey emerged with an approval rating of about 75% as a model of a dynamic market economy in that region of the world which can, importantly, combine some form of Islam culturally and politically with an appearance to democracy. What is interesting about Turkey is the speed with which one can lose soft power as well. The real danger for Erdogan or his AKP Government is the speed at which he may now be losing some of that soft power. Way before, he had enormous amounts of it. That soft power for Turkey was frankly quite an advantage for this country. It was quite a strong advantage for the West. If I can put it straightforwardly, one thing that we do not have very much of is a decent model of how you combine economic development from a religious state and democracy within that particular region of the world. Therefore, what happens in Turkey does not just have Turkish significance, it has huge ramifications for the region and for us.

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John Micklethwait: I was going to say almost exactly the same thing. The interesting thing about Turkey is that you go to Egypt and all these different areas, many of which, we should not forget, did not view the Turks with huge enthusiasm. But in the Arab spring everyone who saw it as a glass half full has seen Turkey as the model to which they are going. You have the various Muslim brotherhoods who have some links. What intrigues me is the idea of whether what has happened in the past two or three weeks has hurt that soft power. What is also interesting is that although you might expect it to be that way, at least some of the evidence of what Erdogan has been doing—economists have definitely felt this—is that you get attacked repeatedly as being part of the western media who are stirring up trouble and interfering in the life of Turkey. If he can pull that off, to some extent, by saying, “Look. I am the person who represents most of Turkey. I’m a democrat”, he might be able to hang on to some of that soft power. The lesson for most countries is that soft power only really works if it is broadly in accordance with what you stand for anyway. If you try and claim that you are something you are not, it is like one of those advertising campaigns: it does not really work. Turkey on the whole—and we have probably all been to Turkey recently—is broadly correct. Turkey is a democracy and it has been reasonably tolerant in different ways. It has helped with the army and done various things. That is not a bad image to project across the Arab world at the moment, even allowing for the really rather awful things that are happening at the moment. So my instinct for Britain, which I agree is a very long jump from Turkey, is that we are strongest when what we are trying to project in terms of soft power is something that is inherently true.

The Chairman: Credible.

Baroness Hussein-Ece: There is a danger. Sitting in Parliament here, we have questions about that region, and we tend to look at it from the western perspective and do not quite see it in the way that Professor Cox described. People from that region or different parts of the world see things in a different way from the way that we do. Incidentally, Turkey uses soft power, as we see from their own soaps, with their own history, which have a huge following and are followed enthusiastically all round the Middle East. Apparently, they have been so successful with people tuning into their programmes. They have used it very effectively in the way that we have been doing for a long time.

Q159 Lord Ramsbotham: I have been reflecting on two things that Michael Williams said. If I can reflect a little before that, I was thinking about the projection of the image and back to the Falklands war when, thanks to a technological accident, as it were, television was not available and everything had to come out by radio. It was very interesting how much better informed people were by the radio than the television, which was presenting a very isolated image. That leads me on to reflect on the image as presented by television because of thinking about the people who are going to receive it. They receive a flickering something, but not a picture. Therefore, if it is going to be used as a weapon for the projection of something, it is almost a propaganda tool. The reason I mention that is because—thinking about Michael’s point about whether this should be co-ordinated, and all three of you have mentioned various disparate aspects of the soft power—last week, when we were talking about it with officials here, the National Security Council came into play as being a co-ordinator. The one thing we are not talking about is security. We are talking about other things. My question is: do you think this is something that can be co-ordinated and, if so, by whom?

Lord Williams of Baglan: Certainly not the NSC. I think John might have some objections to that. It is a difficult question that you pose. What we have done successfully is that NGOs and institutions such as the BBC, the British Museum and others have thrived in

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Britain in a way that puts us at a considerable advantage, even with regard to many of our European neighbours, so we are getting something right. That is something we should be proud of. We need to create an environment where these sorts of organisations continue to grow and to flourish. I am a little hesitant about co-ordination, although there might be some cases where that might be helpful. Perhaps, for example, with regard to universities and higher education, there needs to be some co-ordination. With regard to the press and broadcasting, not at all, John would say, and I suppose John is right on that. NGOs are feisty little organisations, and the last thing they want is a degree of political control. Maybe there is more that government can do in creating an enabling environment, both domestically and internationally. We should want to see from Governments tolerance for British soft power, which there is, and the ability for our NGOs to operate in Africa, Asia or wherever it might be.

Professor Michael Cox: I said earlier that the idea of a Ministry of Soft Power or whatever strikes me. This is where the Confucius Institutes go wrong, and a whole bunch of things that China does simply go wrong because it just looks like government and state propaganda and therefore, by definition, people do not believe it. It has to be bottom-up.

There are two ways I think about this—or one way maybe. Always ask the question: what impact has a policy we pursue had on something that we vaguely understand to be jelly-like soft power? We know there is something out there called our image, our reputation, our whatever. We know there is something out there, even if we cannot be very precise about what it is. Ask the question: what impact on this rather vague, nebulous concept are our actions, policies and even our words going to have on the world out there because we live in a world where things go viral very quickly?

I can think of two things, without getting party-political on this, because that is not what you want. First, visas in higher education is a classic case. The policy was pursued, no doubt for good reasons to do with public opinion, immigration and students. We know all about that stuff. The consequence is that out there in the world, in countries such as India and other countries, particularly the rest—and we are talking about the rest later—it does feed in. I have been asked in many countries in the world: “Why have you got such rotten visa regulations?” It makes the country look more closed than it really is. Secondly, it is going to have impacts on recruitment in higher education. It is the unintended consequence. Nobody asked the question, that is what I am saying.

The other thing—I can say this without any interest in my career on the BBC, if it comes to that—is the impact of this now huge soft power institution, particularly of the World Service, but many of the other aspects. Did anybody ask the question? Maybe somebody did and nobody thought it was a very interesting question. It is asking that question: what are going to be the consequences? The worst thing that often happens in most policies is the unintended consequences. Nobody sets out to do things that are counterproductive, but they often are, as we well know. This is true of universities as much as it is of government. It is just asking that question: “What effect do you think it is going have?”, however vague this concept may well be.

Q160 The Chairman: John Micklethwait?

John Micklethwait: Again, I had almost exactly the same notes. I think that visas are just a crime. I am very happily party-political. 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 bitterly resented. It is completely useless in terms of recruiting people. You

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look at something like the recent visa kerfuffle in Brazil. We have just spent a huge amount of money sending government Ministers out there. We then made it virtually impossible for Brazilians to come here, and whatever small plus point there was with all the money going to Brazil was completely wiped out overnight. At least the very first thing that Governments should try to do is do no harm.

There is a second point. There is some element of co-ordination that Governments can do. I was generally 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—although I was not looking through that particular lens. You could rapidly get 200,000 or 300,000 people being employed in them without even spending more than half an hour on Wikipedia. That is considerably bigger than a lot of industries that receive a lot of government attention.

I suspect that it comes as no surprise to readers of the *Economist* that I am not pro state subsidies in a massive way, but it is interesting that these institutions tend to get cut more than other ones. So at least from that perspective I would take the attitude that that is part of Britain not thinking about these things. You can go the other way and say that France takes a very positive attitude towards these things and does not always get it right, but if you were trying to look at any long-term version of British competitiveness—not just to do with projecting soft power but also in terms of economic competitiveness—you would at least be trying not to do harm to these industries. That alone would be a mild plea from my end.

In terms of security, it strikes me that if you give the issue of visas to the security people, then, on the one hand, I cannot imagine them being in a rush to grant visas to young Arab students at this precise moment but, on the other hand, in terms of Britain's soft power, that would be a big and wonderful thing.

There is one tiny thing on Turkey that I should like to come back to. I should have said that a large part of Turkey's soft power within the region has been the fact that under Erdogan it has got considerably more hostile towards Israel. If you look at the way in which soft power is built by some powers but not necessarily by Britain, it is in large part in the definition of hostility towards other people. A lot of China's soft power in Asia comes from its hostility to Japan. You could follow that in different areas, and that is another way in which you encourage it, although I am not necessarily recommending that you go down that route.

The Chairman: Is it also about who your friends are? Turkey having moved somewhat away from America, would you say that the same applies to us?

John Micklethwait: That is a very good question and I will give you a personal answer. From the *Economist's* point of view, I think we have always had a mild advantage over American competitors in terms of the coverage of foreign events. If you are an American news magazine, you run the risk that America always has a dog in every fight. There is no issue anywhere in the world where America is not heavily implicated one way or the other. There are some areas where we get criticised, and no doubt the BBC does as well. Very occasionally you get the aspect that you are trying to reintroduce colonialism or whatever, but on the whole most people do not see us in that light. So I think that there is an advantage for Britain in this area because we are not seen—however reluctantly by your Lordships—as a global superpower. We are seen as a kind of cultural force, and one which is close to America but not having exactly the same goals.

Q161 Baroness Prosser: Can I go back to the business of digital communications? While I agree, of course, that the use of such tools has been hugely beneficial in co-ordinating activity, it seems to me that the most important thing that has come out of such

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development is the ability of people in quite remote and often relatively underdeveloped areas of the world to find out what is going on in many other areas of the world. There are lots of situations of which people would have been completely ignorant a number of years ago but they now know about them almost immediately. That must impact on the way that such people feel they are being treated. Why do we not have the opportunity to speak about all those kinds of things? Given all that, what do you think the impact is on ways in which we should be delivering and developing soft power from this country? Thus far, we have listened in the main to people from government departments. They have been very knowledgeable but, personally, I did not think that they were hugely imaginative about ways in which we could develop such programmes. I do not know what you think. Professor Cox, you said that soft power can come quite quickly but can speedily be lost. What do you think the impact of all this is on ways in which we ought to move forward?

Professor Michael Cox: To be perfectly honest, I had not thought of the way in which we—the UK—or government should respond to this. Perhaps my colleague can say something on this and I can think of some other things. Going back to the original question, certainly the impact that this is having on, say, economic development, is remarkable. After all, in large parts of the world you do not have laid down cables everywhere; you have to go through cellular phones and mobiles. Communication therefore becomes very important. A huge amount of entrepreneurialism, both potential and real, is emerging in countries such as those in sub-Saharan Africa, and it has emerged largely through new digital forms of communication, including cell phones and mobiles phones. More and more business and more and more transactions will happen in that way.

The downside of that is that Governments then do not feel that there is any onus on them to develop infrastructure. That is a negative. How this country could develop this I will leave up to others who know much more about it. The other day I was having a very interesting discussion with somebody about what the British economy is. I am not an economist—I am at the London School of Economics and Political Science. It was quite interesting. We got into a discussion about what the British economy is per se, and yes it is the financial sector, which we know about, and yes it is the service sector, but what we now think of as industry is actually high tech—it is the new technologies. You have only to travel in and around Cambridge and many other parts of the world. Yesterday, I drove past Harwell. This is very advanced, and we are in the forefront of these areas. I do not quite know how government or departments have thought about this but we have a massive advantage here.

There is another thing that falls into both soft power and economic power. For reasons that I have never fully understood, this is a hugely creative country. We are supposed to have a rigid class system but somehow or other it got bypassed. There is the creativity of the music industry and the arts. London is an exciting city to be in. Others are maybe more beautiful and more classic, without naming names, but London is very exciting and innovative, and part of this goes back to the question of innovation technologies and nanotechnologies, and music. Young people like coming to this city and they find it very exciting precisely in those kinds of areas. Again, I shall leave this to others to think about. Given those advantages, are we taking enough care of this? Are we developing it? Could government do more to facilitate that? Frankly, at the moment I suspect that we are not. This is something that comes from the bottom up in a fundamental sense.

Lord Williams of Baglan: I will echo if I may John Micklethwait's statement with regard to visas and so on. Universities are such a critical part of this country's infrastructure, nationally and internationally. We are putting at stake our present, very strong position. We have more universities in the top 50 and the top 100 than all of Europe put together, and this

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cannot be sustained with the present visa regime. People will eventually go to their second and third choices if they cannot get in.

Q162 The Chairman: I do not want to get into hot issues on this side at this moment, but how does that compare with your impressions of what happens in America, France, Germany, Japan or Italy? Are we notably tougher and more awkward? Are our numbers falling rapidly faster than those of other countries, or is this just a sort of sui generis argument?

Lord Williams of Baglan: Others will know more, perhaps Michael in particular, because he is an academic. Certainly, in the US it is easier to get in. In certain subjects, for example in the sciences, if you get a PhD that automatically puts you in line for a green card and citizenship. Am I right, John?

John Micklethwait: To be fair, America has problems as well. The high-tech companies have, quite correctly, gone crazy about some of the problems that they have had there. They also have a nativist element, if I can put it that way, which has caused them substantial problems, as you can find from anyone in Silicon Valley. The truth is that our rules are tougher than those of most European countries. So it is true that it is easier to go and study in Germany or France. But, for the reasons so ably spelled out, the figures are that out of the top 20 universities in the world three or four are British and the rest are all American. A century ago, if there had been a list of universities, you would have found, at the very minimum, four or five of the big German or French ones. People do not want to go to those places. The added problem at the moment is that, if you are in India, you face at least some degree of more competition from domestic institutions. You can get more engineering degrees, for example. China is building universities like anything. All those things represent different versions of competition.

I would perhaps be more positive and say that, if you look at the world at the moment and guess at industries going forward, at least some of the evidence is that, after about 20 years of it supposedly happening, the influence of technology on education, which has previously always been exaggerated, is one of those areas that seems to be just beginning to take off in a substantial way, particularly in America. It is not just British universities but British private schools that are doing fantastically well around the world, and are seen generally as being of an incredibly high standard. How people make money out of that is a difficult question for the Committee, which I can give a vague economic answer to. London is a large part of this, and the difference between London and the south-east and the rest of the country matters enormously. The fact that London is so cosmopolitan is another reason why people want to come to this country. That makes a big difference, to the extent that government policy is steered by that.

Professor Michael Cox: Without going into too much detail on the facts and figures, I did an analysis last year of the *Times Higher Education* top 500 list of universities around the world. My goodness, that was pretty dull. What was amazing, though, was that the fundamentals are, if you take the top 100 institutions in the world today, 89 of those are definably in parts of the world that we would call the West, with the United States a long way ahead of anyone else with about 49 of them. We have about 17 in the top 100. The English-speaking countries do pretty well. Canada and Australia also do well here. Continental universities the other side of the channel do not do too badly—the northern Europeans, largely. What is remarkable is that soft power is also about language; it is a linguistic power. There is no way around that. Linguistic power is part of our advantage.

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The Chairman: Did not I read at the weekend that the *Times* index of universities put the Japanese, Hong Kong and South Korean universities at the top of the list? So things have changed.

Professor Michael Cox: Let me be absolutely precise. Only two of mainland China's institutions rank in the top 100, and both are in Beijing. Only two of Japan's universities rank in the top 100. That gives you four of the Asian universities. All the rest come from Hong Kong with three, Singapore with two, three in South Korea and one in Taiwan. In other words, all the countries in Asia that have done particularly well in higher education, using these criteria of excellence in research and teaching, along with globality, tend to be in those parts of Asia that have had the longest links with the West. This is not a political or post-colonial point. It is remarkable that the Asian countries that have done so well economically do not do very well in measurements of international higher education. This one does remarkably well, for all sorts of reasons—but having the language is a significant part of soft power.

Q163 Baroness Goudie: I wanted to come in on a quick point on the question of whether we are getting lazy. I thought that we were on the basis of evidence that we had last week and the other week. People said, "Don't worry so much. We've got 10 years extra, on the back of the Olympic Games". This I do not agree with at all. I felt that it was making some departments sit on their laurels and not really do anything. We know that a number of emerging countries are working very hard and that we need to work much harder because we are living in the past, not in the future. I know you have touched on that a bit this afternoon, and I have found your evidence a breath of fresh air.

Professor Michael Cox: I think the success of the Olympics was almost an accident—let us be blunt. Prior to the Olympics, everybody was talking it down; nobody said that it was going to succeed—they said that everybody would be stuck at terminal 5 for three days. There was a real talking down of the thing. Then bit by bit we discovered that we had done something rather good. It started with the opening ceremony, then we started winning medals and people started to really enjoy it. There was the wonderful set of volunteers all over London, making London such a great place to be—and I love London generally. It is total nonsense, because an Olympics is a one-off, and what followed was a one-off. It was great, but it will not last forever.

Baroness Goudie: That is why we have to move on.

Professor Michael Cox: Definitely.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: I have found what has been said very interesting and eloquent. The only problem is that it has not helped us to narrow this down. It has only indicated how wide the area is. Can you help us by narrowing down where we can add value and be useful if we pursue it further? We have hundreds of potential witnesses, but it would be really helpful if you could tell us the areas in which something might be said and done, and we could follow that through.

John Micklethwait: I will go first, although I am going to sound a bit repetitive. Basically, you have to look at this from a global perspective. Britain comes to this with a huge number of assets; it is not just the English language. I will use a tragic British Museum example, when it sent the Cyrus cylinder to Iran, and 1 million Iranians go to look at it. That makes a complete transition in the way in which people think. The digital thing makes it different, and this is true of quite a lot of British cultural assets in soft power. In the old days you could ask why London had this collection of things for the world which the world cannot go to see,

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but now two things are happening. First, those assets go round the world, pretty much constantly. Secondly, people can come through digital means to see it. So there is an element whereby we come with all these things and this huge history of democracy, and there is a vast amount of that sort of thing that Britain has. That would be one argument—that you open that up. The second one, where I am going to sound repetitive, is that you tell government to get out of the way, when it is doing things that are fundamentally deleterious to that long-term thing.

Q164 Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: You have emphasised our cultural heritage—democracy and all the good things about Britain—but everyone has said that China is a good example of a country that uses soft power because its economy is strong. I can think of fewer examples of countries where democracy, the rule of law and human rights are less in evidence than China. So what are we saying here? Is it about projecting our values, or about using the assets and comparative advantages that we have to advance our economic position, which is what China is doing? I am with Lord Foulkes. We have to be clear about what our objective is—and if it is just to make people feel good. You gave the example of providing these artefacts in the museum, and how 1 million people came to see them. I wonder how many of them thought, “How did the British get these and why are we not getting them back?” There could be a double-edged benefit there. So what is the answer to Lord Foulkes’s question? What should we be doing? To my mind, it is about working out where we have a comparative advantage and using that to get business and trade. Is that too narrow?

John Micklethwait: That is a bit narrow. At the very minimum, what we are saying to you is: “For God’s sake, do that”, because you are not doing it. That is the point. You are not even beginning to use the mentality of the people who deal with this is not to think about these assets that we have and which make a difference to soft power. If you look at the soft power around the world—this is not my shtick—and if you look at what we are doing with visas for students, that makes a big difference. We have by any measure an outsized education capacity in this country and people who are willing to come here and spend a lot of money either on pre-university education or university education. To quite a large extent, we have a Government who make that very difficult. That goes for both parties. From the point of view of projecting soft power, that would seem to be not an altogether helpful starting point.

From the point of view of the rest of these things, I think it is to some extent a matter of government realising what is there. Government comes at this very much from the perspective of thinking of our industries, such as car making. It is from that angle. The strengths of the British economy have moved, and I do not think government has. I am not pleading for more money or anything like that. I am pleading for some degree of ability to recognise where they are from. At the moment, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport is seen as a place where you spend a bit of money; is not actually seen as a profit centre. I would argue that it is a huge profit centre for this country.

Q165 Baroness Morris of Bolton: This has been touched on, but I still think there are some interesting answers to come out of this. John said that we come to this with a huge number of assets, but we have become rather lazy, to pick up what Baroness Goudie said. Around the world, a lot of our old friends think that we have rather taken those friendships for granted while at the same time there have been new players coming into the market who have been very active and effective. I wonder to what extent traditional powers are being confronted by a rise in the rest in terms of rival states.

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Lord Williams of Baglan: There is quite a lot to that. The question to my mind is more that the UK and others are being challenged by the rise of the rest, the likes of China, India, Brazil, Turkey and South Africa. It is not because of those countries' capacity with regard to soft power; that is a small element. It is largely and overwhelmingly because of their extraordinary economic development, and with that has come political and military power for some of those countries, particularly China and India, which are both nuclear powers. It calls into question things like the Security Council of the United Nations which essentially has not changed in 70 years, since the Second World War, and whether that is a model that can endure indefinitely. There was one minor change in 1965 when the number of non-permanent members went up from six to 10. How much longer can one go on without countries such as India, which is the most populous country after China, and Japan, which pays about 2.5 times the funding that the UK contributes to the UN? How much longer can they be excluded from the halls of power, as it were?

Professor Michael Cox: There is a long and a short answer, but you want the short one. "The rest" is a term that Fareed Zakaria coined in his book some time ago. The rest constitute largely non-western powers, and that is the challenge. Many of the countries we define as part of the rest are countries that either stood outside the world order, challenged it or were even fundamentally opposed to the world order, if you think of China and Russia and India, in a certain sense because of the socialist traditions and, historically, its admiration for Soviet-style planning. The challenge—rather than confrontation—of the rest in this loose sense, including Turkey and others, is that we are dealing with countries that are, in a sense, in large part, although not completely, joining up to an western economic order but are still non-western powers. Therefore, they have certain ways of looking at the world which are not western in any simple sense. China is the most obvious example, but it is equally true of India, it is certainly true of Russia and it is even true of Brazil. It is certainly true of Turkey. All those countries are coming at us or coming towards us with a different set of assumptions about how the world ought to be organised. This was the original point of Jim O'Neill's notion of the BRICs. It was not that there are countries which are growing economically, but that we will have to change the foundations of governance in order to accommodate them. That is the challenge.

The other point I would make about the rest, which are changing international relations economically, is that I still find it interesting that once you start doing some of the straightforward analysis, much of what I would call power—military power, soft power largely and even a large part of the economic power—still resides in that part of the world that we call the West. I am not sure how we answer this question; it may be too academic. It is really quite remarkable how much speaking up of Asia there has been—if I might put it like that—and talking up of the Asian 21st-century idea, when, in fact still today the greatest amount of economic activity occurs transatlantic. If you are looking at foreign direct investment, it is still primarily transatlantic. If you are looking at some of the biggest corporations in the world, they are still 65%, 70%, 80% transatlantic. The question is how you marry or bring together—maybe John has some thoughts on this—the notion that we are living in a world that is changing, evolving, moving towards the rest but where power in those sorts of senses still remains very much embedded within more traditional western power. The trick is how you draw those countries in, how you give them incentives to cooperate to become part of this order and ensure that they have fewer and fewer incentives to stay outside of it. How you play that game with them and what role we play in that is a much larger policy question.

John Micklethwait: My answer would be that the rise of the rest is inevitable, that we are bound to lose soft power to them to some extent, and that that is a good thing. Sadly, the

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single most amazing thing from the past 25 years, when historians come to write about it, will not be the various things that happened in the West but the fact that a billion people jumped out of extreme poverty in parts of the rest of the world. That was the biggest thing that happened in all our lifetimes—or the lifetimes of most of us. We may dispute it, but that is bound to happen. From a geostrategic point of view, if you are Barack Obama, by the time you have left the White House, if you have not cemented Brazil, India and above all China into some version of the world order, you could argue that you will have failed. It is possible, if they do not bring China into the system, that it will be much harder going forward. There is a big thing there, and Britain could play a role, although you could not claim that we are the people pulling it: that will always be the Americans.

The question to ask, now that the debate is moving from what Britain does at home in order to increase its soft power to what it does with diplomacy, is not whether we are shedding power to these people, because the answer is yes, we are bound to, because power to some extent has to reflect economic reality. The question is whether we are doing as well as we could. When you look at these powers—Mick pointed towards this—they are not challenging us in the way you might expect. It is not just to do with the West having more powerful soldiers and better armaments. The Pentagon's budget is still colossally bigger than anything even the Chinese have on offer. It is still noticeable that the Chinese are still very scared of the Japanese navy, whatever they say about the islands. China, at least to itself and largely to the outside world, is still so focused on what is happening at home that its ambitions to go global are linked slightly to its need for resources, but not much more than that. It has never had a vision of itself that extends much beyond its region. One can read Henry Kissinger on that.

India, again, is a pretty regional power. I heard a statistic, which I hope is correct, that India has fewer diplomats than Singapore. It does not project power in a particularly hefty way. Brazil is a very regional power, if that. It does not throw its weight around, even in Latin America. South Africa is the same; it operates very much within Africa. That leaves Russia, which is an old-style European power. If you put the other four against Russia, you do not see a diplomatic challenge in terms of soft power. I would argue that in the way in which we treat ourselves against those powers, we should be more circumspect than just saying that they are doing well. The answer is that they do not want to invade our space that much to begin with. We should certainly ask ourselves big questions about why we, out of all the powers around the world, sell so little to China.

Q166 The Chairman: Are we losing out on the power to convey our message? What about Al-Jazeera and all the new organisations springing up? You painted a picture of the system and them not coming into it, but are there other systems that we are not going into? I am quite surprised that you feel that it is still such a western-dominated world when all these new realities are emerging.

John Micklethwait: We are all arguing that the balance is changing, but even in the purely economic way in which it is changing, you have to query the numbers. Yes, China is on course to become a bigger economy than America, and that will make a difference, depending on how you measure it. But by any measure of income per head, China is going to be behind for 30 or so years. Just the other day, I was reading a book by someone who is extremely good at soft power, whatever his other attributes, namely Lee Kuan Yew. He makes the point, despite spending a lot of his life warning the West that it is decadent and running out of time, that China will spend the next 20 or 30 years trying to catch up with America on the pure economic side. He is extremely close to the leaders of China and his view is that they take the same attitude. So it is a more nuanced picture in terms of political

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power than it is in terms of purely economic power. If you look at the British viewpoint going into that—I am almost clinically trying not to look at things from a British point of view—yes, we do have superb diplomats and very good soldiers and a network throughout much of developing Asia that many people are highly envious of. But you could then ask how much power we wield, why Lee Kuan Yew has influence in places where we do not seem to have it, and why other people are able to sell so much more to China when we have this huge heritage there. Those are decent questions to ask from a soft power point of view.

Baroness Hussein-Ece: Given our networks and institutions, and the historic influence we have had, do you think we are now waning, and that the way we are doing things is not keeping up with the new changes in the world order, with the emerging powers and people coming together in the Middle East, the South Pacific and South America? Are we failing to adapt and make the most of our soft power? Professor Cox said earlier about the success of the Olympics that it was an accident. It seems to be a national pastime that we talk ourselves down all the time. We do not promote ourselves in the way that we should. We seem to have lost confidence. If a Martian landed and looked at our media, they would think from reading the headlines in some of the newspapers that we were all going to hell in a hand-cart. Are we just talking ourselves down, or have we not moved on and adapted?

The Chairman: I will add one more question on that theme. I was asked at the British Council the other night whether I thought the GREAT Britain programme of self-promotion round the world was a good thing or a bad thing. Being a politician, I gave an ambiguous answer. What does our panel think about GREAT Britain, given what Michael Cox said earlier about the dangers of drifting into self-puffery, boasting and propaganda?

Professor Michael Cox: I lived for four or five years of my life in Scotland, 20 in Ireland, seven in the great nation of Wales and I am now back in London. We have the upcoming referendum and devolution and various issues like that. This brings us to the area of the role of history. 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? This is where we may have lost some of our confidence—and maybe for good reason. The history we used to tell ourselves was somewhat self-congratulatory.

Baroness Prosser: Lord Chairman, were you talking about the GREAT Britain campaign?

The Chairman: Yes.

Professor Michael Cox: I am linking it to a larger question. If we are to have a campaign about Great Britain, we have to know what we think Great Britain is. Part of that has to be defined by the history that we tell ourselves about these islands and the various parts of this island nation. Having lived in different parts of this conglomeration—this kingdom—I find that very different stories are told. This is why I have grave doubts about putting a single narrative back into this. Telling multiple narratives about a complex, multinational structure we call the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is far better, warts and all. That is equally important. If we tell a Putinistic history—which he is constructing quite deliberately in an almost Stalinoid attempt to rewrite the whole history of imperial Russia—people will not believe it, and it will tell against us in the end.

Q167 Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: I should declare my interests, so go to sleep for a minute. I chair the AMAR International Charitable Foundation, which is an NGO, separately registered, working in the UK, the USA, Iraq, Lebanon and Yemen. I chair the Iraq Britain Business Council, again as a volunteer. It is an NGO in Iraq and a not-for-profit

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charitable company in the UK. I chair the Booker Prize for Russian Fiction, which is an NGO registered in Russia. I am President of the Caine Prize for African Writing, which is a charity registered here, and a Vice-Patron of the Man Booker Prize for English Fiction. I am the chairman elect of the supervisory board of the Joint Leasing Company, Azerbaijan. It is a fee-paying post that is just about to start. I chair—again, this is unpaid—the Asociația Children's High Level Group of Romania and Armenia. I am a high representative for Romanian children. I am a board member of the strategic development board of the Durham Global Security Institute and a board member of the Global Warming Policy Foundation. I think that is enough for the moment. Could I possibly ask a question now?

I am looking for some definitions of Britain's success. If the term "soft power" has any validity, it should enable us to clarify how we see Britain being more successful than we are at the moment. As Mr Micklethwait said, the City is one of our trump cards, and I would suggest that the soft power that Turkey has been exercising comes from its very strong membership and former secretaryship of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation, and also from its 10% growth rate in recent years. One definition of success in the use of soft power might be the building of international trust. When push comes to shove and there is a problem, it is the country that trusts you and has confidence in your judgment that will come to your aid—or you will go to theirs. Inherently, I suggest that this is where Lord Forsyth's example of China gives us a pointer. The trust of the Chinese in the country in which they are investing is not desperately high, whereas when Britain and some other western nations come, we employ locally, build locally and engage in institution building, which shows that we have the good of that country at least partly in our hearts. I suggest that education and universities are something that you can identify very clearly, because our ethics and values are well demonstrated in our tertiary education system. I suggest that that is why it is so popular. I question whether at the moment the NGO world can be seen as helpful in governmental policy terms in this way. Lord Williams pointed out with some pride the splendid record of the UK. Of course, it is not a unique record. Ahead of us in per capita giving is the Netherlands. The terrific volunteering ethic of the USA outstrips us in many ways. They are much better grounded in that sense. There is much less government intervention and much more big society in the USA than in anywhere else I know on the globe.

On top of that, the Nordic Alliance is absolutely superlative. Of course, the western nations other than the USA began their NGOs at the same time—or earlier, in the case of Switzerland—but these were then pushed out by the First and Second World Wars, particularly the Second World War. Now NGOs are seen by a number of countries—Russia is a clear example, but there are others—as having become merely a weapon of foreign Governments and funded by them. I wonder whether our use of NGOs in the UK as a soft power tool is any longer good and wise. The communication revolution seems to be the heart of this: smart power rather than soft power. As for definitions of success, have we done anything at all on this in our foreign policy? I do not think so. The Government have rightly put trade and aid at the heart of our policy, but is the communication world not the exact tool that we should be working on? Could we not be sharper in judging ourselves, and make some goals that we could try to meet through the use of soft power, with the purpose of making Britain more successful in every way we can?

Lord Williams of Baglan: I go back to my initial points. We are very strong in soft power, whether we are talking about the NGOs that you referred to, the universities, the media, or arts and culture. They are not only of global renown, but our soft power has global reach. There is no comparable soft power in Europe. Of course, we are aided by the fact of the

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English language. You are right to talk about countries such as Norway and Switzerland, with their own proud heritage in this regard. But their work is in the NGO field, and that is just one part of our cluster of soft power. This is something to be recognised. We ought to think about what more can be done to reinforce it. We raised the practical issue of the universities, for example, and the effect of the visa regime. Our weaknesses, of course, are in large part economic. When the Security Council was formed and met for the first time in Methodist Central Hall in Westminster, in January 1946, Britain was the second economic power in the world. Now I think that we are the seventh largest power, which is still pretty high, but we do not have the economic strength that we had in the past. Moreover, there is something peculiar about our economic strength. John alluded to this. Why do we export twice as much to the Republic of Ireland as to China? Why have we consistently failed to be an economic power of global reach? That is a broad statement, and there are several outstanding international companies that are British based, but there is a real issue to be recognised. There is also a political issue in the period ahead. We face the probability of not just one referendum but two in the space of four or five years. That will be very distracting to the projection of British power, whether soft or hard, in the world.

Q168 The Chairman: That is touching on some very much wider areas that we will have to address. The Committee will call witnesses to deal with where soft power and hard power forces and flows meet, particularly in dealing with military interventions against irregular warfare and terrorist activity. Obviously the Americans are giving the same sort of thought to that, and suggesting that civilian power should be at the forefront and should spearhead all military operations. It is a revolutionary thought. We will come to that.

Professor Michael Cox: I will make two quick points. Some of this is slightly repetitive. I think that there is a correlation, although I am not sure where the causal link lies, with why Britain is such an attractive place for foreign direct investment. It may be that our workers work harder than the Germans and speak more languages than the Norwegians, but, going back to our vague notion of soft power, here it includes the rule of law. It is a relatively safe and stable country to be in. British people by and large—although sometimes less large these days—tend to be quite polite and nice to foreigners, strange though that may sound to some people. And we have fairly good schools. Frankly, that is why foreigners—not just poor ones but rich ones who want to invest here—want to come here. Forty per cent of US foreign direct investment in the world, a good part of which comes to Europe, comes to the UK. Between 250,000 and 300,000 French people now work in and around London. These are measures of success, and they are not just because we have better labour laws or because our workers work harder. There is an environment in which people want to live, and to which they want to bring their wives and children. That is what I would call soft power, and we have been pretty good at it. Our education system we have talked about. I do not want to sound self-congratulatory, but the statistics and facts speak for themselves at various levels. Paying a compliment to John, we have the two publishing outlets in the world that are deemed to be not British but global, namely the *Financial Times* and the *Economist*, which have no significant competitors. These are measures of success. It is not just a question of economics. Part of the success in attracting foreign direct investment, productive immigrants and productive business people to this country must correlate with the underlying structures of the civil society and the kind of society that we have created.

John Micklethwait: I shall try to answer the questions of the two Baronesses. I apologise for not doing so earlier. I will try to list the bits of soft power. There is diplomacy and the military, and education and the arts. The media comes in somewhere, and the whole element of democratic institutions—into which, arguably, some of the NGOs fit, as being part of the institutions of politics. I will say one quick thing about economic power. There is

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one way in which we beat ourselves up too much. A lot of the world comes to London to do business. Law is a very good example. It is not just the City. It is also the case that Britain has more influence in Asia. For instance, Jardine Matheson is by some measures Indonesia's biggest manufacturer. That would not appear anywhere in our export figures, although possibly they may not thank me for saying that. Our problem with exporting is the lack of a *mittelstand*. We do not have enough medium-sized companies that are good at exporting. That seems to be the core of it.

On the softer versions of soft power, we have three bits. The first is that we have a much more international mindset than most other countries. Yes, there are elements of British life that are incredibly local, but in general we have always been more interested in the outside world than most people, for reasons of our maritime history or whatever. The second is that we have generally been liberal with a small "l", and a safe haven for people on the run from different places—not, sadly, American leakers at this precise moment, but we have been in the past. One of the things we stand for in the world, and certainly in Europe, is a liberal economic outlook in different ways and shapes. The third point is trespassing on what you said. We are seen, on the question of whether we are close to America or part of Europe, as being conveniently close to both those things. People very high up in China will give you a long lecture about how awful the Europeans are, with the exception of the Germans. They include the British not as honorary Germans, sadly, but as somehow not quite part of Europe. To that extent, the Channel is quite a wide ocean, and it gives Britain a distinctive feel.

On the question of how you measure this, the answer must include some elements of economic trade and foreign direct investment. Secondly, there must be an element of popularity, which is simple to poll. The third one is somewhat less easy to measure but I suspect is still to some extent analysable. It is our ability to get people to do things that they would otherwise not want to do, and which they are not just doing for reasons of hard power—in other words, it is not just because our gunboats are appearing in their harbour but because they think that it is generally in their interest to be nice to us. That is the hard edge to diplomatic soft power. There is some element at the end of this of access around the world to British institutions. If we have these assets and do not use them, it is a negation of soft power. This is where the visas come in. What is interesting about soft power at the moment is that there is some element of recalibration because of digital technologies that allow you to reach people in ways that you did not before. I see it in my industry and in various other institutions that I have looked at, possibly including this one.

Q169 The Chairman: I will ask our expert panel to give some final comments. The message seems to be that we have all these assets and are extremely good at soft power. We are top of the soft power index and our influence is everywhere. Considering that we have invaded practically every country on earth, we are still remarkably popular. But somehow we are not quite achieving it. Our inward investment is excellent, but our trade performance is not up to what it has to be for us to survive, and our influence around the world in some areas—for example, in persuading the Russians to do things or other countries to see our point of view—is not as good as it should be. That seems to be the point.

Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top: I wanted to ask how the UK might find a workable balance between hard and soft power, but you have sort of answered that. However, it seems that what you were saying before about the state or the Government not causing problems is a huge part of this. Actually, it is a bit more than that. Now, so many people internationally—thinking about people who use social media—want a channel that is not the

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state. They want to operate in different ways. This is where I disagree with you about the Olympics. It was a perfect example of where the state had to be centrally involved, but it was successful because the state representatives knew that they could not be seen to be in the forefront. They had to make sure that the structures were there and that the stadiums got built, and they appointed people to do that, but then, quite bravely, they gave over to Danny Boyle, who did the opening ceremony, and others to give a view of Britain that was quite challenging to the state. I think that the Committee has to come to a balance between hard and soft power, and how the Government enables soft power to get further to the front, but without losing control totally. That is the space we have to come into. Perhaps in your summing up you would think about that.

The Chairman: That is an excellent final summary question. It could not have been better. Could we have your expert views?

Professor Michael Cox: Perhaps I can jump in on that one. When I said that the success of the Olympics was an accident, perhaps I used the wrong word. Possibly it was “unforeseen”.

We did not realise that it would be quite so successful. I was walking around this city for two or three weeks beforehand, and Londoners seemed to be leaving London rather than staying for the Olympics. The more significant point that we will agree on is that the image of Britain—this gets back to the history question I mentioned earlier—presented at the Olympics, through Danny Boyle and subsequently, was perfect soft power, to put it bluntly. It was self-critical. It did not look too establishment. We had nurses jumping up and down on National Health Service beds. The Chinese did a very different kind of soft power in their Olympics. It was a projection of state power. Ours was a very self-critical reflection. It was a combination of Dickens. Afterwards, a lot of my Chinese friends said to me, “What the hell was that all about?”. It really was quintessentially British. I could not imagine the French doing it in the same way, for rather different reasons, and I could not imagine the Americans doing it like that. What was distinctly British was that it was self-critical. It slightly came from below. Here we do agree. The Government did put a lot of money into it. It led from behind, almost, and in the end it turned out to be a massive success. When I said it was an accident, I did not mean that in a pejorative sense. Many people were taken by surprise that it was so successful. In my answer to the other question on the Olympics I said that we cannot build on that and say that it will be the be all and end all.

I will make two final summary points. Lord Howell raised the point about balance. You cannot be successful using soft power alone. Joe Nye never thought that soft power was a substitute for other things. I will not go into the background academic stuff, but he was having a debate with a man called Paul Kennedy—another Brit—who had written a book saying that America was in decline. Joe came back and said that America was not in decline, that it had a lot of military power and strong economic power, and that it had something else that we do not talk enough about, which is soft power. He always believed that soft power was not a substitute, but had to be related to and connected to the other two forms of power. He was saying something else as well. It is difficult to define because you cannot measure it in terms of military budgets and GDP, but it makes a fundamentally important contribution to aspects of hard power. In other words, if you want to do military things abroad, it makes it easier if you have good soft power. If you have good soft power, it will help you grow economically. Nye is trying to bring all those things into a complex analysis that is not easily measurable.

Q170 The Chairman: Lord Williams?

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Lord Williams of Baglan: I agree very much with what Michael said there. It is not just a question of economic power and soft power. Germany is a much stronger economic power than the United Kingdom. That is simply a fact. But has Germany had the influence that the United Kingdom has had globally? I would say not. By a considerable mile, we are in advance through the array of institutions that we have talked about, including the media, NGOs, universities and so on. That is something we should do our best to try to protect. It has been difficult for us as a panel to answer the question put by Baroness Armstrong about how a Government should enable soft power. We have identified one particular issue, which is the visa regime. It is a rather draconian regime that has been placed on some of the world's best universities. Wider than that, I am grasping to find recommendations for how government could enable soft power. Almost by definition, soft power is and should be independent of government. I welcome the fact that within six months, the BBC World Service will be free of the Foreign Office and will be funded directly from the licence fee—which, incidentally, is how it was funded for its first six years. It was only because of the Second World War, for very good reason, that in 1938 the Foreign Office took on the World Service.

John Micklethwait: I will go back to the concept of soft power. Lord Williams is absolutely right: it is a non-governmental force in general, and its impact comes through best if it is not seen as pushed by government. On the West Bank, for instance, you will find the influence of Hollywood and Silicon Valley considerably more useful for America's image in the world than troops. When I said that we were lazy with soft power, I was referring to an accumulated complacency, for all the reasons we have gone through. If this gathering were in Paris, I guarantee that there would be a vast number of people pushing every available thing, because the French have to work really hard at this. I see it from the British Museum's point of view in the vast amounts of help that the Louvre gets. The French have to work hard because they do not have the advantage of the English language, or the same ability to sometimes piggy-back off the Americans. Trying to define yourself against that is quite difficult. In terms of things that government can do, we have all mentioned visas. The sort of things that fit in to soft power are things such as broadband. If everything we say is correct, broadband must make a difference in access to education, the arts and culture, and our ability to sell these things everywhere. Heathrow and other British airports make a huge difference. We are not talking just about students. The people who get angry with our soft power are people trying to get in. The Chinese who are cross about trying to visit this country, and the tourists who do not come here, do not come because we are not part of Schengen. Our inability to work out some accommodation on that with the Chinese strikes me as a straightforward piece of self-defeating inefficiency. There must be some degree of co-ordination. I have tried to say that a couple of times, but there simply is not. There are three people here and we have been able to put across a vague idea of the different ingredients of the cultural complex—I was about to say the military-industrial complex. American and European politicians think we have a much firmer grasp of these things than we do. In fact, we have virtually no numbers and no real co-ordination. We should be prepared to stand for a liberal point of view. That is worth something, and part of what we are. I have a hunch that London is absolutely crucial. What it stands for more than anywhere—by some measures more than New York now—is that it is a multicultural, cosmopolitan city. That helps the new version. The Olympics thing sort of worked, although I talked to South Koreans who found bits of it completely unintelligible. The bit that came through rather strongly was that Britain was not the same as before. Some of Blair's Cool Britannia stuff, whatever its many defects, carried the same message. People come to London and realise that it is not like the Sherlock Holmes movies. That has changed

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considerably. On what you do about soft power, we are all slightly grasping around this digital idea. Where is digital technology colliding with those areas that we talked about as being part of our soft power? It is colliding with defence and security. This is where you get into cyberwarfare. It is certainly—I should have pushed this harder—beginning to collide with education. There is now a real opportunity for people. The teachers of the future will possibly be closer to being tutors, with most of the teaching done across computers. That is beginning to happen in America. If we are so good at education, why are we not more prominent in that? Digital technology colliding with the media is something that I have to deal with. In a variety of different institutions the means of doing things are colliding with them, and the ways in which government can help may be illustrative. That is the best I can do.

The Chairman: Right. You have given us enormous food for thought—plates and plates of it. We are very grateful to you. We now have much more work ahead. This was an excellent second session and you have been extremely helpful. Thank you all very much.

Wygene Chong – Written evidence

Individual Submission in Personal Capacity

The following is an individual submission by a 19 year old university student in Perth, Australia who has been following the committee's work with interest and who would like to make some contribution to the debate on Soft Power and the UK's Influence. I have no specific interests to declare and do not form part of any particular organisation or political group.

- I. What is your understanding of soft power?
 - a. My understanding of soft power is very much concerned with contrasting soft power from hard power. Hard power brings to mind a focus on coercion and force, whether it be through military might or economic sanctions. Soft power on the other hand brings to mind the term *influence* (which ironically also features in the title of this committee); the ability of a country to use its influences in areas such as culture, language, diplomatic ties and general reputation to further its interests in a particular field.
- II. How important is a country's soft power?
 - a. I would consider a country's soft power immensely important, especially in a world which has largely seen peace for many decades. Whilst the use of both soft and hard power tends to produce the same outcome (in other words, they are both means to achieve a solution), the former results in a somewhat more content partner or ally; the latter in a decline in relations between nations.
- III. In a digitally connected world, is soft power becoming more important? If so, why, and will this trend continue?
 - a. Yes I believe soft power is becoming more important and I believe there are two ways of looking at this.
 - b. Firstly, with the rise of a digitally connected world, we are seeing a general fall in the number of armed conflicts worldwide. This naturally strengthens the need for soft power as opposed to hard power, which is now being placed under more scrutiny than ever before. In other words, it is now much easier for members of the general public to examine hard power decisions and vent their opinions in the public arena than it has been in the past. However soft power is, as aforementioned, viewed in a more favourable light.
 - c. Secondly, I believe that soft power is becoming more important in a general sense due to this digitally connected world. People want to see positive diplomacy and negotiations, not negative. A digitally connected world also provides a more economical platform for nations to project their influence abroad, through the use of the internet. While being cheaper, I believe that this form of influence is no less effective and should be capitalised on.
- IV. What are the most important soft power assets that the UK possesses? Can we put a value on the UK's soft power resources?

- a. I would consider the UK's most important soft power assets as
 - i. the Commonwealth, as an international organisation in which the UK plays a crucial role, both in its history and in its present governance.
 - ii. the Monarchy, as both an ancient and modern institution that provides leadership and inspiration to the world.
 - iii. the BBC, as an internationally-acclaimed media organisation which broadcasts worldwide.
 - iv. the British Council, as a well-recognised education and cultural organisation.
 - v. the UK's diplomatic network, being the UK's physical presence abroad and the coordinator of the UK's overseas initiatives.
 - vi. its universities, being the educators not only of the British population, but of a vast proportion of the world's talented young people.
 - b. I am sure that it would be possible to put a value on the UK's soft power resources but I personally think this is a waste of taxpayer resources. This is an activity best left to think tanks and interest groups.
- V. Is 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?
- a. I believe the Government could do a lot more to help the UK maximise its use of soft power. I would propose:
 - i. An official 'Soft Power Policy', created as a collaboration between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. This should set clear targets for long-term development, in particular strengthening what I would call the 'key pillars of the UK's soft power', being the entities listed in IV(a).
- VI. 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?
- a. I would suggest an annual pot of funds of significant value to be awarded to a number of businesses and organisations who present projects that would generate soft power for the UK. The awards would be administered jointly by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.
- VII. How can the UK mobilise its soft power resources to boost trade with other countries and foreign direct investment in the UK?
- a. Well, mobilisation requires leadership, and that can only be provided by the Government through the aforementioned soft power policy.
 - b. The UK's network of embassies, consulates and high commissions should be responsible for being on the frontline on coordinating the rollout of any mobilisation.
- VIII. Who should be the target audiences, and what should be the aims, of the application of the UK's soft power?

- a. Everyone, but particularly countries with strong economic potential for the UK.
 - b. The general aim of the application of the UK's soft power should be to build a positive image of the UK as an influential, prosperous and esteemed global power.
- IX. Are there spheres of influence in which the Government should do more to promote the UK?
- a. There are many spheres of influence but I would like to point out two in particular:
 - i. Universities; the UK has many of these and many rank amongst the best in the world. However, I believe the university sector needs stronger support to attract the very brightest from around the world. I am not in a position to comment exactly on what is required but I recognise that universities around the world are working extremely hard to entice international students, with the strong support of their governments. The UK must keep up or risk falling behind.
 - ii. Tourism; the UK is a popular nation to visit but still lags significantly behind rivals such as France, Italy, Germany, Spain, Turkey, China and the US. The Government must set even more ambitious targets to attract tourists from around the world. Again, I am not in a position to comment on exactly what is required, but I recognise for example that the UK receives relatively very little from the world's largest 'supplier' of tourists, China. This should be rectified.
- X. 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?
- a. I will focus solely on the Commonwealth. I believe the Commonwealth is still far below its full potential as an influential international organisation. Currently, the two most significant manifestations of the Commonwealth are the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting and the Commonwealth Games.
 - b. I believe the UK needs to play a stronger role in the Commonwealth in order to more effectively increase its influence (both of the UK and the Commonwealth). This could be done with...
 - i. An annual award of funds from the UK government for business/investment projects within the Commonwealth. This could eventually transition to an award of funds from a pot of money maintained by the Commonwealth.
 - ii. An annual festival hosted by the UK showcasing Commonwealth business, organisations and culture.
 - iii. A 'Commonwealth Scholarship' awarded to talented students from around the world to study at UK universities.

- iv. The establishment of a 'Commonwealth Council' of senior government officials from all Commonwealth members which meets bi-annually in London to propose policies for the further development of the Commonwealth.
 - v. A Commonwealth free-trade zone.
 - c. I would like to make the point that I would not envisage the Commonwealth becoming a political nor economic organ; rather, it should remain an organisation fostering cooperation and shared history.
- XI. 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?
 - a. I think the answer is quite simple here: fight.
 - b. The BBC should be expanded, particularly in its Worldwide division and in its Online division. It should be championed as a source of up-to-date, quality information.
 - c. UK Government departments should also make good use of social media, being coordinated by the Government Digital Service. This is already working quite well at present so I will not comment any further.
- XII. 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?
 - a. It must shape this landscape or risk losing its position among the global elite. It can do this by following everything else I have said in this submission.
- XIII. 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?
 - a. UK institutions are generally perceived in a positive light, but there is plenty of room for improvement.
 - b. The Monarchy plays a central role in the UK's reputation and this role needs to be enhanced. I think the recent Royal Wedding and Diamond Jubilee have demonstrated globally the power of the Monarchy to impress and inspire. Coupled with the promotional power of the BBC, I believe it would be beneficial to open up more of the ancient ceremonies and procedures involving the Monarchy, as well as the Royal Palaces. More should be done to help the Monarchy reach out to the public.
 - c. The Church of England and its global influence through the Anglican Communion is also an important and perhaps often forgotten advantage. The Church should be aided particularly in its role in developing communities worldwide, especially in nations which are still developing.

- d. Parliament is also a key player in the UK's reputation, but quite often the House of Commons (or in Lords terminology, 'the other place') is perceived in a negative light; they look like a bunch of children during heated debates. I think it would be highly beneficial for the House of Commons to follow procedure more in tune with the House of Lords. The other point I would to make here is that the world is often not aware of the work (and sometimes existence) of the upper chamber and it would be beneficial for the House of Lords to reach out to the world in this regard. That said, I think it is already doing quite well, especially with its social media connections and use of videos created by the Parliament Education Service.
 - e. In contrast to the above, the UK's use of hard power is perceived generally in a negative light abroad. It often draws cries of unnecessary interference and hypocrisy. In my opinion not enough consideration of this fact is made by those representing the UK. I believe that the application of hard power, in any form, be it economic/trade sanctions or military force, should be limited as an extreme last resort. Diplomatic efforts should always take precedence, using the UK's influential assets such as the BBC and social media to project a positive solution to the problem. This solution should in most cases be a compromise, not lending full support to any party in a conflict.
- XIV. Are there any examples of how its commitment to such values has hindered the UK's influence abroad or damaged its interests?
- a. The UK's activities in the Middle East, in my opinion, have significantly hindered the UK's influence abroad and damaged its interests. Whilst they may yield a long-term solution, I continue to hold strongly to the fact that soft power is a more powerful, if tiring, instrument than hard power, which has been wielded particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- XV. 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?
- a. I have already commented on the role of UK universities and how they face threats to their position from around the world. I would just like to say here that essentially the aim of government policy should be to make it a 'dream' to go to a British university and to make that dream a reality for millions through the organs of the Commonwealth and the British Council.
- XVI. 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?
- a. Certainly the UK Government should involve the devolved administrations in its work, but I believe that the best way forward is to produce a single narrative. A loose collection of narratives only weakens the influence of the UK. For example, many people around the world are not even aware of the distinctions between England, Wales, Ireland, Northern Ireland, United

Wygene Chong – Written evidence

Kingdom and Great Britain. To continue to use so many distinctions, particularly on frontline marketing, is damaging to the UK's reputation abroad.

Wygene Chong
Perth, Australia
14th August 2013

Professor Andrew Coyle, International Centre for Prison Studies, University of Essex – Written evidence

Memorandum of evidence to the
House of Lords Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence
from Professor Andrew Coyle CMG, Emeritus Professor of King's College London and
Visiting Professor University of Essex

1. This submission is made by Andrew Coyle, Emeritus Professor of King's College London (KCL) and Visiting Professor University of Essex. Between 1997 and 2005 the author was founding Director of the International Centre for Prison Studies in the School of Law KCL and during that period was also Professor of Prison Studies at King's. Before that he worked for 25 years at a senior level in the prison services of the United Kingdom, during which time he was governor of several major prisons, the last of which was Brixton Prison (1991–1997).

The International Centre for Prison Studies

2. The International Centre for Prison Studies (ICPS) was established in 1997 and is recognised internationally as a leading academic centre for the study of penal systems and prison reform issues. ICPS was part of the School of Law in King's College London until 2010 when the Law School was restructured. The Centre now has a partnership with the University of Essex. One of the unique features of ICPS is that many of those who have been most closely involved in its work have many years of operational experience in criminal justice, particularly in the prison and probation fields, usually within the United Kingdom.

3. From the outset, as its name implies, ICPS placed all of its work in an international context. It did this by identifying, assessing and analysing the agreed **principles** on which imprisonment should be based. Internationally these principles are enshrined in treaties, covenants and standards which have been agreed by the international community through bodies such as the United Nations. There are parallel norms which have been agreed on a regional basis by bodies such as the Council of Europe. ICPS then set about demonstrating how these principles could be used as the basis for a coherent set of **policies** to be developed by individual governments to inform their use of imprisonment. Finally, based on these principles and policies, ICPS identified good **practice** in the way that prisons should be operated and managed.

UK Government support

4. ICPS raises funds for all of its work, often from international donors and national charitable foundations and trusts. Over the years a significant amount of funding for specific pieces of work has come from United Kingdom Government sources, most notably the FCO and DfID. In 2002 ICPS published a comprehensive handbook on *A Human Rights Approach to Prison Management*. The costs of research for this work and its initial publication were funded by the FCO, which also funded a second edition of the work in 2009. Over the last decade this handbook has become one of the best recognised works in its field. It has been translated into some 18 languages, sometimes with funding from other sources, and it now used widely by international bodies in many regions of the world as well as by national

governments for training prison staff and as a basis for prison reform work. As an example, the Brazilian Government funded the printing of 40,000 copies in Portuguese for use by its prison staff. The FCO also provided funding for ICPS to write and publish a series of *Guidance Notes on Prison Reform*. These notes identify the major problems facing prison systems around the world and contain detailed advice for governments, funders and policymakers on how to alleviate these problems. The notes have been widely translated and are in use internationally. FCO and DfID have funded several other similar publications by ICPS.

5. From its earliest days ICPS has been invited to lead a wide variety of projects to reform prison systems around the world. These invitations have come from a variety of sources. Some of them have been international or regional, including various offices of the United Nations and European bodies which have sought help for their work within member states. They have also come from individual governments which have identified penal reform as a key element of attempts to improve access to justice and to reduce inefficiency and corruption within official institutions. In many of these cases initial approaches have come via UK embassies or directly from the FCO as part of its work to assist other countries to improve their justice systems as a vital part of good governance.

6. As an example, between 1998 and 2004 DfID funded a number of major prison projects in several countries of the former Soviet Union, with a particular focus on the Russian Federation. These projects had a number of strands which included training prison staff in good practices and assisting relevant governments to develop humane and decent prisons. ICPS led this work in-country and also secured the assistance of prison services in the UK to demonstrate examples of good practice where these existed. All of these projects were based on the model described above of assisting other countries to identify international principles, to translate these into sound policies and then to implement them through good practice. The lead taken by ICPS and its staff as well as the involvement of other UK partners undoubtedly created a significant degree of trust between relevant government departments and officials in these countries towards their UK collaborators. UK funding has also supported similar projects in Africa, Australasia, South East Asia and Latin America. At the request of the UK Government ICPS has also contributed to justice reform work in countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan.

Libya

7. The work which has ICPS has done and continues to do in several North African countries may be of particular interest to the current inquiry. In 2004 ICPS was requested by the UK embassy in Tripoli to provide assistance to the Libyan Government in new prison reform initiatives. This request came directly as a result of early discussions between the UK authorities and the Ghadaffi regime as the latter began to open to outside influence. This resulted in a series of major prison reform projects which lasted until the change of regime in early 2010. Throughout six years ICPS experts visited Libya on a regular basis and sponsored several visits by Libyan prison and justice officials to the UK. The Prison Service of England and Wales co-operated positively with these initiatives. By early 2010 discussions had commenced about how the experience in Libya might be used to encourage similar reforms in other countries in the region.

8. The revolution in Libya in early 2010 put an end to the prison reform work in Libya. This, however, proved to be a temporary cessation. In the latter years of the project it had

been championed by Mustafa Abdul Jalil, the Minister of Justice, who had been able to oppose some of the excesses of the Ghadaffi regime. After the revolution Abdul Jalil was appointed as head of the Transitional Council. In one of his first meetings with the UK Ambassador he indicated that he wished to give priority to setting the prisons on a legal footing and that he would be very grateful if ICPS could be involved in this work. He chose this bilateral course in preference to multilateral work with other countries. ICPS embarked on a new programme of support and for the last six months has had an embedded prison adviser working in the Ministry of Justice in Tripoli with funding from the UK Government.

Algeria

9. In late 2005 the Algerian Government approached the UK Embassy for advice about how to implement its new programme of prison reform. This led to a series of discussions between ICPS and the Algerian Ministry of Justice. The outcome of these was a request from the Algerians for ICPS to engage in a joint project for strategic prison change in the Algerian prison system. The FCO agreed to fund this project which subsequently ran at an intensive level between 2006 and 2012. ICPS experts visited Algeria on a regular basis and senior Algerian officials visited the UK. At the request of the Algerian authorities a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Director General of the Algerian Prison Service and the Chief Executive of the National Offender Management Service. When the project formally ended the Algerian authorities indicated that they wished to have an ongoing link with ICPS experts and continued funding for this is being provided by the FCO. For a number of years the European Commission (EC) has had a parallel project for justice reform in Algeria. The senior Algerian officials have made clear that they very much value the practical outcome from the UK funded projects and ICPS is now providing expert input to the EC project

Soft power

10. The International Centre for Prison Studies seeks to assist governments and other relevant agencies to develop appropriate policies on prisons and the use of imprisonment. Its aims are:

- To develop a body of knowledge, based on international covenants and instruments, about the principles on which the use of imprisonment should be based, which can be used as a sound foundation for policies on prison issues.
- To build up a resource network for the spread of best practice in prison management worldwide to which prison administrators can turn for practical advice on how to manage prison systems which are just, decent, humane and cost effective

11. In the current academic jargon, the work carried out by ICPS achieves considerable 'impact' in the manner in which it provides a sound knowledge base for the humane use of imprisonment and has assisted governments and other bodies to make use of that knowledge base. In carrying out its mandate ICPS has worked in some of the most problematic countries in different regions of the world. In terms of this Select Committee's inquiry, ICPS has shown how it is possible to exercise soft power in a strategic and effective manner.

12. ICPS is not a surrogate for the UK Government, nor does it seek to present the prison services of the UK as models in all that they do. However, ICPS is based in the United Kingdom and it has received considerable support in its work from the UK Government. It has also worked successfully with the National Offender Management

Professor Andrew Coyle, International Centre for Prison Studies, University of Essex –
Written evidence

Service in a number of its projects in other countries. As a consequence it can be argued that it has helped the United Kingdom to make a significant contribution to prison reform in a number of countries. 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 number of specific objectives, such as international abolition of the death penalty.

13. ICPS has also been active in recent years in developing understanding about important matters of topical concern, such as the management of very high risk prisoners and of violent extremists in prison. In its work in Libya and elsewhere it has enabled the UK Government to provide countries in transition with particular operational expertise in a manner which has enhanced the UK Government's wider objectives in post conflict environments.

September 2013

Commonwealth Business Council, Institute of Export and National Asian Business Association and Leicestershire Business Association – Oral evidence (QQ 93-115)

Evidence Session No. 5.

Heard in Public.

Questions 93 - 115

MONDAY 22 JULY 2013

Members present

Lord Howell of Guildford (Chairman)
Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top
Lord Forsyth of Drumlean
Lord Foulkes of Cumnock
Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts
Lord Janvrin
Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne
Baroness Prosser
Lord Ramsbotham

Examination of Witnesses

Peter Callaghan, Director General, Commonwealth Business Council, **Uday Dholakia**, Chairman, National Asian Business Association, and Chair, Leicestershire Asian Business Association, and **David Maisey**, Director, Institute of Export

Q93 The Chairman: Welcome, gentlemen, and thank you very much for coming. You have the interests of the Members of this Committee before you on a list, I hope, so you will know how our views are shaping. I am not going to identify all three of you because we know who you are and you know who you are. I note that Mr Dholakia would like to make an initial statement. I would like to make an initial statement as well, which in a sense is going to be an umbrella question, but I would just like to say this to set the tone of the whole discussion.

I think we all recognise, and you recognise, that we are seeing an era-shifting change in technology going on in world markets, and indeed the Prime Minister has spoken of a battle for Britain's future in a super-competitive world. What we are doing on this Committee is asking whether a key element in that struggle is the deployment of so-called soft power, which of course is not really soft at all. As you will appreciate, it is tough and intense, but it does stand in contrast to the doctrines of force of the past or the belief that we could just threaten or walk into or bluster our way into new markets and succeed. That was yesterday and today we have to consider new approaches. You are really one of the spearheads to these new approaches in the front line, and it is your views and assessment of how you see the soft-power element and what you would like to see change and improve and what more

you would like to do that we want to hear from you today. That was my opening statement, and now I would ask Mr Dholakia, as you asked, to make an opening statement.

Uday Dholakia: Thank you, Lord Chairman, my Lords. Soft power in terms of the British Asian community is not a new phenomenon. It has been in existence within our culture for a long time. It embraces human dignity, culture, media, religion, entertainment, arts, family and commercial links. The invitation to a potential business colleague, be it an exporter or importer, to come home and have a meal with the family essentially goes beyond just the price and the contract. It is a soft-power engagement, based on a relationship on a long-term basis, whether the business is transacted today, in five years' time or on behalf of somebody else or to help somebody else. In conclusion, my submission is very much that we have an inside track into the commercial centre of gravity towards the east and as a country we ought to engage with that inside track. Thank you.

Q94 The Chairman: Thank you very much. In a sense, it was a very valuable opening statement that has really answered what is the first question to all three of you, which is how you see the soft-power element in your work and the ambitions and goals of the various members of your organisations. I should also have mentioned that Mr Maisey and Mr Dholakia have sent through notes that we have. I am afraid it was rather late in the day, but they are very useful and simple and short, which is the best thing of all, and we can probably have questions built on those as well because they are in front of Members of the Committee. Let me start with Peter Callaghan of the Commonwealth Business Council. How do you respond to the question I put about the soft-power element in your work?

Peter Callaghan: I have long held the view that philosophies are much stronger than rules. People are much more likely to do things for philosophical reasons than they will do by following the rulebook. Another saying that I have is that leadership is not taken but it is given. It is given as a result of followers being willing to follow you, so you cannot impose leadership on people; people have to want to follow you as a leader.

I think that applies to what you are looking for in this soft power. The UK occupies a very interesting position in terms of people aspiring to many of the values that Britain has and so people are willingly following the leadership that is provided by the UK. You see that in our language, education, sports and business; people willingly follow the values and the policies and style of doing things that Britain has. I think Britain has soft power and it has always had that. It occupies a unique position between Europe and the rest of the world.

One thing I would go back to is in the day of sailing ships Britain had a unique position that it had many of the harbours where large ocean-going ships had to trans-ship into smaller ships that went into the rest of Europe, and I think Britain is in a similar position today. It bridges the gap between the European world and other parts of the world, whether that be Africa, North America or Asia. The UK occupies a unique position, especially because of education. A lot of people in these countries have been educated here or they have sent their children or they have had special courses. I think that is a very important part of the soft-power aspect of the UK.

The thing I would like to finish on is relationships—my colleague touched on this—and the fact that business is all about building relationships. You do not do business with people you do not know. You need to have time to build those relationships and from those relationships comes an understanding of each other—not necessarily an acceptance but certainly an understanding. The Commonwealth is an important way of building those relationships very quickly because we have a common language and we have some common history. So while the Commonwealth is not a super-weapon, so to speak, in this battle that

the Prime Minister talks about, it is nevertheless a very important enabling part of building the relationships that are necessary for trade to be based on around the world. Thank you.

Q95 The Chairman: The clerk has just reminded me that I said outside that we had already stripped down in this Committee. I believe it is the hottest day of the year so far, and if any of you would like to take your jackets off, we would completely understand. Thank you very much. We are going to come back to a number of the points you have made, too, but could I just ask Mr Maisey if he would like to begin with the central point: what his organisation does and how he sees this soft power dimension?

David Maisey: Thank you, Lord Chairman. I am representing the Institute of Export today as a newly appointed director and trustee. I also own and manage a company, ICC Solutions Ltd, and we supply and develop test tools for chip and PIN by way of a very large global customer base. So I am actively engaged in export on a day-to-day basis with my organisation.

Our view of soft power is it defines a nation's brand image and influences how our organisations and our products are perceived. There are a number of components of soft power: government, education, culture and, very importantly, innovation. Certainly from my experience, one of the most powerful things about UK business is our ability to be innovative and deliver the highest levels of excellence in terms of solutions and customer service. We are engaged in a relatively niche market but we work, as ICC Solutions, with all of the payment associations and the major banks over the globe. They demand the best-quality solutions. Our closest competitors are based in Europe, in France, Holland and Belgium, yet we rise above these other organisations simply because of the British way of doing business and how we excel in certain things.

There are some tangible components of soft power, notably, for example, the Queen's Awards for Enterprise. My organisation won two Queen's Awards for Enterprise last year in international trade and innovation, and I can tell you that these have been exceedingly well received by our global client base, not just within the Commonwealth but outside the Commonwealth as well. They have a massive impact on how our organisation has been perceived. I think generally soft power is about excellence; it is about innovation and quality and the British way of doing business.

Q96 The Chairman: Thank you very much indeed. The British way of doing business—that is a very useful springboard phrase to develop. Would any Members of the Committee like to come in at this stage?

I think what you have described is fine in general, but we have to try to work out how this is going to be developed in the British interest. Let me start with a headline from today or yesterday: the Olympics are said to have contributed mightily to actual deals and real returns. Is that the sort of soft power that you have in mind? Do you think those figures are right, incidentally, about getting £9.9 billion-worth of extra deals out of the Olympics? Would any of you like to comment on that?

Uday Dholakia: I think that was something to celebrate, but the Olympics only comes around after so many years. I was listening to the radio on the way down here, and I also, if my memory serves me right, heard how many millions were put into the Olympic redundancy packages. We live in the real-time values of Twitter, e-mails and blogs. While we celebrate, the perception of what the Olympics did and did not do is mixed around the world. While we have a very good reputation, and my colleague has touched on that, as a result of the British way of doing business, my question is: what is the British way of doing

business in the contemporary competitive and globalised world today? I think there is need for some rebuilding, recalibration and redefinition of what “British” means. We start off with a very good base in terms of integrity, creativity, innovation and sense of fair play. I am speaking in my voluntary role. For my day job I work for Birmingham Airport, and I just secured Air India flights into Birmingham four times a week from 1 August, so that we have connectivity and inward investment with India. But we need to define what is the new British way of doing business, and I would like to think that we can build empathy and other people’s values into this as well.

Q97 The Chairman: There is a note of challenge or criticism in what you just said, and indeed in your paper, where you remark: “A very real perception by many British Asians is that upper echelons of diplomacy, trade and inward investment promotion are narrow and established hands for whom diversity in Britain has only comparatively recently been accepted as relevant”. That is quite a sharp observation. Is this based on the fact that some of your colleagues feel real difficulties in—

Uday Dholakia: It is a factual observation, Lord Chairman. I started my career as a local authority officer, and I was headhunted into DTI. I worked for Kenneth Clarke as Minister then for four years. It is a real observation. It is also an observation based on travelling abroad and doing business day in day out. I do not see many people from diverse communities at the hierarchy within FCO, BIS, UKTI. I have not seen any non-executive directors, and yet we are held-up as a good entrepreneurial community.

Q98 The Chairman: I will turn to Mr Maisey. You too put in a paper, again with a critical note to it, which is good hard stuff to build on. You say, “We are not seeing a joined-up approach from Government. It appears to start with great ambitions and then runs out of time, which leads to a compromise”. What are you looking for from Government?

David Maisey: There are generally some good ideas being put forward, but none is really taken through to complete fruition. There is a lot of mismatch and confusion for people like myself and other organisations like the Institute of Export. They see that certain initiatives can be undertaken in one governmental department but not reflected in another, and we have the situation where generally what we find day to day, especially for smaller businesses, is there is no centralised resource for all the information that exporters need. We have personal experience of this, as do many organisations within the Institute of Export, which have to in many ways rely upon HMRC for information, and that can typically take two weeks. When you want to be very dynamic, very proactive and you have clients chasing you on a daily basis as to certain criteria that they may need to satisfy, two weeks is completely unacceptable. It is just generally a number of components. It is the disparity between different departments within the Government and certain departments not knowing what is happening in other departments. The essential point is having a complete, centralised resource of information that people can turn to.

The Chairman: That is very interesting.

Q99 Lord Ramsbotham: I was very interested by that comment because that impinges on various things that we have been hearing before and have been exploring, for example that the National Security Council is the general overseer of soft power. Is that right, or is that far too shadowy? Do you, as a person involved in the marketplace, feel that Government is coming together to help you, or are you having to deal with a splintered and fragmented Government, having to pick off each bit of it as you have to, which makes life more difficult for you?

David Maisey: Absolutely, and I would totally agree that there is too much fragmentation. Exporting now, we all appreciate that we have to be a lot more dynamic. The world is very much a changing and evolving place. We are seeing more activity taking place in the east as opposed to the west. The UK has enjoyed being in pole position for soft power, but we can see that will soon start to decline unless we attack it and challenge it. Some of the major assets for the UK, such as the BBC World Service and the British Council, are having more challenges now with funding; some have been cut or removed completely. These have been a fantastic way to sell the UK to the globe. What we are seeing now are these diminishing, and additionally we see nations like China and Turkey becoming very much focused on soft power, China especially—we all know the massive economy there. They have always had a very hard-line stance and have been negligent of soft power, but they are now very much focusing on soft power. In fact, they have established some 320 educational institutes over the globe simply to promote China and the Chinese culture and the Chinese language and so on, and it is a subtle way of them opening the door to do more business.

Uday Dholakia: I have a rather sanguine view of this. I think we live in realistic times where money is tight and the government apparatus can only do so much. This is why I am here. We want to come to the crease and bring our own resources, networks, cultural links, inside track, not just in the Asian subcontinent, but in east Africa, South Africa, the United States and parts of Europe and the Middle East as well. We have real challenges. My fundamental concern is that something like the UKTI ought to be a core function of the Government and not something that is outsourced here, there and everywhere. Look at the US Department of Commerce and how aggressively it promotes the hard power as well as the soft power worldwide. I think there is a lesson to be learnt out there.

We are an island and, while we are very good at export documentation and export support, let us think about supply chains and imports as well. We have to import a lot of raw materials to make Land Rover Jaguars or food and drink, or whisky as well, if I may use that as an example. We need to be savvy at import relationships as well as exports. One of our biggest unique selling propositions in this country is our regulation. This summer I spoke at the Trading Standards annual conference in Brighton. They were rather hoping that I would complain about the burdens of regulation on SMEs. I did a little bit of that, but what I talked about was that we have the best regulations in the world. If you buy a British product or service abroad, you know it is legitimate, it is transparent and there is a redress complaints procedure. I think that is something that we need to build on so that the world looks at us in terms of better regulation models and frameworks. I feel that is one soft area of power that will give us ongoing competitive advantage.

Q100 Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts: You have raised the question of the gap between firms, particularly SMEs, and the Government, and it is multi-faceted. One of the intermediaries that Lord Heseltine referred to, of course, is the role of the chambers of commerce, which are closer to the ground for many SMEs, and yet, as he points out in his report, the membership of chambers of commerce is very small indeed compared to equivalent organisations in Germany. Should we be thinking about ways to use the chambers of commerce as protagonists and informers and developers of smaller firms to work around the world? If so, is that going to be better than trying to find a way to focus the huge panopoly of governmental apparatus on one contact point?

Uday Dholakia: If I may address that, let me give you the example of Leicestershire, which I know reasonably well. We have some 45,000 businesses in Leicestershire, from micro to quite substantial businesses. I would say not more than 10% are members of the CBI, LABA or the Federation of Small Businesses. How do we engage with the 90%? Clearly

Government does not have the resource to do this. What I am advocating is a partnership that goes beyond just chambers of commerce. I read Lord Heseltine's *No Stone Unturned* report. In fact, Lord Heseltine was in Leicester two Fridays ago, and had lunch with all the representatives of the business community. I really feel there are big gaps in the government offering. We will ignore it at our peril. What we need is real leadership from this institution—from both Houses—to create alliances and partnerships that are legacy-based that add real value. The chamber on its own cannot deliver this.

Compare our chambers of commerce network to, say, those in Germany, which are a quasi-statutory instrument in Germany. 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 OMIS reports from the UKTI. We need to look at a wider coalition. Let us tease out the best in what the people have to offer. One of the reasons I am here today is that we have nine British Asian business associations up and down the country which trade internationally and bring in inward investment; they are really keen to engage, to go out there and promote UK plc, but unfortunately they are not engaged.

Q101 The Chairman: I am just going to chuck a question at Mr Callaghan, which I hope will pave the way for Lord Janvrin, who wants to pursue something. What I want to ask you, Mr Callaghan, is whether you feel that your members and you are operating in new markets with new patterns of behaviour, new conditions and new tastes and techniques for operating and doing business. Has something quite big changed in the world, and are we moving away from our traditional business patterns?

Peter Callaghan: I have worked in most parts of the world except South America. I have run a lot of international businesses. I have actively used UKTI. As you can tell, I am not from this country, but I have been here 23 years, so I have run businesses from here and from Australia, and from places including Russia, eastern Europe, North America, Asia and India. I have a slightly different view about UKTI. I have found it extremely helpful and extremely useful in-country. You get out of it what you put into it. I do not think business has changed one bit. I think it is still about relationships and, whatever the technology you are dealing with, it does not really matter unless you have a good relationship with someone.

You asked earlier about sport and the role it plays in these things, like the deals at the Olympics. I think these events bring people together—they get to know each other and relationships are formed, people start talking, they feel good and they say, “Let us work on this together”. The CBC has run lots of Commonwealth business forums in conjunction with the Heads of Government meetings, and lots of deals always come out of this. It takes a while for them to be completed afterwards, but nevertheless people get together in these forums, they build relationships and they say, “Let us work together and make something happen”. That is what business is about.

I think the thing that has changed for the UK is a thing called integration—I do not know if you are familiar with this term. Today you cannot export low-value products; you have to export highly integrated products or highly integrated services, so you are either exporting a car or an aerospace subsystem, a jet engine. They are highly integrated, they involve lots of different suppliers and technologies—drugs are an example of a highly integrated product—or you are exporting highly integrated systems, such as power transmission and generation, water supply and sewerage, or railway transportation. These are highly integrated systems, and they bring a lot of suppliers with them. I think if there is anything that has changed for Britain it is that we have to be more in the integrated product, integrated system supply arrangement, and for that we need more companies like the BAEs and the Rolls-Royces.

The one thing that I would be encouraging about where there might be something Government could do is the post-trade mission consortium. Trade missions go to countries, they build relationships and people say, “Let us do such and such”, but it falls flat afterwards because there is no follow-through. So if there was one thing I would vote for it is not to change UKTI but somehow to encourage the formation of post-trade mission consortia. It does not have to be a Government-led institution—it could be a chamber, it could be the bodies that are represented here today—but it should pull together those teams. I think that is where the Germans, whom I have competed with, the Chinese and the Japanese are much better than we are. They form consortiums willingly, and that is soft power. Coming back to the starting point of soft power, people want to be part of it rather than be compelled to do it.

Q102 Lord Janvrin: That leads straight into the area that I want to get into. All of you started off by saying, “We had terrific advantages, we had the language and the education and the Commonwealth”, and so on, but then all of you have said, “UKTI could do more of this”, or, “We could use people in different ways”. You have all mentioned Chinese, the US Chamber of Commerce, the Germans and so on. Is there advice that we can give to Government on how other people do it, in your experience, that we could make use of? Can you be a little bit more specific? I am addressing this to all three of you, if I may, on how we can learn from others.

Peter Callaghan: I was competing in my previous job for a £100 million contract to supply mobile hospitals to the Saudi Arabian health service, and we were competing against a German company. A hospital is not just a set of boxes. There is quite a lot of money involved in all the equipment that goes inside the hospital as well as all the supplies, so you have to form a consortium to be able to bid for that hospital. It is not just one single company. The leading company was called Zeppelin, but there were lots of companies involved in that bid, and they had active involvement from their trade organisation to facilitate the bid. They obviously won it. That is something that I think we could do in this country—encourage those sorts of consortia. I am not suggesting that UKTI should lead the consortium, but certainly it has to be able to facilitate, encourage different firms to get together and know each other. In the case of Zeppelin leading that consortium, it had built up relationships with all the various suppliers over years in order to make the bid. A £100 million bid is a big bid for a mobile hospital. So I would be encouraging doing something to facilitate the building of consortia. Rolls-Royce and BAE already do this when they are bidding on big projects, but I think we could learn to do more of that. If we are going to succeed in the UK, it is about selling or exporting more integrated products that pull with them the supply base in both this country and elsewhere.

David Maisey: I completely agree that voluntary consortiums are a very efficient way to work. There is no doubt about it, from my own personal experience globally, that when people pull together for the benefit of all involved they tend to achieve a lot more as opposed to being forced into doing something. The Institute of Export is committed to the education of their members to ensure that all of their 2,000-plus members have the basic infrastructure and knowledge requirements to help them export globally to existing and new and emerging markets, which is absolutely vital as a first layer to have that education and the information and knowledge of what needs to be done.

Referring back to the UKTI, I think they are also an excellent organisation and they have launched a few initiatives. One of these is Export Champions. That is where the UKTI select a number of high achievers who have done well at export and have them collaborate to share their experience with other companies to encourage them to export, to help them

actually export, all based on experience. There is absolutely no doubt that in today's climate we need to utilise technology more. Technology is going to change the way that we all communicate; it has already done so, but it will do so more when we look at soft power and what can be achieved by technology. We all know the World Wide Web. That has made such a huge difference to my own business, because we deal mainly electronically although, having said that, people still want the face-to-face relationships. In Canada and the USA, for example, they are very keen on face-to-face and you cannot take that away, but you can collaborate more, you can have more consortiums and you can utilise the power of technology more.

Q103 Lord Janvrin: Can I come back to my question? You mentioned the Germans. How are they doing better at this than we are? Do they have a different organisation? Is there a different structure? Where can we learn from the people who are beating you on contracts?

David Maisey: I think it was my colleague who mentioned Germany.

Uday Dholakia: The end issue is legacy. Let me give you a practical example. You decide that you want to export to India, for example. You do your market research; you have your local export adviser from UKTI; you commission an OMIS report. You turn up in India, you have a nice drinks reception at the High Commission, and next morning you wonder, "How the hell do I do business? How the hell do I get repeat business, and how do I expand on this?" I feel that UKTI in this country is not fit for purpose. Abroad, yes. If I am a £10 million business exporting to Saudi Arabia, I am sure I will get the Prime Minister to take me with him to Riyadh. I am talking about the SMEs who are not based in London, who are based out in the country, in the Midlands, in the north-east of England. We need to create a legacy-based relationship.

So, you have been to India, you have met a few people, and you have come back to a place like Leicester or Derby or Lincoln. What I would like to create is a relationship with the Asian business community. There are 11 Indian banks in Leicester. Each of those bankers is very well experienced in doing business and getting money out of India for customers. What can I do to bring those bankers and those mentors to work with a farmer in Lincoln, to work with an engineering company in Derby so there is a legacy base, so that somebody who understands you can talk to you on a regular basis and create that next stage of your relationship? That is where I am coming from. Yes, there are sterling people within UKTI doing a great job; I have tremendous respect for them. The proposition that I am putting to you, my Lords, is: is UKTI fit for purpose in this country compared to what the Americans, the Germans or the Japanese do? It is something that I would like you to investigate. I feel that it is not fit for purpose.

Q104 Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: I was just going to carry on with this one, not the question I was planning to ask. Going back to the beginning of some of your points, while supporting fully what Mr Callaghan has said about lack of follow-up, despite the fact that the Foreign Office has quite properly put trade and industry at the very top of its agenda, Mr Maisey says, quite correctly I think, that there is a huge lack of joined-up government on the ground. What suggestions do you have that can be taken from examples from other nations of how you should get a completely cohesive single face on the ground that will enable our businesses to succeed where we are at this moment failing in the face of other competition? For example, would you like to see DfID maybe not necessarily always choosing a British company but giving British companies first choice and only turning to another company from another nation if the British company does not fit the standards? What recommendations do you have? Would you like to see UKTI, the Foreign Office and

DfID more closely linked together on the ground? What is it you are suggesting? You are giving us what is wrong. Have you any thoughts as to what we should have on the ground?

David Maisey: That is a very good point, and this is what we need to further assess, because there are no magical answers immediately, but we do agree that we need that collaboration. We do need more power given to the likes of the Institute of Export and the UKTI so that these can become a centralised resource of information. But I think also we cannot overlook the fact that we have to encourage everything from the bottom up, so this is all about innovation. It is about manufacturing excellence, and this is why some countries are doing better than the UK, because they are more innovative and maybe the manufacturing is better. We have taken some knocks. We still have some fantastic organisations here doing extremely well, but often we just lack that attitude of, “Go for it and make it a success”. This is something that I see a lot in my line of business. We export a software application and it is very technical, very innovative, we have won many awards for that, but it is about having the guts to start with.

A lot of people I know—because I speak to a lot of different business leads—are concerned about the economy, they are concerned about stepping too far beyond their comfort zone. They have so many other things to think about these days that it is suffocating the capability to be innovative and achieve these higher levels of excellence. So we have to look at that as well to encourage all of that activity, as well as what you have suggested, having the overall body that co-ordinates and provides the information.

Q105 Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: I am getting two messages, listening to your experience. Perhaps I am misunderstanding you, Mr Callaghan, but you seem to be presenting a sort of big-business picture, the £100 million contract with the consortiums, while Mr Maisey and Mr Dholakia are saying, “We have to have innovation, and we have to give the SMEs more of an opportunity”. Certainly my own experience, talking to small and medium-sized businesses, is that they say, “It is impossible for us to break into these markets, because we do not have the resources, we do not have the knowhow, and the DTI and other organisations are only interested in the big boys”. You have emphasised the importance of businesses like British Aerospace and so on, which are very fine businesses, but most large businesses in the end decline and it is small and medium-sized businesses that become the big businesses of the future.

What I would like to know is: how do we use our networks, whether they are Commonwealth networks or whether they are relations with India or whether it is particular sectors where we have a comparative advantage, as in technology? How can we solve this problem? There are lots of words, but it is not clear to me in practical terms what the things are that we need to do. I do not for the life of me see why the Government should be involved in helping you to put together a consortium to bid in Saudi Arabia. I would have thought that if you have a bid you want to get the best people together for that purpose, but I can see how there may be a very innovative high-tech firm that is at the leading edge that wants to be able to export its product but simply does not have the resources or the manpower, or the time even, to do so. How do we deal with that?

David Maisey: Let me reflect, if I may—I know Peter wants to speak—on you have said. My organisation, ICC Solutions, has 18 people. Last year we exported to 63 countries, the year before it was 55, the year before that it was 44, and that was with fewer staff. We have achieved a lot with a small number of people. We do not become involved in consortiums. We do it all ourselves. Our challenge has been to find all the information that we need in order to export to markets, and especially new and evolving markets, the Middle East being

a very good example, because there are so many criteria that you must satisfy. It is having that centralised resource of information for us. We have worked with the chambers over the years, we have worked with UKTI, we have worked with the Institute of Export, and they have all been excellent in their own way, but we have had to jump from one to the other, to HMRC as well, to the—

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: So you are talking about the compliance requirements, regulatory requirements of the countries concerned. You are not talking about how to market your product.

David Maisey: Absolutely, yes. We believe we firmly know how to market and position our product, but of course what is beneficial is obtaining information about that particular market so you know how best to deal with the people and also how to fully position your product.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: So marketing and access and credibility are not an issue; it is knowing how to get through all the regulatory and local hoops that you are concerned about.

David Maisey: Essentially, combined with some of the local knowledge. I do feel that is very important, because as a small business we have seen diversity of cultures and we have to work in many different ways to satisfy our clients, and, as you will appreciate, with a small team of 18 people, that is very hard to achieve unless you have very focused and committed staff. That commitment is there, but we have wasted quite a lot of effort over the years going off down alleyways searching for information when really it should have just been there immediately.

Peter Callaghan: Just to correct an impression I created, perhaps, a £100 million hospital involves hundreds of suppliers. It is not just one supplier with a £100 million contract; it is lots of small suppliers as well, but someone has to take the lead to integrate all of that together. I used the example of British Aerospace; in the case of the company I was working for it was Marshall in Cambridge. The business I was running averaged about £60 million a year, so it is not a big business by any means. It is about integrating the supply chain from smaller companies, some of them quite small, where someone takes the lead. Why did the Germans do better and why did they win that contract? They spent seven years bidding against us. They travelled more often to Saudi Arabia. Their trade organisation had more people in their office in Riyadh who knew the lie of the land than the UKTI did. We had a good relationship with UKTI, but they seemed to have just the finger on the pulse of who needed to be talked to and what they needed to be offered. They take a much more proactive role. The thing I would vote for would be to double the number of people in the UKTI offices overseas, the British trade commissioners. I would put more people into those offices, based on my very positive experiences with those offices around the world.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: But what would they be doing?

Peter Callaghan: You go to a country maybe once every three or four months, so your relationships are very short-term. If the UK trade commissions had more people to establish relationships inside the country when you go there, you can get a briefing, and you are much more up to speed as to who to talk to, what lines to take. That is what we used the trade commissioners for. They could do a lot more than they are currently doing, but you would probably have to have ex-business people who are oriented to getting an idea of what was going on in the marketplace so that when you got there you could be briefed by them. That is the practical recommendation I would make.

Q106 Baroness Prosser: Why do you think it is that UKTI is so on the back foot on these things? Do you think it is an attitudinal problem or—

Peter Callaghan: I do not find them on the back foot.

Baroness Prosser: No, but what you have just been saying is that—

Peter Callaghan: That was Mr Dholakia.

Baroness Prosser: No. You said you need people to co-ordinate and you gave us an example that the Germans were up there, upfront, spending more time abroad and so on.

Peter Callaghan: I forget the name of the German trade organisation, but in-country they seem to be much more interested in the background and the details to these bids so that when their teams went to Riyadh, they were being briefed by the German trade—

Baroness Prosser: Who is it that is at fault in this country for not being so—

Peter Callaghan: No one is at fault. There are only so many trade commissioners in these offices. I am just arguing you could do with more of them.

Baroness Prosser: So that is a UKTI issue, then?

Peter Callaghan: It is probably a budget issue.

The Chairman: The next witness is from the UKTI, and we can put these questions to him, but we need to move it on because of timing. This phrase of yours, “a British way of doing business”—of course our way of doing business is not the same as the way of doing business with new markets, including emerging markets. That leads to a question that I think Baroness Nicholson wanted to put, which is quintessential.

Q107 Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: Mr Dholakia, you mentioned about halfway through the very large amount of regulation that Britain has. I would like to invite anyone to comment on whether your companies, the ones that you have been representing and nurturing, have found the Bribery Act to be a big handicap. I recall that when the Bribery Act came in there was a big consultation period with companies who were not altogether satisfied. Of course in the emerging markets and other markets, with the rise of bribery and corruption globally being horrific, the real struggle is quite often against a country where it is state companies and maybe they do not have the same respect for our Bribery Act as, say, the US would have, and certainly not maybe locally. What is the competition doing about corruption, and is this hampering our companies very badly indeed?

Uday Dholakia: What I would like to see in terms of your question is localised international trade centres where we bring in the synergies of the universities, private equity and the experience of the local business community to help local businesses. In terms of anti-bribery, I think the whole world is moving in the right direction; they want a level playing field, and they want to do away with sharp practices. My concern is that when we come up with regulation and if we do not weigh-up the ethos and the modus operandi of that legislation, we are perceived to be anti-investment, anti-trade and an anti-business country, and I think there is danger in that. I firmly believe in the long-term and medium-term aims and objectives. If we do not communicate with our soft power while we are moving the agenda for anti-bribery forward internationally, then we will be perceived—and we are perceived—as being anti-investment, anti-business, anti-trade, with our regulations on visas and people coming into our universities.

I was in India with the prominent Vice-Chancellor from Nottingham University, Sir Colin Campbell, and we were talking to the Institute of Management in Ahmedabad, to the bright

and the best, asking why they were not coming to the Russell Group of universities rather than Ivy League—they were ever so polite and did not say much. After a couple of beers, they said we were perceived to be expensive, stuffy, and you could not get jobs here. More importantly, in America, at MIT or Stanford or UCLA, they saw peers from their own communities who were heads of departments, who were Nobel prize-winning economists, and that gave them the impetus to go to America. The business case for having soft power in this area is very important.

I go back to my early proposition, that our regulations are the best in the world; that is our USP, but sometimes we do not communicate intelligent regulation very well, and in the short term we send out mixed signals. People do not just listen to the Prime Minister in the House or the Opposition on the television; they also read blogs, they also listen to our commercial radio stations and television stations, and make their minds up. It is no longer that COI and the BBC send the messages to the world. The world is looking at us from all sides, and sometimes we are perceived to be anti-enterprise.

David Maisey: I would also suggest that no one wants to see corruption in business. We all want a fair, competitive, even playing field. To some extent, the Bribery Act is perceived as limiting what companies can do and what they can offer. I know from my own experience in the Institute of Export that there is confusion about what is involved in the Bribery Act. There are companies who are now setting limits on hospitality, for example, because they are concerned that may be perceived as bribery. The other consideration is it is very much unilateral. There should be a multilateral implementation, because we need to be mindful of all of the different cultures globally, and there are different ways of doing business in each of these nations. It is incorrect as westerners if we go along and impose certain ways of doing business on the eastern cultures. We have to be flexible, and I think the Bribery Act itself does not lend that flexibility. It has now put businesses in fear that they may well be overstepping the mark with simple things like hospitality and doing business that is relevant to the nation that they are in. These things do need to be considered and, never mind internationally, even in the UK there is a lot of confusion with it.

Q108 Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts: On the Bribery Act, which is now out for consultation, people say that the difference between it and the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act is that you have responsibility for your agents in this country, where you do not in the US. What I am always amazed by is how few people write in to say something. When that consultation closes, there will be a couple of hundred, but there ought to be a couple of thousand. If people really believe that they can influence the Government, that is what they ought to be doing. I hope that organisations like yours, if this is a problem, do write in and say so because the weight of evidence will have an impact. We heard earlier about the BBC World Service and we heard then, Mr Dholakia, about how Britain was perceived as stuffy and anti-enterprise. Is the World Service pro-enterprise? Does it have enough—

Uday Dholakia: My Lord, I have a real concern about the BBC. When I got home after a day's business, I saw one of your colleagues use the term "lost the plot". I think if they have lost the plot in internal issues in the UK, they certainly have lost the plot externally. The world does not see us through the BBC any more. There are a plethora of multimedia communication platforms out there. That is my biggest concern, that the world is viewing us in real-time values, not the historical values of cricket, fair play, integrity. Those are still underlying, important values, but the values have changed. Some of the events that happen in this Westminster village are heavily reported worldwide, and people made their own perceptions about these issues as well. I would say that certainly the BBC needs to take stock of that.

One point I will make is that there are no senior people in policymaking or the editorial end from the diverse community. Yes, we see people in front of the television. I had the privilege to work as a commissioner for the Broadcasting Standards Commission, chaired by Lord Dubs, and we worked very hard to put a diversity provision within the Communications Bill before Ofcom was established. I am sad to say the BBC today has no empathy in terms of policy and direction with the rest of the world because it does not reflect the rest of the world. It certainly does not reflect the communities that are based up here.

The Chairman: Strong words there; that is very interesting.

Q109 Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: That is very interesting, and all the evidence has been interesting. I know you want to get on to the Commonwealth, but I wanted to check something. Do the three of you work together on a regular basis, or are you just here because we happen to have invited you to the same session?

Uday Dholakia: I work with the Institute of Export. In fact, I did a presentation to some of the companies who were keen to do business with India and, rather than doing an academic business presentation, I did almost like Arthur Daley's philosophy of doing business. What is the reality? Let me give you a quick example. If there is a major festival in Bombay, UKTI and the chambers will advise you not to go during that period. What I was advocating is that is the right period to go and say to your host or your client, "Can I come and spend the day with you or your family to get underneath your skin to build a relationship?" so the next morning when you wake up to do business you have already covered a lot of useful ground. That is the place that I am coming from.

Q110 Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: Each of you has made some very interesting and some quite strong comments. You have given us some very interesting evidence. Was it because we asked you about soft power, or have you been thinking for some time, "Hey, Britain should do more on soft power"? Has that been something that has been seething away in your thoughts?

Uday Dholakia: I have been badgering Lord Stephen Green and Margot James MP on this. I have been badgering for the last 10 years, because it is really frustrating to go abroad and find that we are losing our competitive advantage.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: Is that the same with Mr Maisey and Mr Callaghan? Have you been feeling strongly about this issue?

David Maisey: Yes, we have, from both the Institute of Export and the ICC Solutions perspective. Ultimately, "soft power" is a term, but it is all the underlying principles. For my company, that has been absolutely key for our continued evolution and success. Constantly, daily, we are looking at how people globally perceive us and what we need to do to enhance our company.

Q111 Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: I think my colleague Baroness Nicholson mentioned this earlier. If you were asked to point to one country that we should look at to see, "Hey, wait a minute, they are good", would you say Korea or would you say Australia, or France, or America? Where would you say we should look at to see some really interesting, innovative things, using your word, Mr Maisey?

Uday Dholakia: Germany and United States.

David Maisey: Yes, I would agree.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: You think they are ahead in soft power, both of them.

David Maisey: Certainly the US. I think Germany is evolving and, as I mentioned earlier, China and Turkey undoubtedly are evolving in terms of soft power.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: What about France? They always seem to be pushing the French case through the French institutes.

David Maisey: I think, with all due respect, many people have had enough of France and the general attitude, again with all due respect. We see this day in, day out. Speaking with clients globally, they have exactly that perception. They are becoming somewhat annoyed with the ongoing arrogance of the French and their failure to be flexible and to adapt. It will be interesting to see how that evolves, but talking from personal experience it is not my own personal point of view.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: Mr Callaghan, in the Commonwealth is there a country that we could emulate?

The Chairman: Can I just interrupt? That is the question that we want Baroness Prosser to develop.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: Are we going on to the Commonwealth?

The Chairman: Yes, we are going on and it is going to be, I am afraid, the last question. I just declare an interest when I speak on this subject because I am President of the Royal Commonwealth Society and Chairman of the Council of Commonwealth Societies. Baroness Prosser, you put the question and let us build on it with what Lord Foulkes was asking.

Q112 Baroness Prosser: The majority of Commonwealth countries have retained over the years the very similar legal systems, governance procedures and so on that they inherited and developed during the time when we were much more involved. Do you find that dealing with Commonwealth countries as British companies makes it slightly easier at all? Does it give any advantage?

Uday Dholakia: I think that Indians—I speak as somebody who is British and who is absolutely passionate about UK plc—and people anywhere that English is spoken and appreciate Pythonism have a great affection for us. Affection itself does not translate into commercial reality. There is a shift in paradigm that needs to be taken on board. One of the observations is that a lot of our institutions are London-centric. There is an exciting life outside London. There is a lot of business to be done outside London. That is one observation.

The whole world is knocking on the doors of English-speaking emerging markets, so what is our unique selling proposition? Soft power is an important one, but I go back to my original submission that we need to restructure and recalibrate it. It may be a question of learning as well. I will give you an actual example. One of the biggest challenges we have in doing business with the Indian subcontinent is regulation in terms of import and export, especially around food. I put a proposition that better regulation is our USP that sets us apart and the rest of the world wants to adopt our model. The World Bank wants to adopt our model. Rather than just taking SMEs to India, I am taking British regulators to India to a conference and saying to the SMEs, “If you want to do business with us, these are the prerequisites. If you get it right, we can do a lot of business together, but if you need help, these are the signposting areas where we can give you help”. As a result of that, the Indian regulators now want to come to this country and adopt our best practices as well. Those are soft skills. Those are influencing skills that we need to build on.

Q113 Baroness Prosser: Mr Maisey, what do you think?

David Maisey: Certainly, from my experience, it has been a benefit to engage with other Commonwealth countries, and most notably Canada has been our key area for export over the last number of years. We have established somewhat of a monopoly in terms of the test tools that we supply within the Canadian marketplace and that is undoubtedly due to the very close relationships that we enjoy as both being part of the Commonwealth. It is the same culture, the same business ethos and obviously similar laws and so on. Canada has been a wonderful destination and undoubtedly that is because of the Commonwealth link.

Interestingly, because of our activity in Canada as part of the Commonwealth, what we are now seeing is migration to the US. Typically, there is often conflict between Canada and the US, but in this case the US is looking to Canada to see how they have implemented the chip-and-PIN model. Canada looked to the UK; now the US is looking to Canada. That is part of, I suggest, the power of the Commonwealth going beyond and now starting to influence how the US is going to manage their chip-and-PIN migration. That potential, incidentally, is massive, infinitely bigger than Canada itself. As part of that Commonwealth relationship, we are now looking to achieve huge things in the US.

Q114 Baroness Prosser: That is interesting. Could we say the same, Mr Callaghan, if you look at Australia and the very close relationships nowadays in that Pacific Rim with Singapore, Hong Kong, which are themselves ex-Commonwealth, and their legal systems?

Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top: It is still part of the Commonwealth.

Baroness Prosser: Yes, indeed. I was just giving an example.

Peter Callaghan: The first thing I would say is that people build relationships by doing things together. One of the most important things that we have all done and continue to do is education. People in the Commonwealth are educated either in their own country, but, most importantly, they are educated in other Commonwealth countries. It is not just the UK they come to but Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. They are educated in other Commonwealth countries. In that process, English is the common language and the examples and the case studies and the material they work with are largely Commonwealth examples, whether they be English or Canadian or Australian or whatever. It is a very important form of soft power. When people are educated technically as doctors, engineers, accountants, whatever they might be, in a Commonwealth country, they are taking across the soft power that you are talking about. I think there is a huge benefit in the Commonwealth for that reason—it is inherent that people have done things together. That is the thing I come back to about the trade commissioners in these countries. When you go there, you go and see them. You build a relationship with the trade commissioners, and they in turn build a relationship in that country with people so that you automatically fit into the patterns, the processes, the ways of doing business in those places. I think the Commonwealth is tremendously important because of the soft power it already has.

Q115 Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top: Do Commonwealth countries talk about visa issues?

Peter Callaghan: There is a committee that is looking at this expansion of the APEC card across the Commonwealth, the business visa. That is something that is going on at the moment.

Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top: So, visas are not a problem at the moment.

Uday Dholakia: They are a major problem. It is also how we communicate processing of visas. I think as a country we are sending out mixed signals. Investment money has the opportunity to go anywhere in the world to be invested. We have a competitive advantage because of language, integrity and everything else, but my advocacy is that we ought not to take it for granted. We need to build on it. We need to calibrate it. We need to innovate with that.

The Chairman: Baroness Armstrong has chucked a large rock in the pool right at the end because, of course, the visa issue is one that comes up again and again, but I think we are going to call this to a halt now. We are very grateful to you. Speaking for myself, I have tremendously enjoyed this short session, and I think we can draw on a number of your comments very heavily, particularly in the next session that we are going to have with the UKTI. Thank you very much indeed for taking the time on this hot afternoon to be here and

Commonwealth Business Council, Institute of Export and National Asian Business Association and Leicestershire Business Association – Oral evidence (QQ 93-115)

good wishes in all your work. We shall study very carefully what you have told us. Thank you very much indeed.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) – Written evidence

1. CPA UK

1.01. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is the professional association of Commonwealth parliamentarians, a network of over 17,000 parliamentarians from 175 national and devolved legislatures.

1.01. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK Branch (CPA UK) is one of the largest and most active branches of the international CPA and delivers a unique annual programme both in Westminster and overseas. Governed by an Executive Committee of parliamentarians from all main parties and with a membership of Members from both Houses of Parliament, CPA UK undertakes international parliamentary outreach on behalf of the UK Parliament and its Members. Its specific focus is on parliamentary diplomacy and parliamentary strengthening activities, seeking to foster co-operation and understanding between parliaments, promote good parliamentary practice and advance parliamentary democracy.

2. The meaning and importance of soft power

2.01. *How important is a country's soft power? What is the evidence that soft power makes a difference?*

2.02. CPA UK's work is in large part instigated through requests for programmes and partnerships from Commonwealth legislatures, so the organisation relies on demand for the UK's existing soft power to generate its activity. Over the last three financial years, CPA UK has seen 30% year-on-year uplift in its programmes, indicating that the UK's soft power is both increasing and meeting with a favourable reception and increased appetite abroad.

2.03. CPA UK's aim in creating links between Westminster and international parliaments is to strengthen good governance and democratic accountability. Improved parliamentary practice can lead to good governance, which in turn helps improve a country's peace and stability, which catalyses social and economic development, stabilises its economy, and thereby makes trade with and investment in the country more secure.

2.04. *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?*

2.05. Exercising soft power influence on other nations can lead to peaceful and amicable resolution of differences in opinion, in particular where it is likely that more overt attempts to change a country's course of action might lead to large-scale international consequences and that a softer approach will have greater impact. For instance, the UK Government's recent decision to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Sri Lanka despite its inconsistent human rights record indicates that it is preferable to maintain links and to continue to highlight issues and lobby for improvement rather than to isolate the country and leave it without international checks.

2.06. To this end CPA UK facilitates peer-to-peer exchanges between different countries' parliamentarians, a context in which it is possible for MPs and Peers to raise challenges and disagreements amongst their international colleagues informally, with the aim of instigating action from parliaments. In recent weeks, for instance, the UK delegation to the 59th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) in Johannesburg raised the issues of the persecution of LGBTI individuals, female genital mutilation and the death penalty with Members from countries where these practices persist.

3. The extent and use of the UK's soft power resources

3.01. *What are the most important soft power assets that the UK possesses? Can we put a value on the UK's soft power resources?*

3.02. CPA UK is able to undertake its work on the basis that Commonwealth countries – and others, 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.

3.03. The shared language and, in many cases, legal system and business/administrative law, also allows for easier trading relationships, as well as for increased cultural exchange and understanding.

3.04. *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?*

3.05. CPA UK undertakes to work, wherever possible, in partnership with NGOs and civil society organisations such as Volunteer Services Overseas (VSO), the British Council, and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD). By identifying shared goals and creating strong, well-planned partnerships, it is possible to collaborate and to leverage public funding and non-state actors' funding to increase the reach and impact of programmes.

3.06. *Who should be the target audiences, and what should be aims, of the application of the UK's soft power? Is the UK using its soft power well and to the right ends?*

3.07. Parliaments, as the institutions that create legislation, hold governments to account, and represent citizens' interests, are a hugely important target for soft power, with far-reaching influence that extends up to governments and down to individuals through civil society and grassroots political structures. As such, focusing soft power on parliamentarians leverages its impact. However, parliaments are often forgotten stakeholders in the developmental process, falling between governments and civil society organisations; for instance, in the consultation process for the post-2015 development agenda, there is no clear route through which parliamentarians can make their voices heard.

3.08. *Is there sufficient return for the Government's investment in soft power? Is the Government's investment adequate?*

3.09. CPA UK runs its programmes on extremely tight budgets, consistently making decisions based on maximising value for money; it has found that a great deal of soft power influence can be achieved without incurring large costs. However, soft power requires non-monetary investment, such as human resource, time and facilitation assistance, i.e. opening

the right doors, and greater assistance from Government in these areas would be gratefully received by all actors.

4. Soft power and diplomacy

4.01. *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?*

4.02. As an informal grouping of states, the Commonwealth network is based on friendship between nations and shared values. As such, approaches between members and under the Commonwealth's auspices are likely to be received favourably, and shared language, administrative/legal frameworks and, to an extent, history are likely to make cultural understanding easier. The advantages of shared values and history also apply to the EU.

4.03. However, in the Commonwealth this shared history can have the unfortunate side effect of allowing disagreements and wrongs of the distant past to have enduring ramifications. For instance, in some quarters in some African countries, the UK's attempts to influence elements of domestic policy such as homosexual rights are perceived to be ongoing interference from a former colonial power.

4.04. *How best should the UK's foreign policy and approach to diplomacy respond to the new global communications environment?*

4.05. With increasing channels through which the public can access the media, and with an increasingly fraught relationship between politicians and the media, it is important that use of both traditional and new media by Government be as open, responsive and comprehensive as possible, to ensure that the general public feels that Government is being transparent and has nothing to hide and to build bridges with media.

4.06. *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?*

4.07. In many cases, the interests and objectives of non-state actors will tie in with those of the UK, making it practical to link with them and promote these shared aims. It is important to ensure positive perception in as many quarters as possible to secure the UK's position.

4.08. Bilateral links already exist with several of the emerging global powerhouses, such as India and many African countries through the Commonwealth. In some cases, these nations lack strength in their democratic institutions; CPA UK seeks to work with these to reinforce good governance and parliamentary democracy, promoting stability, human rights and the rule of law.

4.09. *How are UK institutions and values 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?*

4.10. Westminster continues to be seen as the mother of parliaments and a universal gold standard of parliamentary best practice. This is evidenced by the popularity of CPA UK's

Westminster-based programmes, notably the Westminster Seminar on Parliamentary Practice and Procedure, which each year is oversubscribed.

4.11. However, in its dealings with some partner parliaments, CPA UK has found that the relationship can be overshadowed by ongoing ill feeling towards the UK as the former colonial power, and in some cases its exercise of soft power can be perceived to be ongoing interference with a sovereign power's domestic policy. This should be borne in mind by representatives of the UK, as in some cases exchanges of views can be perceived as preaching.

4.12. *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?*

4.13. At the recent CPC in Johannesburg, a session on the Commonwealth Charter sparked a discussion of the rights of and protections given to LGBTI individuals in the 2/3 of Commonwealth countries that criminalise homosexuality. In this session, several delegates implied or directly accused the UK of imposing a liberal, human rights western agenda to the detriment of the sovereignty of other nations. This was handled by one UK delegate by citing the number of instances where the UK has not performed well, for instance in preventing women voting for many years, the low female and ethnic minority representation in Parliament, criminalisation of homosexuality until relatively recently and permissive attitudes towards racism. It is important to emphasise in any attempt to influence that the UK is still far from perfect, and therefore any efforts are mutual, not merely a case of developed western countries dictating to the less developed world.

5. Aspects of soft power

5.01. *What is your assessment of the role played by the English language, and English language publications, in advancing the UK's influence abroad?*

5.02. Because the Commonwealth's shared language is English, one barrier is removed in bilateral exchanges with other Commonwealth countries, whether at governmental, parliamentary or non-state level. This is particularly beneficial in business agreements, as it dramatically reduces the costs by eliminating the need for translation of documentation. It also means that cultural influences, such as books, music, films and television programmes, are more likely to be shared, creating opportunities to develop closer relationships.

5.03. In the parliamentary context, English is the main language for parliamentary business in the majority of Commonwealth countries. However, in some, for instance Mozambique, English is not always the first language of Members, making English language training essential in enabling parliaments to be effective and robust. The British Council undertakes some parliamentary English language training, but due to lack of resources is not able to provide it across the board where it is needed.

5.04. *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?*

5.05. The UK's aid payments and humanitarian relief contribute to stability and to social and economic development through improvements to communities' health, food security,

education and infrastructure. This stability in turn gives economies and businesses the space in which to develop, and eventually to become new trading partners. It also can provide a means through which the UK can influence decision-makers in recipient countries, a symbol of support and friendship that may make calls for improved human rights records and strengthened roles for parliament, civil society and the media more effective.

5.06. *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?*

5.07. The international CPA is unique in recognising devolved legislatures equally to national; Holyrood, the Senedd and the Oireachtas therefore form an important part of the British CPA branches' work. For instance, similarities between the devolved legislatures and those of small countries such as Pacific and Caribbean islands mean they have a great deal of knowledge to share on issues of mutual concern, more than a Westminster parliamentarian might be able to contribute.

5.08. Furthermore, devolved administrations have their own bilateral relationships (Wales with Lesotho, Scotland with Malawi for instance) that are individually valuable and should be fostered.

5.09. It is also important to preserve the multiple narratives of the regions as each will speak to different countries. For example, Northern Ireland's post-conflict and peacebuilding experience links it with countries such as Sri Lanka, Rwanda and South Africa, all of which face the challenges of integrating divided communities, whilst Scotland's ongoing devolution/independence debate bears similarities to that of Quebec in Canada.

September 2013

Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University – Written evidence

I. SUMMARY

I.1. The Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies at Coventry University welcomes the opportunity to make this submission to the House of Lord's Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence.

I.2. We note that one of the priorities of the coalition government is to use soft power to promote British values, advance development and prevent conflict overseas. Our submission will focus on how we can make effective use of the UK's soft power resources to enhance security at home and abroad. Specifically, we will respond to the following areas of interest:

- The importance of a country's soft power and the evidence that it makes a difference
- The relationship between soft power and 'hard' exercises of a nation's power
- The UK's soft power assets and how can we make the most of them
- The role for non-state actors in generating and capitalising on UK soft power
- The part that sport plays in the UK's influence and soft power

I.3. We will not substantively address the questions around trade, language or digital interconnectedness.

I.4. The submission draws from our own experiences related to the committee's areas of interest, both as a research centre engaged in responding to protracted conflicts and humanitarian crises and also as a UK higher education provider with significant presence in emerging economy countries. We have particular expertise in linking hard power and soft power approaches, most notably in the humanitarian sphere and the maritime security domain. We are also a research leader in the area of sports and peace, where our work focuses on understanding the social impacts of major sporting events such as the Olympics.

I.5. Established in 1999, the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies conducts cutting-edge interdisciplinary research that addresses the challenges posed by violent conflict and cultivates a deeper understanding of peace and reconciliation. Our research and consultancy services provide academic expertise and practical insights into the dynamics of war and humanitarian crises.

2. RESPONSES TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE'S AREAS OF INTEREST

2.1. How important is a country's soft power? What evidence is there that soft power makes a difference?

2.1.1. The UK's soft power capability provides the means for us to influence the actions of other countries in ways that support our continued security and prosperity. It allows us to pursue our goals internationally without relying on coercion or force, and to work cooperatively with other countries in order to strengthen the rules-based international system in line with British values. What's more, it allows us to exercise our influence and pursue our goals in ways that demonstrate our own commitment to the values we hold. For

any country this is crucially important. However the UK's position as one of the five permanent members on the United Nations Security Council, one of the biggest countries in the European Union and a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, makes our need to manage soft power even more acute.

2.1.2. This is critically and ever increasingly important in today's world. The threats to our security are changing rapidly, partly as a result of the same processes of technological innovation that are transforming our personal lives, allowing us interact with people abroad with unprecedented ease, speed and openness. While this increasingly open and interconnected world brings new opportunities, it also exposes us to new forms of vulnerability such as cyber-attacks and threats posed by networked criminal or terrorist groups. Changes in our natural environment also create uncertainties and pose a danger to public safety, and here our concerns include the effects of climate change on food, fuel and water supply. It is more often the case now that our enemies are not necessarily other nation states, but are non-state actors or even the forces of nature. This has significant repercussions for how we seek to address security challenges. Military operations are less likely to bring us the lasting solutions we need, and there are many actions that require the consent and cooperation of others. Often security threats require a comprehensive response, pursued in partnership with other countries and involving the strategic deployment of resources from a range of UK government departments, public sector agencies and non-governmental organisations. The more we are able to influence others, the more scope we will have to set agendas and lead in responding to these challenges.

2.1.3. The importance of soft power is also set to keep growing in a world where rapid developments in the global communications infrastructure is empowering citizens and enabling them to make their voices heard, pressure their representatives and participate in decision-making. The swiftness of communication and its networked character are 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. The relationships that we build with these more participatory publics will be crucial for our national security. Governments that seek to support us in pursuing our foreign policy and national security goals will need the support of their populace, and those that wish us harm will also need to justify this to win internal support. Our own messages will increasingly be scrutinised for honesty and consistency, both at home and abroad. The challenge for us is to find ways of reaching out to citizens of other countries – particularly the young – and to project our soft power messages in ways which resonate with people and cut across their busy lives.

2.1.4. The serious commitments that other countries are making to develop their soft power capabilities is a clear indication that these resources can make a crucial difference in achieving trade and security goals. Emerging economy countries are vastly increasing their investment in soft power in order to increase their influence internationally. Turkey has steadily increased its contributions as a humanitarian aid provider and offers its mediation services in some of the world's most intractable conflicts. Qatar has exponentially increased its soft power projection through its sponsorship of the news network Al Jazeera. The British Council reports that China has opened more than 300 overseas cultural institutes in less than ten years. Meanwhile established leaders like Norway, Switzerland and Canada continue to invest in and capitalise upon their reputations as upholders of universal values, aid providers and stewards of the environment.

2.1.5. Thanks in no small measure to the successes of the Olympics and Paralympics, the Queen's Jubilee and the royal wedding, the UK is now very highly ranked for its soft power projection. The 2013 IfG-Monacle Soft Power Index considers the UK to have the highest levels of soft power in the world. In light of this increase in our soft power capabilities, and with an awareness of the need to adapt to a changing and increasingly uncertain world, the UK government and policy communities are rightly considering the opportunities for more effectively deploying soft power resources and consolidating gains. We welcome the increasing attention and the support for investing in soft power, particularly within UK government departments working overseas. We particularly welcome the inclusion of soft power in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's business plan and congratulate the British Council for its leadership in promoting soft power.

2.1.6. It is vital to our national interest for us to build from our position of strength and maintain our investment in soft power, developing our position relative to other emerging and established countries. **We call on the committee to affirm the increasing importance of soft power in responding to today's security challenges and to encourage support for developing our soft power capabilities across government.**

2.2. How does soft power interrelate with 'harder' exercises of a nation's power?

2.2.1. Soft power assets are part of the full spectrum of means through which power may be exercised. This spectrum also includes the use of force, often encapsulated by military assets, and economic payments to achieve certain ends; collectively known as hard power. At its most effective, soft power can offer significant advantages over hard power in managing security challenges. Whereas hard power can be important to contain threats and prevent violence in the short term, soft power can aspire to go beyond this in seeking a lasting resolution to underlying conflict issues. Its subtlety can mean that it is less divisive, reducing the strain on our relationships with other countries, and it is likely to be more cost effective than military action.

2.2.2. There is currently a lack of clarity around how hard and soft power may be applied together so that each consolidates the gains of the other. It is widely accepted that containing violence through military action does not constitute a strategy in itself, and that this is unlikely to secure a lasting settlement in the absence of a robust political plan to address contested claims and issues. In the UK we also recognise the importance of working for a negotiated resolution to conflict, and we can assume that our soft power increases our influence when we are a stakeholder in such discussions. But there is no set formula for judging the combination of hard and soft power that need to be applied in any given context – except to say that the latter involves less loss of life and takes a smaller toll on our finances and international standing.

2.2.3. The Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies adopts an integrated approach to peacebuilding, prioritising the importance of working collaboratively with partners in a range of sectors. Over time we have gained particular experience in researching hard and soft forms of power at the points where they intersect. One such context includes humanitarian action, where there has been increasing interaction between civilian and military actors, and a drive to create policies, methods and tools to facilitate collaboration of an appropriate nature. Another includes maritime security, where a range of military and civilian actors are

currently responding to challenges like piracy, illegal fishing, trafficking and smuggling. We believe that there are transferable lessons from each of these contexts which may help us better understand the interrelationship between hard and soft power in more general terms, and especially within foreign policy.

2.2.4. Experiences from the humanitarian sphere indicate that creating a culture of dialogue, exchange and effective coordination between hard and soft power institutions will be vital if we are to fully utilise our range of security assets. What's more, while the irregularity and unpredictability of most security challenges makes it an almost impossible task for us to adopt fixed rules governing the deployment of our hard and soft power assets in any given context, it would be possible for us to iterate some basic principles more clearly. This additional clarity would help to ensure the consistency of messaging across the wide range of actors capable of contributing to – or destabilising – the UK's planned response to a specific set of circumstances.

2.2.5. We can also evidence the need to integrate hard and soft power approaches within a comprehensive framework for response through the centre's work on maritime security. Reported incidents of piracy off the Horn of Africa have reduced in the last year through a combination of international naval patrols, vessel hardening techniques and the use of armed guards. Yet while these improvements at sea should be recognised, a hard power response will do little to tackle the instability ashore which is often the source of such problems. Here the delivery of humanitarian relief and the focus on development is crucially important. Yet there remains a lack of sufficient awareness of activities on land and at sea by those working in different environments, and this is all too typical of institutions seeking to enhance security through different means. We believe that universities and research centres can play an important role as facilitators here. In this particular case our centre will be hosting a series of seminars funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council to examine the relationship between maritime insecurity and sustainable development. This research programme seeks to bring together academic and non-academic, state and non-state actors, and has been supported by the Royal Navy and Nautical Institute. **We urge the committee to underline the importance of communication and dialogue between hard and soft power institutions in addressing security challenges, both to ensure the coherence of messaging and the coherence of action, and to recognise the role that universities can play in building cross-sectoral networks and facilitating sustainable knowledge transfer between different actors.**

2.3. What are the important soft power assets that the UK has? How can we make the most of these? What is the role for non-state actors?

2.3.1. The UK has an unparalleled range of soft power assets at its disposal. We are an outward-looking country that contributes significantly to promoting and realising a more values-based global governance. We have a strong reputation as a generous and effective aid provider and we are well recognised as a global hub for non-governmental organisations working in development, humanitarian aid and peacebuilding. We have recently reached an important milestone in our aid spending, reaching 0.7% of GNI, and we are co-chair of the United Nations committee developing the successor framework to the Millennium Development Goals. Our leadership in these areas goes hand-in-hand with the attractiveness of our cultural institutions and other soft power assets to give us credibility and leverage in global conversations on security and governance.

2.3.2. Our leadership role in development, humanitarian aid and peacebuilding is buttressed by our values. Informed by these, we invest heavily in strengthening democratic freedom, universal human rights and the rule of law. These investments are often made by UK government departments working overseas, including the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, as well as other operationally independent bodies such as the British Council and British non-governmental organisations. Importantly, our value-based foreign policy is an extension of our way of doing things at home. We are one of the world's longest standing and most stable democracies, with an exceptionally strong human rights record. In order to maintain our international reputation as a responsible global actor lead by our values, and thus to make the most of our soft power assets, it is imperative that we continue to maintain our strong domestic record on human rights and other freedoms. We must also recognise that how we pursue our goals matters. We need to be as consistent as possible in the application of our values and encourage high levels of civil society and community involvement in the activities we are involved in and the decisions we make. **UK soft power is affected by the perceptions of others. In order to make the most of our soft power assets we should continue to ensure that our actions are values-based, and that these values are consistently applied to the fullest extent possible both at home and abroad.**

2.3.3. We note with concern that investment in UK soft power institutions is jeopardised by the deficit in our public finances. The British Council, BBC World Service and British Film Institute all play an invaluable role in promoting British soft power, and each has been affected by the current financial climate. To make the most of our soft power assets we must continue to invest in them, guarding against the possibility of decline. **We encourage the committee to press the government to invest more in soft power assets like the British Council, BBC World Service and the British Film Institute, and to provide additional support for them to weather retrenchments in public spending while retaining a focus on results and value for money.**

2.3.4. A good deal of soft power projection lies outside of government, and this is particularly the case when we are deploying soft power resources in order to meet security challenges or achieve foreign policy objectives around stabilisation, conflict prevention and development. Here again a key determinant for making the most of our soft power assets lies in coordination, this time between government departments and affiliated bodies and others in the public and non-governmental sector. An integrated approach would support partnerships across different sectors, including universities, cultural institutions and businesses. At the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies we are using our expertise to build up higher education sectors abroad, and have contributed significantly to developing peace studies curricula and a research culture in China, Kenya and Palestine. **Non-state actors are playing a vital role in generating UK soft power, and the government can support this through resourcing and amplification. The continuation of funding for organisations delivering soft power goals is vital, and these funding relationships need to be sustained.**

2.4. What parts do sport and culture play in the UK's influence and soft power?

2.4.1 The UK has a long tradition of sporting success and has lead the way in the inception and development of some of the world's most popular sports and sporting events, such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Sport is practiced in some form or other almost universally, and in terms of economics is one of the largest business sectors on the planet. It

is also often used as a political soft power battleground such is its reach and influence within society. This makes it an important area in which the UK can increase soft power influence, through activities such as hosting mega-events like the Olympic and Paralympic Games or World Championships, or through the opportunities created by having individuals in key positions within sports organisations (e.g. Sir Philip Craven as President of the International Paralympic Committee).

2.4.2 An increasing area of interest over the past decade or so, both practically and academically, has been the use of sport as a tool for peace and development. Increasing numbers of organisations are including sport within their development programmes as stand-alone tools as well as part of a more holistic approach, particularly within post-conflict zones and areas hit by natural disasters. Sports organisations and big businesses are using sport as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility programmes, while governments and NGOs are increasingly integrating sport within aid programmes as a way to lessen tensions, improve health and break down barriers. In addition, sport is increasingly being used as a way to re-integrate people with disabilities into society and to help change attitudes towards disability. Programmes such as the International Inspiration programme operated by UK Sport International, which emerged out of London 2012, allow us to increase UK reach and recognition abroad and so maintain high levels of soft power.

2.4.2 The Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies is actively involved in research aimed at increasing and better understanding the impact of sport and sporting mega-events as a tool to bring about social change. From September 2013 we are hosting a Brazilian research fellow sponsored through Marie Curie International, who will be researching the relevance and transferability of the social legacy programmes of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. In addition we are implementing a four year staff exchange scheme, again funded through Marie Curie International, in which we are partnered with four other higher education providers in Brazil, Germany, South Africa and the USA. The aim of this project is to look at the management of impact for mega-events (both sporting and cultural) in order to make recommendations as to how to better ensure a lasting positive legacy. **We encourage the committee to highlight the role of sport in bringing about social change and the platform it provides for communicating soft power messages on human rights and development. We also encourage support for the role that universities play in improving our understanding in this area.**

3. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS IN SUMMARY

3.1. We call on the committee to affirm the increasing importance of soft power in responding to today's security challenges and to encourage support for developing soft power capabilities across government.

3.2. We urge the committee to underline the importance of communication and dialogue between hard and soft power institutions in addressing security challenges, both to ensure the coherence of messaging and the coherence of action, and to recognise the role that universities can play in building cross-sectoral networks and facilitating sustainable knowledge transfer between different actors.

3.3. UK soft power is affected by the perceptions of others. In order to make the most of our soft power assets we should continue to ensure that our actions are values-based, and

that these values are consistently applied to the fullest extent possible both at home and abroad.

3.4. We encourage the committee to press the government to invest more in soft power assets like the British Council, BBC World Service and the British Film Institute, and to provide additional support for them to weather retrenchments in public spending while retaining a focus on results and value for money.

3.5. Non-state actors are playing a vital role in generating UK soft power, and the government can support this through resourcing and amplification. The continuation of funding for organisations delivering soft power goals is vital, and these funding relationships need to be sustained.

3.6. We encourage the committee to highlight the role of sport in bringing about social change and the platform it provides for communicating soft power messages on human rights and development. We also encourage support for the role that universities play in improving our understanding in this area.

September 2013

City of London Corporation – Written evidence

Submitted by the Office of the City Remembrancer

Introduction

1. The City of London Corporation supports the maintenance and promotion of London as a leading international centre for financial and related business services, under the broad brand of “the City.” The services cluster based in London is a major asset to the UK. It is a significant contributor to the UK balance of payments and to the public finances and employment. Over 1 million people are directly employed in UK financial services with a further 967,000 employed in related professional services. Around two-thirds of UK financial and related professional services employees are based outside London⁵¹.
2. The City Corporation has extensive engagement with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and UK Trade and Investment, as part of this promotional work. The aim is to support UK-based financial and professional services firms to develop business in overseas markets, and to attract enhanced levels of inward investment into the Square Mile, London and the UK as a whole.
3. Financial and professional services continue to be the UK’s leading export sector with a trade surplus larger than the combined surplus of all other net exporting industries in the UK. The value of UK financial and professional services is something that the City of London Corporation makes every effort to promote not only within the UK but on an international scale.
4. The City is fully aware of the need for British business to look not only beyond our borders, but beyond those of our traditional European trading partners. The Lord Mayor travels extensively throughout the year as part of his programme to promote British businesses abroad. The impact of the door-opening role that the Lord Mayor’s status provides is seen as particularly valuable in emerging markets and countries where there is strong government involvement in economic functions, and where building long-term relationships is essential.
5. A consistent message received by the Lord Mayor when overseas is that the UK has a strong global brand, representing 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.
6. The City of London’s experience is that the nature of the office of Lord Mayor and ‘the British Embassy brand’ are also very powerful and widely respected. It is right to seek to try to build on these brand assets, and the City Corporation is greatly encouraged by the recent emphasis placed by the Government on “commercial diplomacy”.

⁵¹ Trends in UK Financial and Professional Services, *TheCityUK*, June 2012.

7. Increasingly the Lord Mayor's meetings overseas are less dominated by discussions purely about financial and professional services and include more about sectors of the economy to which financial and other services are relevant such as infrastructure and manufacturing – and the framework conditions/regulatory environment in which they operate.

Trade Promotion

8. The Lord Mayor currently spends approximately 90 days a year overseas, in over 30 countries, promoting the markets and services of the UK based financial community. The focus of these visits has evolved and a substantial business delegation drawn largely from financial and business services companies now often accompanies the mayoral party.
9. There are also occasions when, by engaging through the prism of financial services, the Lord Mayor contributes to advancing wider UK commercial interests – major infrastructure projects (HVOs) are a good example. The planning of the Lord Mayor's visits routinely involves UK-based financial service firms, institutions and trade associations at an early stage in order to understand which countries are important for them, and how a visit by the Lord Mayor could help.
10. The results are analysed jointly with UKTI, and then FCO diplomatic posts are invited to bid for visits according to the priorities that have come out of the consultation exercise. Selection of successful bids is made on the basis of the potential value to the financial and related business services industry.
11. The schedule of visits is agreed well in advance of a new Lord Mayor taking office which allows staff in post sufficient time to plan a programme of meetings, especially since the Lord Mayor's visits are less at risk from domestic factors which could potentially impact on other high level inward visits.
12. The programme now regularly includes visits to major Asian markets such as India and China. However, considerable effort is made to incorporate within the programme visits to less high profile countries which are visited less often by UK Ministers⁵². Recent countries include Mongolia, Myanmar, Angola and Panama. Feedback from posts in such countries suggests that there is particular benefit derived from these visits and they are highly valued. High level engagement at post on business issues by Political and Economic staff – including Heads of Mission – adds immense value to the UK's trade promotion.
13. Each visit programme is delivered in market by economic and commercial (often UKTI) staff based in the Embassy and Consulate network, with the aim of increasing the profile of the UK-based financial services industry in overseas markets (predominately high growth markets), promoting business development opportunities for UK-based firms and influencing senior interlocutors to increase market access for such firms.

⁵² The current programme of overseas visits is available on the City of London's website <http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-the-city/who-we-are/key-members/the-lord-mayor-of-the-city-of-london/Pages/overseas-business-visits.aspx>

14. The City enjoys a close and productive relationship with UKTI, and the support provided in facilitating engagements and undertaking market follow-up is an invaluable part of Mayoral visits.
15. UKTI has a vital function in both attracting senior industry figures to visit the UK (to promote both trade and investment opportunities) and the coordination of overseas visit programmes made by business ambassadors and Government Ministers. There is however a danger of duplication of effort and it is important that UKTI maintains a proactive role to ensure that there is effective coordination of international visits across Government departments to promote the UK.
16. There could also be a greater recognition across Whitehall of the role that UKTI plays and the on-going programme of business support and engagement that takes place.
17. Effective and well-resourced UKTI teams are essential to the successful delivery of the visits. To this end, the City of London runs an annual 'Industry Briefing Course' for overseas based representatives from UKTI, which has a role in promoting the industry within their geographic remit. The week long intensive course arms UKTI staff with a core understanding of the UK-based financial and professional services industry and its role in support of the broader economy; first-hand experience and industry contacts help to increase the effectiveness of UKTI.

Inward Investment

18. In addition to the trade promotion work undertaken in tandem with UKTI, the City supports the delivery of inward investment services to assist foreign firms involved in the financial and related business services sector set up or expand in London and the rest of the UK. This includes working with firms that have been identified as targets by UKTI staff based in the overseas Embassy and Consulate network.
19. The City then provides prospective investors with a range of services including market intelligence detailing the UK-based financial and professional services industry and facilitates introductions to relevant contacts in the sector.
20. The UK's Embassy and Consulate network provides a valuable and high profile point of contact for overseas firms looking to invest in the UK; Posts form an essential tool in facilitating access to firms to discuss and encourage their inward investment plans. UKTI is well placed within central government to work with other departments on issues that affect inward investment into the UK and this can be extremely valuable.

Lord Mayor's Regional Visits

21. The Lord Mayor undertakes numerous visits throughout the UK to support regional economic activity, and to promote the contribution the City can make in partnership with the rest of the country. The Mayoralty represents the entire UK-based financial, professional and business services sector, regardless of ownership and not just those businesses based in the Square Mile. It is therefore important to maintain close engagement with all the UK's financial centres in order that the Lord Mayor, when overseas, can highlight the value that they add to the UK.

22. The range of different specialist services and cost bases available in the regions is an important competitiveness factor in the UK's global financial services offer. Regional representatives also regularly join the business delegations which accompany the Lord Mayor overseas.

City Hospitality and Events

23. The Lord Mayor and City of London Corporation, through the hosting of official receptions, meetings and general hospitality events, seek to encourage business contacts and showcase British strengths to spur new bilateral trade. The holding of State Banquets for visiting Heads of State at Guildhall and the major occasions such as the annual Diplomatic Banquet at Mansion House form part of the City's contribution to fostering diplomatic relations between the UK and other countries. This has benefits (often not readily quantifiable) for the UK across a wide spectrum but including the creation of a positive atmosphere for finance and business, and the development of a better understanding of the range of opportunities that exist for UK based firms.

Arts and Culture

24. The City of London Corporation has long been a strong supporter of the arts. The arts enhance the quality of life and help to attract and retain talented people in London. Research instigated by the Lord Mayor and published earlier this year by the City of London Corporation⁵³, explores the range of benefits that derive from the City's arts and culture cluster.
25. Drawing on data provided by a range of arts and culture organisations based in the City, the report highlights the substantial economic contribution made by the City's world leading arts and culture institutions, showing that the cluster generated a net contribution of £225 million in GVA and supported 6,700 full-time-equivalent jobs in the City, as well as providing for the City's residents, workers and visitors access to a vibrant and diverse range of world class cultural activities.
26. There is a strong history of philanthropy in the Square Mile and the legacies of individuals such as Sir Thomas Gresham and Dick Whittington are very much part of the City today. Bequests were not only for the good of the community at the time but also an investment in its future. The Lord Mayor, and the City Corporation more generally, are keen to ensure the tradition of giving. The theme of this year's Lord Mayor's appeal, 'The City in Society' reflects the City of London's contribution and ranging commitment to the society it serves in the 21st century. The Appeal is focusing on the City as a global centre for philanthropy, and particularly on its involvement in fostering the arts. By giving a platform to its chosen charities, the Appeal aims to encourage and challenge people to give more and do more to secure the future for the next generation.

⁵³ "The Economic, Social and Cultural Impact of the City Arts and Culture Cluster", prepared for the City of London Corporation by BOP Consulting, January 2013

Interfaith Issues

27. The City of London exhibits a singularly wide range of nationalities and faiths working in its businesses and visiting as tourists. Its rich heritage of religious buildings reflects the migration of different groups through the Square Mile over many centuries and provides an opening for the Lord Mayor to engage actively on interfaith issues often complemented by contacts made on overseas visits.

28. This year the Lord Mayor has engaged with a number of religious and faith leaders from around the world, and will be hosting a major dialogue and dinner on Faiths and the City that will encourage deeper understanding and promote appreciation at a time when globalisation places a growing premium on understanding and learning among disparate faith groups.

September 2013

City of London (Letter from the Lord Mayor of London) – Supplementary written evidence

I was grateful for the opportunity to provide evidence to your Committee on Soft Power and the UK's influence so near to the conclusion of my term of office.

The Division Bell curtailed the opportunity to complete our session but perhaps I might take this opportunity to make a few supplementary observations based on my experience of the last twelve months – which I think reflect the views of successive Lord Mayors, and I know are shared by my successor Fiona Woolf who begins her year as Lord Mayor on Friday.

The Mayoralty

The office of Lord Mayor is a prime example of the value and the virtues of soft power. I stand in a line stretching back to 1189. It is, now, an office with little formal executive power: we do not make policy decisions in the way ministers or business leaders do. But the antiquity of the office, worn lightly, lends it an authority and an authenticity that relatively few other institutions can match. It is also politically neutral – and works impartially and constructively with Governments whatever their party affiliations.

That authority, authenticity and neutrality is I believe best deployed by using the convening power of the office to bring together a wide range of people and institutions, and to act as a focus for an equally wide range of activities - whether that is through the City's networks of philanthropic activity and charity (livery companies and reserve forces associations in particular) or, increasingly, as a spokesman for the financial and business City.

In this respect I believe that the office of the Lord Mayor is a powerful lever of soft power. The concept of the City encompasses not only the cluster of financial services based in the City of London, but also the whole range of assets based there, especially our heritage and our arts cluster centred around the Barbican.

The City Brand

And beyond that geography, the Lord Mayor as leader of the City speaks for the whole of the UK's financial and professional services industry – one that is internationally owned and staffed, employs almost two million people and creates a tenth of our GDP. The idea of "The City" is therefore a global brand – an asset for Britain and, dare I say it, Europe.

The Lord Mayor promotes this City brand through advocacy at home, but also abroad - where each Lord Mayor spends around a quarter of their year in office battling for the City and for the UK in established markets and, increasingly, in the emerging markets of Africa, South America and the Far East. I attach a list of the visits undertaken in recent years, and those currently planned for next year.

Overseas Visits

This programme of overseas visits, on which the Lord Mayor usually works closely with an accompanying business delegation, is exactly about soft power. My own experience is that

City of London (Letter from the Lord Mayor of London) – Supplementary written evidence

the Lord Mayor has a unique ability to open doors, to say things which perhaps a Government minister might not wish to say, and to spread the influence of Britain and our services industry. This focal point for the interests of the UK's financial and professional services sector is something that other financial centres do not have – but which many would love to emulate.

It is difficult to estimate the exact outcomes of this work in terms of contracts won, and jobs and growth created but it can be noted that, as a percentage of GDP, financial and professional services have doubled in the last decade to some 15%. The significant benefits are also in the areas of your Committee's inquiry: of influence, of long term relationships established and nurtured, of new relationships opened up, of British expertise showcased – the framework or background in which British business can go out and sell itself.

Specific examples include:

- leading and convening work with developing financial centres in building up their capacity in providing financial services, most notably in Moscow and Istanbul. This work is done 'for free' but is already leading to contracts for UK firms.
- heading up the City of London Advisory Councils for China and India;
- the City's highly successful initiative in developing its own capacity as a centre for RMB trading;
- promoting London as a hub for social investment – leading to the City's own social investment fund and working closely with the City's Policy Chairman in getting the tax, regulatory and legal framework for financial services right;
- working closely with TheCityUK – as President of its Advisory Council, but also in promoting the City as a financial centre;
- the whole panoply of the City's charitable and philanthropic activities –over 100 livery companies, the City churches and many other charities, not least the City's own charity, the City Bridge Trust, which has just launched a new programme – “Investing in Londoners”, and makes grants of around £15 million each year;
- encouraging City businesses to support the Armed Forces and the Reserves, an increasingly important part of what the City does and which has had particular prominence in the last year.

UK Institutions

The City of London works very closely with institutions such as UKTI and the British Council which, as I said, do an excellent job in opening doors for British business. We see this as being increasingly important in our age of globalisation and instant communication.

On the other hand, I have heard many comments in the course of the last twelve months that UK firms are not taking full advantage of the trade opportunities and that they are not as active or hungry for business as counterparts from some of our key competitors. So there is much still to do.

City of London (Letter from the Lord Mayor of London) – Supplementary written evidence

I would be delighted to supply more information if that would be helpful as I believe that the work of your Committee will allow us to build more effectively on the openings that our successful deployment of soft power creates. We all look forward to assisting that process.

6 November 2013

Demos – Written evidence

Demos and Soft Power

1. Demos is Britain's leading cross-party think tank. It has spent 20 years at the centre of the policy debate, with an overarching mission to bring politics closer to the people.

2. In 2007, Demos published the pamphlet *Cultural Diplomacy*⁵⁴, which examined the ways in which cultural relations were changing – through technological innovation, migration and mass tourism – and the consequences of this for politics. It argued that mass peer-to-peer cultural contact was increasing and adding an extra layer to cultural relations; cultural 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. It found that where governments did get involved, their role was most effective when they were hands off, restricting themselves to facilitating the activities of independent bodies rather than attempting to impose control.

3. In the six years since the report came out, the growth in mass peer-to-peer cultural contact has exceeded anyone's expectations. YouTube, founded in 2006, is the most obvious and spectacularly successful example of the phenomenon. Interest in cultural diplomacy or soft power has increased, with the foundation of the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy in Berlin, the development of academic courses and a steady flow of conferences and events exploring the subject. This trend led to Demos revisiting the topic in a new pamphlet written for the British Council that sought to bring together various strands of enquiry, examine data and research, provide a conceptual framework to aid discussion, and set out some emerging lessons for countries seeking to maximise the impact of their cultural relations.

Influence and Attraction

4. The British Council and Demos report *Influence and Attraction*⁵⁵ was published in June 2013. The following paragraphs summarise the report's argument.

5. Culture and international politics are now in an interdependent relationship, where culture plays both a positive and negative role. In this new global environment, people-to-people cultural contact sets the tone and sometimes the agenda for traditional state-to-state diplomacy. Nations are increasingly seeking to maximise their 'soft power' – a term used to describe their ability to achieve their international objectives through attraction and co-option rather than coercion – in an effort to promote cultural understanding and avoid cultural misunderstanding.

6. 'Culture' encompasses publicly funded, commercial and individual 'homemade' culture. Among its core expressive activities are language, sport, education, food and religion. 'Cultural relations' refers to the sharing and communication of this culture internationally,

⁵⁴ Bound K, Briggs R, Holden J and Jones S (2007), *Cultural Diplomacy*, London, Demos, <http://www.demos.co.uk/publications/culturaldiplomacy>

⁵⁵ Holden J and Tryhorn C (2013), *Influence and Attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century*, London, British Council, <http://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/documents/influence-and-attraction-report.pdf>

Demos – Written evidence

typically through education exchanges, language teaching, art performances or museum exhibitions, international broadcasting and a wide variety of other activities.

7. The forces that shape cultural relations activity include:

- foreign policy interests
- the desire to create a positive image around the world
- the unique history and legacy of each nation
- ideology
- resources
- language
- cultural assets – arts, education and individual expression
- commerce

8. The main cultural relations actors are:

- nations, states and cities
- cultural, broadcasting and educational institutions
- NGOs
- businesses
- foundations, trusts and philanthropists
- individuals, particularly artists, sports people and performers

9. Cultural relations activities include a range of traditional instrumentalist objectives, but there are trends in many countries to move beyond simple cultural ‘projection’ and towards mutuality, together with increasing innovation and a recognition of the role of cultural actors as agents of social change. Cultural relations can build trust between people and that in turn impacts positively upon a wide range of activities, particularly tourism and trade.

10. There is a growing seriousness about, and expenditure on, cultural relations in BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) 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 and their performance in culture, education, tourism and trade.

11. In future, the role of NGOs and the third sector will increase. New cultural networks will form at different layers of government, particularly between cities. Peer-to-peer cultural contact will continue to grow and individual citizen cultural diplomacy will increase. 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.

12. The implication for governments is that they should:

- create conditions for broad and deep cultural exchange to flourish – because peer-to-peer exchange is more likely to generate trust
- work with commercial and third-sector initiatives – because it encourages innovation and decreases reliance on public funds

Demos – Written evidence

- adopt a mix of traditional and digital strategies – because it is cost-effective and responds to increasing technological sophistication
- pay as much attention to inward-facing as they do to outward-facing cultural relations – because that will help develop a culturally literate and globally aware population
- support cultural exchange through independent, autonomous agencies – because direct government involvement invites suspicion and hostility
- embrace long-term relationship building instead of short-term transactional and instrumental thinking – because it is more effective

13. To make the most of the increasing opportunities for intra-UK and international communication and cultural engagement, UK citizens need to be more globally aware, skilled in languages, comfortable with difference and culturally confident. Culture itself develops through exchange, therefore the UK also needs to stay ahead in ‘the commerce of culture’ – ensuring a continuing interchange of ideas, research, creativity and artistic practice with others around the world, enriching both the UK’s and other countries’ cultural and educational sectors.

John Holden

Associate, Demos; Visiting Professor, City University, London

Chris Tryhorn

Associate, Demos

September 2013

Richard Dowden, Royal Africa Society – Written evidence

Richard Dowden, Director of the Royal African Society, Journalist and former Africa Editor of The Independent and The Economist.

1. My main expertise is in Africa where I have been involved since the early 1970s and since the 1980s have reported and analysed for a range of media. I regard an important part of my role as a journalist is to understand the thinking of ordinary people and interpret and explain to the rest of the world, their attitudes and understanding of events.
2. Based on that experience my interest in soft power is from the point of view of the subject, people who experience other's soft power. In Africa Britain has been respected and trusted. That respect was often genuine, based on the knowledge that Britain understood their situation and was ready to provide assistance and help nudge governments in the areas of freedom of speech and respect for human rights. However where soft power was used for propaganda or myth-making to cover self interest, the resulting disillusionment will last generations. Britain's reputation in Africa was severely damaged by the invasion of Iraq on false premises. Almost everyone I have spoken to believes that the chemical weapons story was invented as a pretext for invasion in pursuit of Iraq's oil.
3. The view of Britain by Africans today may also be changing for other reasons. In recent years African nations have become more self confident and are increasingly pushing back against the former colonial powers. This is not necessarily because Britain makes wrong policy decisions. The tone of "we know best for you" is alienating a new generation of self confident Africans. This coincides with a revisitation of the colonial period and a growing realisation that colonialism was mostly bad for Africa. The cleverly finessed independence process is increasingly seen as not a real liberation but a tactical retreat by Britain and France that left African countries dependent on them. This perception, combined with Africa's decade and a half of better economic growth and the new deals with China – which does not patronise Africa - have given African leaders the confidence to push back against the UK, the US and France. For example the united stand by African governments in support of Robert Mugabe after his recent electoral victory may owe more to solidarity against British attempts to bring him down than to real support for his policies. Other issues where Britain fails to recognise or understand local sensitivities are gay marriage (not popular in the world's most religious continent) and aid. Britain's policy in Africa has relied too much on aid and assumes that Africans will be grateful. Some may be, but the influential classes increasingly reject aid, seeing it as a soft power tool that weakens them and prevents them making their own choices. They also object to aid agencies use of pictures of starving, fly-blown African children which have come to symbolise their continent.
4. That is the background. In the foreground are two obvious reasons why Africans, especially the middle classes, are turning away from Britain.

5. Firstly the diminishment of the BBC World Service, Britain's strongest tool of soft power. Its reputation – justly earned but regularly ignored by UK politicians – is based on getting the facts right and giving a fair analysis. I have covered more than 24 wars and crises in the Middle East and Africa and found that almost everywhere the “good guys” - and frequently the “Bad Guys” - listen to the BBCWS. In comparison every other major nationally owned global media organisation is propaganda - although Al Jazeera comes close except when covering some Middle Eastern countries. Privately owned, profit-driven, global media have little interest in anything that does not entertain their customers. At a time when more and more stations are trying to go global, the BBC, in poll position for decades, is again suffering from cuts which lower morale and lose good journalists and contributors.
6. Secondly the failure of Britain to exploit its education system. After the US, UK universities are the preferred institutions for many people seeking respected qualifications, despite the high cost of places. The main deterrent is the extraordinary difficulty of getting a visa to the UK. In many countries in Africa would-be students have to spend over £1000 to travel to another country to buy a visa to the UK. I have come across several cases where bona fide students, having spent that sort of money, are turned down without explanation. And then there is the humiliation of arrival. As someone who makes many journeys a year from Africa to the UK, I notice that invariably only black people are questioned by the Border Agency at immigration and then again by customs. Welcome to the UK! Perhaps one of those turned away may one day be a president.

September 2013

Durham Global Security Institute – Written evidence

1. This paper is the product of a collaborative effort by staff at Durham University's **Durham Global Security Institute for Defence, Development and Diplomacy (DGSi)** and members of the Institute's Strategic Advisory Board, chaired General The Lord Dannatt. The Institute was established to focus on the interface between defence, development and diplomacy in conflict prevention, intervention and reconstruction, and to reflect critically on current practices. The focus here will be on the interface between hard and soft power in conflict situations and on how soft power can be harnessed better.

Soft Power: Goals, Audience, Agents

2. Before discussing the interface between hard and soft power, we need to be clear on what soft power should be used for, who its audience is, and who is doing the influencing. Soft power should **not simply be about pursuing the 'national interest' but should also be informed by the notion of 'global good'**. As the authors of a report on American Smart Power argue (smart power being the skilful combination of soft and hard power), the U.S. can 'become a smarter power by once again investing in the global good', reconciling 'its overwhelming power with the rest of the world's interests and values' (Armitage and Nye 2007). Although there is no global consensus on what constitutes 'the global good', the key point is that governments must try to understand the interests and values of those they seek to influence and respond to those where possible. Because cultural differences in how power, community, interests and values are understood affect social power (Lyon 2004; Kastrinou forthcoming), it is crucial that governments are informed by in-depth cultural expertise.

3. Who should be the target of soft power? Nye observed that in a world where public opinion is becoming increasingly salient, **state elites can no longer focus their efforts solely on elites in other states** (2004: 16, 105-106). Yet **governments are still unclear how to go beyond state elites** and on what basis to engage foreign publics. One of the reasons the Arab Spring caught so many Western governments by surprise is that the most effective opposition actors were informal protest networks, rather than the official parties or registered NGOs (Gunning and Baron 2013). Although some governments had engaged with these networks, many considered them too informal and lacking in leadership to be taken seriously.

4. Finally, we need to be clear about who is wielding soft power. Governments can play a central role in the creation and projection of soft power through public diplomacy, international development aid, democracy promotion and policies nurturing attractive values or culture at home and abroad. However, as Nye (2004: 14) notes, **'soft power does not belong to the government in the same degree that hard power does'**. Much of what positioned the UK first in *Monocle Magazine's* annual 'Global Soft Power' ranking (McClory 2013) was about civil society and social fabric rather than government. In conflicts, non-state actors such as NGOs or private individuals are often best placed to lead, particularly if those seeking help are non-state actors who mistrust the intentions of the government. In those instances, government attempts to become involved can undermine an NGO's credibility.

Tensions and overlap between hard and soft power

5. Nye recognises that **hard and soft power are interlinked**. Hard power can 'create myths of invincibility or inevitability that attract others', or it can be used to build the institutions that eventually will confer legitimacy on a hard power intervention, as has been the intention in Iraq and Afghanistan (with mixed results). Soft power, meanwhile, can limit what another state's

hard power can achieve, as Nye argues was the case with the way France used soft power to try and constrict the US during and after the 2003 invasion of Iraq (2004:25-30).

6. This relationship needs further reflection, particularly in the context of the blurring of boundaries between military and humanitarian personnel in conflict zones and the evolution of a whole-of-government approach in which defence, development and diplomacy are meant to work together. **Hard power can seriously undermine soft power, for example when development aid is dispensed in areas where a government is also involved in drone attacks**, as is the case with the U.S. in Pakistan. Between 2009 and 2012, when U.S. drone attacks increased, Pakistani public support for US financial and humanitarian aid to militant areas dropped from 72% to 50%, while those regarding the U.S. as an enemy rose from 64% to 74% (Pew 2012). Conversely, 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).

7. Similarly, **counter-terrorism laws and practices can affect the distribution of humanitarian aid** with potentially devastating consequences for target populations. In Sri Lanka, humanitarian aid following the Tsunami was severely restricted by counter-terrorism laws stipulating that no assistance, financial or otherwise, could be given to organisations thought to be affiliated to the Tamil Tigers, although these were often the only organisations with the local capacity to deliver aid effectively (Arulanantham 2008). In Palestine, counter-terrorism concerns have hindered UK distribution of aid, both governmental and non-governmental, to organisations that have only a tangential affiliation with Hamas and a track record of spending aid solely on humanitarian projects (Gunning 2007, 2010).

8. Some within DGSi argue that **soft power should be seen in non-military terms as a purely civilian activity**. Integrating the concept of soft power within the context of deploying military force can cause misunderstanding among the receiving population concerning the motivation for wanting to use soft power. For example, asking military personnel to dig wells and build roads in the types of asymmetric conflicts they are often engaged in, is short-term soft power whose motivation is often not understood by local communities and militants, with possibly negative effects on aid workers. Similarly, military or police protection of aid workers has contributed to the blurring of boundaries between soft and hard power, leading to an increase in attacks on aid workers. Because of this, it is crucial that development aid remains within the hands of development agencies, and is not transferred to the military.

9. Others within DGSi argue that **the UK's Armed Forces do have soft power roles and should develop these further**. In the context of defence budget cuts, soft power roles for the military could be attractive, as long they do not become a burdensome add-on to already overstretched forces. The development of guidelines regarding the cooperation between humanitarian workers and military forces in Afghanistan is an example of how soft and hard power can work together more effectively, although serious challenges remain in the implementation of these guidelines. Of particular importance are the stipulations that humanitarian agencies should retain their independence, ensure their security 'primarily through local acceptance', be able 'to ensure sustainable access to all vulnerable populations in all parts of the country', and that any information that 'might endanger lives ... must not be shared with military actors' (IRIN News 2009).

Recommendations

I. Greater strategic coordination between soft and hard power

10. **The potential effects of hard power on long-term soft power programmes must be taken into greater consideration.** For instance, the cost of drone strikes to soft power programmes must be included in any military assessment determining whether such strikes are effective as counter-terrorism measures. Similarly, if militancy or terrorism is exacerbated by unemployment, relative deprivation and political exclusion, **the long-term effects of hard power on development projects and society more broadly should be a primary concern of counter-terrorism strategies** (Howell and Lind 2010). Conversely, to prevent development aid or other interventions increasing the likelihood of conflict, a conflict sensitive strategy must be employed.

II. Enhancing the soft power potential of the Armed Forces

11. The UK's armed forces are among the best trained, disciplined, and effective militaries in the world with an influential role in the education and training of armed forces globally. Beyond training, **the soft power value of UKAF lies in being exemplars of what a modern professional army should be.** Particularly important is the military's relationship with democracy, its attitude towards domestic and international law, and respect for human rights.

12. The military can project soft power through involvement in **disaster relief**, although there are serious issues to be resolved concerning the use of foreign militaries in disaster zones and how they relate to the overall humanitarian relief structure. Unlike humanitarian intervention or state-building, disaster relief is short-term, usually enjoys wide-spread public support, reaps international goodwill, and does not carry the same potential for neo-colonial baggage as long-term aid involvement nor as many risks for the assisting state. Armed forces are often uniquely able to reach crises quickly. However, the use of armed forces may put undue pressure on humanitarian budgets, while decisions to involve military actors might be interpreted as political rather than purely humanitarian. Operating within an internationally agreed framework, such as that provided by the UN, may mitigate some of these costs.

13. **Environmental security** is another way for the military to play a soft power role. Some of these activities are protective, involving force or the threat of force (for example enforcement of environmental international law, protection of fish stock areas, CITES-related interdictions), but others have a straight 'soft power' rationale in being neither coercive nor rewarded. These include sub-icecap sampling (access to which is available only to military submarines), the sinking of decommissioned ships to provide reef erosion protection, and the use of military explosives to 'burn off' petroleum products spilled from tankers.

III. Enhancing the UK's mediation skills base and branding the UK as a global leader in mediation and peacebuilding

14. Nye cites Norway's focus on developing mediation skills and projecting an image of 'Norway as a force for peace in the world' through 'ruthless prioritization of its target audiences and its concentration on a single message' (Leonard in Nye 2004:12). The UK already has expertise in international mediation, both within government and among NGOs such as Coventry Cathedral's Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation, the Quakers, Conciliation Resources, the Oxford Research Group, and community groups in Northern Ireland. But **this expertise is dispersed and the UK is not universally known as a global leader in mediation.** With budget cuts and the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015, a national conversation should be held on how to **project the UK as a global leader in mediation and peacebuilding**, to complement the global brand its armed forces already enjoy.

15. One of the reasons the UK was rated first by *Monocle Magazine* was the strength of its diplomatic network. This competitive advantage should be extended and branded more effectively. In particular, we recommend that the UK government **increases the involvement of UK personnel in international mediation, at all levels**. Unlike negotiations, which contain significant elements of hard power, mediation is towards the softer end of the peacemaking spectrum. Through its focus on listening, empowerment and moving beyond adversarial positions, it has the potential to prevent conflict and defuse it after it has erupted. Because it is non-coercive, mediation has a greater capacity to generate attraction. Whilst enhancing the training of diplomats in mediation skills is important, so is the strengthening of non-governmental mediators and grassroots organisations. This includes mapping, sharing and learning from past mediation experiences and the strengthening of academic expertise on international mediation and negotiation to feed back into the training of practitioners.

16. We recommend that the UK follows the UN's example by establishing a **Mediation Support Unit**, providing technical and administrative support to mediators, and follows the EU by pooling expertise, establishing a roster of experts and creating a framework for cooperation between NGOs and government, for example by facilitating training and exchange of expertise through annual conferences and training courses.

17. For this type of soft power to be effective **engagement must not only be at elite level but also through initiatives that include the broader public, including the sensitive involvement of those considered security threats**. Norway and Switzerland have demonstrated that it is possible to engage armed non-state actors such as Hamas or the Tamil Tigers without legitimating their violent tactics, and that such contact can at times result in positive policy changes (Gunning 2010). Similarly, there is scope in the Syrian conflict to engage non-state actors through mediation training by non-state actors.

18. **Significant expertise in international mediation exists at grass roots level, and this needs to be tapped and nurtured**. A number of local NGO's have international programmes, and have been delivering training in international contexts for years. The focus of this work has been primarily on mediation skills that develop the capacity of local actors to communicate and engage constructively in dialogue. The work of these non-elite organisations is rooted in a particular model of peace building that promotes a two-way engagement with local non-elite actors, as well as with statutory bodies such as police forces and local government. This work is based on a philosophy of local empowerment that focuses on recognition and fostering local dialogue rooted in personal experience rather than on the imposition of norms that may be divisive. By developing indigenous capacity for non-violent conflict resolution and democratic dialogue such models contribute to democratisation.

IV. Enhancing soft power through greater use of conflict expertise

20. Sharing expertise can enhance one's soft power by increasing one's attractiveness, moral authority, and ability to influence international agendas, norms and institutions. **The UK possesses a rich store of expertise and has a track record of transmitting this globally**. The shape of global governmental and non-governmental organisations from the UN to Oxfam, common law based legal orders, university and cultural structures and education more broadly as well as specific forms of diplomacy, policing and armed forces, have all benefitted from UK expertise. This utilisation of soft power has been incremental.

21. Domestically, **the transmission of expertise can be enhanced through specific structures, such as scholarships or courses** within academic institutions which can be enhanced by the Government through financing, immigration support and advertising.

Scholarships for emerging leadership who may develop strong links with UK institutions as well as with its principles, education and human rights practices are particularly valuable. Yet, the UK's ability to wield this soft power is undermined by cuts to programmes such as Chevening and the Royal College of Defence Studies, as well as visa restrictions. Within Durham University, we annually lose legitimate overseas students, including scholarship students, as a result of visa problems. The outsourcing of visa provision and the securitisation of overseas students as potential threats seem to have exacerbated this problem. Although the Chevening cuts are in the process of being reversed, greater funding, particularly in conflict, mediation or leadership studies, would be a highly effective soft power investment.

22. Externally, whilst much of this expertise has been transmitted through such organisations as the UN, the World Bank, NATO, the OSCE or the EU, expertise can also be leveraged by the UK government facilitating private provision of consultancy services by UK experts abroad. However, in recent years **the UK has fallen behind in its contribution of experts to international bodies**. For example, the UK's contribution to UN policing in post-conflict areas has dropped from 230 in 2000 (placing the UK seventh in the world) to one in 2009. **Richard Monk, former UN Police Commissioner in Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo**, and a member of DGSi's Advisory Board, wrote for this submission:

In 1998, the UK contributed 80 police officers to the UN mission in Bosnia Herzegovina (UNMIBH) and a UK senior police officer was chosen to be the mission's Police Commissioner. This created a presence and influence amongst national and contributing countries' contingents, with a consequent authority to contribute to high-level UN DPKO policy-making. For example, the UK Police Commissioner was appointed by Kofi Annan to the high-level UN Panel on Peace Operations, which in 2000 produced the principal reference document to be used by all future UN peacekeeping missions, the Brahimi Report. Since then, UK Foreign Office support for police capacity- and institution-building in post conflict states and states-in-transition has dwindled to the present position where we contribute a single police officer to the UN Mission in Liberia. As a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council, this greatly diminishes our entitlement to be heard on issues of post-conflict security, stabilisation and re-building.

To regain its ability to affect international policies on policing, **the UK should appoint a Police Attaché to its Permanent Mission at the UN** and re-boot itself as a police-contributing country. With 18 nations having attached Police Attachés to their Permanent Missions, the absence of UK engagement is conspicuous. There will be a formal opportunity for the UK to reconsider its soft power commitment vis-à-vis international policing at the forthcoming joint DGSi/UN DPKO meeting in the UK (November 2013) of members of the Global Police Policy Community to finalise the newly developed Strategic Guidance Framework for International Police Peacekeeping.

23. A similar shift has occurred regarding UN missions more broadly. **Dame Margaret Anstee, former UN Under-Secretary General, former Special Representative of the Secretary General in Angola** and a DGSi Advisory Board member, wrote:

Historically the UK has played a leading role in the development of UN peacekeeping. It is the member state that has probably done most to develop a common doctrine which the Defence College and the Foreign Office disseminated through training courses for military and civilian personnel in developing countries, both here, at Shrivenham, and in the countries themselves. In recent times, these have been severely reduced, a false economy that should be reversed.

Whereas twenty years ago the UK used to contribute military contingents to a number of UN peacekeeping missions – e.g. Bosnia (UNPROFOR as well as the subsequent NATO mission), Kosovo, Liberia (albeit on the margins) – to my knowledge we do not have any military contingents in any UN mission today and this has been the case for a good many years. Yet **the provision of military components to UN missions is a relatively low-cost and impartial way of supporting the internationally-accepted policy of Responsibility to Protect** that can make friends and avoid the animosity incurred by the Iraq and Afghanistan operations.

24. Expertise can also be leveraged by **the government drawing more consistently on existing academic expertise within the UK**. By up-skilling its foreign policy and international development personnel, it can increase its soft power through making staff more effective at reading underlying structural tensions and understanding public opinion dynamics beyond state elites. **Academics and experienced practitioners can advise civil servants on how to identify which non-state actors to engage.**

25. In addition, the UK has a wealth of **expertise around arms control, counter-proliferation, confidence-building measures**, and what might broadly be termed ‘security dialogues’. The UK could do more to apply its expertise (military, academic, scientific, technical) to military security problems. In this it could look to Australia and Canada who exercise great regional and international influence by ‘agenda-setting’ and bringing countries (or countries’ militaries, academics, scientists or technicians) into multilateral fora.

26. Finally, we would highlight the importance of the promotion of the **English language as a critical element in the UK’s soft power through language courses in the UK, the British Council and the BBC**. English is not only the international language of power, it is also often the language elites in developing nations use to monopolise power within their own borders and access global goods and resources. English is thus one key to internal political rights and power, to education, to promoting the growth of middle classes, and to challenge unjust rule. In Egypt, communication between local English-speaking protesters and transnational protest networks was one element in the evolution of networks and tactics that tipped the balance of power against Mubarak in 2011 (Gunning and Baron 2013). Cuts to the British Council and to the BBC, 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.

18 September 2013

European Economics and Financial Centre – Written evidence

*Written Evidence by Prof. H. Scobie
Chairman, European Economics & Financial Centre
to House of Lords Select Committee
on Soft Power and the UK's Influence*

Below is the European Economics & Financial Centre's response to a selection of the questions which were stated in the PDF file that was sent by the Committee to our Centre.

Q1 What are the most important soft power assets the UK possesses? Can we put a value on the UK's soft power resources?

A1 The most important soft power assets that the UK has are:

- (a) English Language
- (b) Telecommunications
- (c) TV news & documentary services
- (d) Fashion trend setting
- (e) Its creativity in a variety of areas

A value can be put on the UK's soft power resources given ample time and the necessary resources. One way of assessing the value would be in terms of increased exports of goods and services. For the assessment of the return one can apply the discounted value of future returns. However, the returns would have to be projected on the basis of certain assumptions and expectations. It cannot be assessed just in terms of the most recent values of the external trade account.

Q2 Is 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?

A2 No - the government is not doing enough to help the UK maximise the extent of, and benefit gained from, its soft power. The government should give more support to both R&D and higher education as well as giving tax breaks to those who generate exports.

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).

Q3 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?

A3 The government could encourage UK businesses to join international associations. For example, the International Association of Business Schools encourages British businesses to have links with other businesses abroad.

The following are some examples that can undermine UK soft power:

- Football hooligans being too nationalistic can undermine UK's soft power
- All the negative talk about UK leaving the EU. Countries can no longer be self sufficient.

If the UK did not have immigrants, inflation in the country would be higher. Foreign workers have to work harder to keep their jobs and are more cost effective for employers. It is no accident that foreign workers such as East Europeans become hired.

Q4 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?

A4 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. Ireland expects that if there is an EU referendum in the UK and the UK pulls out, FDI could be diverted to Ireland.

Businesses have to adapt to international standards and norms. For example, British companies in the old days did not put plugs on their electrical appliances which they sold. American companies, on the other hand, sold their appliances with plugs. Separate hot and cold water taps, especially on airplanes, is another example of how the UK does not try to conform to international standards and norms.

Finally, foreign direct investment can be encouraged through tax incentives.

Q5 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?

A5 The target audience for longer term promotion of soft power should be towards the younger generation through universities and other training colleges. For the shorter term, soft power can be aimed towards businesses.

For the assessment of the return one can apply cost-benefit analysis and estimate returns on the basis of Net Present Value.

Such returns would have to be forecasted on the basis of certain assumptions and expectations. It cannot be assessed just in terms of the most recent external account balances.

The government needs to think long term. For example, Vogue magazine invested in Russia and after 3 – 4 years, just as they were thinking of withdrawing their

publication, their circulation escalated and they decided to remain in Russia. The current UK investment in soft power is not adequate. There should be less interference in other countries' affairs and their revolutions, such as in Libya. UK businesses should also strive for better industrial design of goods & services.

Q6 Is there sufficient return for the Government's investment in soft power? Is the Government's investment adequate?

A6 It is not clear how much and in what way the government has invested in soft power so far. However, whatever it has, it does not seem to be sufficient.

September 2013

Exporting Education UK (EdExUK) – Written evidence

1. Exporting Education UK (ExEdUK) is pleased to make this submission to the Lords Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's influence, which we strongly believe is timely and necessary.
2. Exporting Education UK is a broad group of UK-based companies and organisations involved in education as an export (either educating foreign students in the UK or abroad) who have come together to promote the value of the education exports to UK plc and its contribution to the UK's long term competitiveness in the global economy. We currently have over 20 members, who span the full range of education from Pre-preps, Prep schools, High Schools, Sixth Form, FE & HE colleges, Professional Colleges and Education Publishers, all of whom are exemplars of UK education. A full list of members is included at the end of this submission.
3. As institutions whose main activity is to promote British education to international students - many of whom have done so over many years – we have a great deal of experience of building relationships with international students from around the world and follow their subsequent progress with interest and pride.
4. Our experience leads us to believe that the relationships which international students establish with the UK and their experience of their time in the UK have tangible short, medium and long term benefits. We were pleased to see government recognition of these benefits with the recent publication of the BIS Research Paper on the *Wider Benefits of International Education in the UK*.
5. There is, however, an urgent need to establish a metric which seeks to quantify these benefits. We believe this would be an invaluable aid for developing a supportive policy framework which creates an environment for growth in British education exports and international education in the UK. Large scale economic and statistical analysis of this kind could usefully be commissioned by government.
6. ExEdUK have also commissioned some work to analyse patterns of contact with British education of some of the world's most successful and prominent people in a variety of professions. We will share this with the Committee as soon as it is completed.
7. In addition, OC&C Strategy Consultants, an ExEdUK founder member, is currently completing a research study in partnership with Google examining the opportunities associated with the internationalisation of British higher education. This is due to be launched in London in November.
8. In the interim period we would be very happy to give oral evidence to the committee to share the collective experiences of the UK education providers who are our members.

Appendix: Members of ExEdUK

- ACS International Schools (www.acs.schools.com)
- Association of Colleges (www.aoc.co.uk)
- Alpha Plus Group (www.alphaplusgroup.co.uk)
- BSA (www.boarding.org.uk) (awaiting confirmation)
- Cambridge Education Group (www.ceg-uk.com)
- Dulwich College Management International (www.dulwichcollege.cn)
- English UK (www.englishuk.com)
- Excellence Education Group (www.duffmiller.com)
- Funding for Independent Schools (supporter) (www.fismagazine.co.uk/)
- GL Education Group (www.gl-education.com)
- Greenwich School of Management (www.greenwich-college.ac.uk)
- Independent Schools Council (observer status) (www.isc.co.uk)
- Independent Schools Inspectorate (www.isi.net)
- Kaplan UK (www.kaplan.co.uk)
- Malvern House (www.malvernhouse.com)
- Mander Portman Woodward (www.mpw.co.uk)
- QA (www.qa.com)
- Study Group (www.studygroup.com)
- Study UK (www.study-uk.org)
- OC&C Strategy Consultants (supporter) (www.occstrategy.com)
- Wild Research (Supporter) (www.wildsearch.org)

September 2013

Exporting Education UK (EdExUK) – Supplementary written evidence

1. Exporting Education UK (ExEdUK) is pleased to make this supplementary submission to the Lords Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's influence, which contains further thoughts on action by Government which would help ensure that the UK is effectively positioned to maintain and extend its influence in the space of international education.
2. Whilst the UK currently has an enviable reputation for both school, further and higher education across the world, the market for international students is an intensely competitive one. The USA, Canada and Australia all have strategies in place to grow their market share. Our European competitors in France and Germany are now beginning to teach courses in English in order to attract greater numbers of international students.
3. So whilst our reputation is high and numbers of students from some places are increasing, our share of a fast growing market is declining.
4. To ensure that the UK's position is not eroded over time and that the short, medium and long term soft power benefits are not lost, we believe the Government must act now to support our ability to compete effectively.
5. We believe the Government should consider the following:
 - The introduction of a 5 year student visa to cover two years of A level and a three year course in a higher education institution. This would be subject to the awarding and take up of a confirmed place at such a higher education institution. This would remove the need for the student to apply twice for a visa and would encourage greater numbers of international A level students applying to independent schools and sixth forms with the benefit that the vast majority of these would then continue their education in the UK rather than look to the USA, Canada or Australia.
 - Increasing the resources available to UKTI Education to enable it to increase its ability to broker relationships between UK education providers and opportunities in key markets. This should include marketing and on the ground support, as well as more opportunities to partner UK providers to jointly bid.
 - Increasing the number of visa processing centres in key and emerging markets (for instance there is no centre in Myanmar) to ensure there are fewer practical impediments for suitably qualified international students wishing to apply to UK institutions.
 - Commissioning detailed research to evaluate and quantify the short, medium and long term impact of soft power derived from contact with UK education.

This is an area which is currently under-researched but where better information would greatly improve the targeting of policy.

Appendix: Members of ExEdUK

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- Excellence Education Group (www.duffmiller.com)
- Funding for Independent Schools (supporter) (www.fismagazine.co.uk/)
- GL Education Group (www.gl-education.com)
- Greenwich School of Management (www.greenwich-college.ac.uk)
- Independent Schools Council (observer status) (www.isc.co.uk)
- Independent Schools Inspectorate (www.isi.net)
- Kaplan UK (www.kaplan.co.uk)
- Mander Portman Woodward (www.mpw.co.uk)
- QA (www.qa.com)
- Study Group (www.studygroup.com)
- Study UK (www.study-uk.org)
- OC&C Strategy Consultants (supporter) (www.occstrategy.com)
- Wild Research (Supporter) (www.wildsearch.org)

October 2013

Dr Ali Fisher – Written evidence

Bio

Ali Fisher is an advisor, strategist and author on methods of achieving influence across a range of disciplines including Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication, Counter Terrorism, Child Protection, Human Security, and Public Health. Across these diverse disciplines Ali's work enables organisations to identify and build networks of influence.

Ali specialises in delivering insight into complex information ecosystems through network analysis and big data. In his work Ali has: collaborated with organisations seeking to track and counter the behaviour of extremists online; helped international foundations to identify, reach and support influential activists working in closed societies; and analysed the use of social media and role of journalists during large scale social movements.

Ali previously directed Mappa Mundi Consulting and the cultural relations think-tank, Counterpoint. He worked as Associate Director of Digital Media Research at Intermedia, where he continues to be an associate, and has been lecturer in International Relations at Exeter University. Ali received his Ph.D. at the University of Birmingham.

His books include Collaborative Public Diplomacy (2012), The Connective Mindshift(2013), and Trails of Engagement (2010).

This document is submitted by Ali Fisher acting as an individual.

Summary:

This submission addresses two questions relating to UK soft power:

- 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?

The central argument of this submission is that in a networked world too great an emphasis on soft power can limit the ability of a nation to embrace the full range of opportunities available when seeking to have influence in the new global communications environment. This is not to ignore the value of 'soft power resources' such as the British Museum, BBC World Service or British Council, but to argue there are a wider range of options through which the UK can achieve influence, than those narrowly conceived within the definitions of hard power and soft power.

This argument is put forward because the new global communications environment, and in which the 'soft power resources' of the UK operate is a complex information ecosystem in which communities communicate and share information. Successful strategies within the new

global communication environment focus on achieving impact at specific points within 'networks of influence' which comprise the information ecosystem.

Equally, emerging powers and non-state actors are increasingly able to leverage influence within the new global communications environment by developing strategies specifically suited to the information landscape of the twenty first century. As a result, it will be increasingly important for the UK to recognise the landscape created by the new communications environment and use the tools capable of analysing the complex networks of influence which have many hubs, or coordination points, through which influence flows in multiple directions.

In this environment the UK think beyond the representational or assertive approaches deployed through a 'soft power' strategy, and as a result be able to deploy approaches appropriate to a networked age, including greater use of facilitative and collaborative strategies.

For the UK to continue to be influential in the international environment, UK soft power resources and the institutions responsible for them will need:

- To make greater use of collaborative strategies when seeking influence within the international environment.
- To leverage the increasing quantities of publicly observable and open data sources in designing programs intended to extend the influence of the UK.
- To use the available data to better understand the complex networks of influence which shape the new global communications environment

Written Evidence:

This submission draws on the contemporary study and practice of public diplomacy, which has increasingly focused on multilateral initiatives, working in partnership, and collaborative or cooperative approaches. The following is an edited text taken from:

Ali Fisher, *Collaborative Public Diplomacy: How Transnational Networks Influenced American Studies in Europe*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. ISBN13: 978-0230338968

The power of networks

1. R. S. Zaharna's *Battles to Bridges* provides a breakthrough in the understanding influence in an international environment. The work expands significantly the literature on the role of relationships within Public diplomacy. This expands the work of Brian Hocking, Amelia Arsenault, and Geoffrey Cowan, from the conceptualization of collaboration to that of practical application and policy analysis.⁵⁶ Increasingly public diplomacy focuses on partnership and collaboration. In doing so scholars recognize the role of relationships and the larger network structures these relationships create. These developments in public diplomacy can be enhanced through the research into the influence of networks on human behavior.

⁵⁶ G. Cowan and A. Arsenault, "Moving from Monologue to Dialogue to Collaboration: The Three Layers of Public Diplomacy," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616, no. 1 (March 1, 2008): 10–30.

2. The study of networks has a long and distinguished history.⁵⁷ Recently the increase in computing power has significantly expanded the potential to investigate ever-larger networks. The analysis of public diplomacy by Brian Hocking and R. S. Zaharna draw influence from the concepts of “boundary spanners” and “network weavers” developed by network analysts including Valdis Krebs, Everett Rogers, and Thomas Valente.⁵⁸ Key within these concepts is the in meaning of the term “periphery.” Contrary to colloquial use, when applied to a network infers the potential of great influence and importance. Thomas Valente has emphasized “the importance of marginals who act as bridges in diffusion.”⁵⁹ Across these bridges new ideas, perspectives, and information can flow into a network. In public diplomacy, the factors that influence these individuals will be of growing importance as the emphasis on collaborative working and evaluating impact increases in scholarship and practice.
3. This work is supported by the role of weak ties within a network. In the article “Strength of Weak Ties,” Mark Granovetter demonstrated the importance of those more distant members of a network in providing new information from diverse sources.⁶⁰ Strong ties, those through which an actor is in closest contact, have a role in sustaining the core activities of a network. Weak ties link to the periphery of an actor’s network; in doing so weak ties have the potential to increase the size and diversity of an actor’s information horizon. If identified, these weak ties have the potential to increase the impact of public diplomacy practice and, for scholars, these weak ties provide the means to understand the influence of individuals able to bridge between one network and the next.
4. Public diplomacy is always conducted through the interaction of individuals *in a network* and the interaction *between networks*. Success in public diplomacy is inextricably linked to the way individuals collaborate through relationships. This is the result from the way humans huddle in networks. The relationships between these huddles, or clusters, are negotiated through the connections that link the different hub points. A network might be a family, community, corporation, charity, or a network facilitated by social media. They are all networks, containing “small worlds” and “spheres of influence.”⁶¹
5. As Mark Gerzon put it:
We are all profoundly affected by the decisions and actions of people whose faces we may never see, whose language we may not speak, and whose names we would not recognize—and they, too, are affected by us.⁶²
6. The actions of individuals and communities within a series of interconnected networks. The structure of a series of relationships can be thought of as a network if

⁵⁷ For a history of network analysis see; John P. Scott, *Social Network Analysis: A Handbook*, 2nd ed. (Sage Publications Ltd, 2000).

⁵⁸ Valdis Krebs, “Mapping Networks of Terrorist Cells,” *Connections* 24, no. 3 (2002): 43–52.

Thomas W. Valente, *Social Networks and Health: Models, Methods, and Applications*, 1st ed. (Oxford University Press, US, 2010).

Everett M. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations* (Simon and Schuster, 1995).

⁵⁹ Thomas W. Valente, “The Diffusion Network Game,” *Connections* 19, no. 2 (1996): 30–37.

Also see; Franco Malerba and Nicholas S. Vonortas, *Innovation Networks in Industries* (Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, UK, 2009).

⁶⁰ Granovetter, Mark, “The Strength of Weak Ties,” *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no. 6 (1973): 1360–13.

⁶¹ Joel Levine, “The Sphere of Influence,” *American Sociological Review* 37, no. 1 (1972): 14–27.

⁶² Mark Gerzon, *Global Citizens* (Rider: London, 2010).

there are two or more connections between three or more points. These connections provide contacts and relationships through which influence can flow. That flow of influence has the potential to be multidirectional, as it could move in either direction down any of the connections.

7. The multi-hub and multidirectional nature of these ‘networks of influence’ emphasize the need to look beyond a broadcast-inspired model of “many-to-many” evolving from “one-to-many.” The complex connections through which public diplomacy takes place are better understood as numerous few-to-few interactions. These few-to-few interactions cluster around numerous hubs and coordination points that create complex networks linking governments, substate, and nongovernmental groups to each other and to communities in countries around the world. It is within this context that collaborative public diplomacy takes place.
8. Strategies for public diplomacy cannot be based around a concept of many-to-many, where it is thought everyone is in communication with everyone else. These “all-channel” networks absorb a huge amount of time due to the massive rise in connections for every member added to the network. As a result, they rarely exist in human communication outside very small groups.
9. Instead of these Herculean efforts, networks tend to create manageable clusters that coordinate their communication around certain hubs. This clustering has been demonstrated, for example, in the case of activists using social media after the Iranian election.⁶³ It has been analyzed more fully in other fields, for example, the work of Robin Dunbar on the “social brain” and social group sizes.⁶⁴ As a result, strategies have to evolve that can navigate the numerous small groups created by human behavior.
10. The strategies available to public diplomats working in this operational environment are often analogous to situations that John Forbes Nash described as cooperative games; those in which the interests of those involved “are neither completely opposed nor completely coincident.”⁶⁵ The nonzero-sum nature of these situations leads to emphasis on the bargaining problem and equilibrium points.⁶⁶ The Nash equilibrium, as it later became known, exists in a situation where “neither player can improve his payoff by unilaterally changing his strategy.”⁶⁷ As in public diplomacy, the better outcome is contingent on the behavior of both (or all) actors in a situation and each being prepared to shift position. Contrary to assumptions often seen in assertive approaches to public diplomacy, Nash concluded, “no equilibrium point can involve a dominated strategy.”⁶⁸

11. Echoing the emphasis on contingent behavior, Thomas Schelling argued:

⁶³ Fisher, “Bullets with Butterfly Wings,” in Yahya R. Kamalipour (Ed.), *Media, Power, and Politics in the Digital Age: The 2009 Presidential Election Uprising in Iran* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010).

⁶⁴ R. Hill and R. Dunbar, “Social Network Size in Humans,” *Human Nature* 14, no. 1 (March 01, 2003): 53–72.
W. X. Zhou, D. Sornette, R. A. Hill, and R. I. M. Dunbar, “Discrete Hierarchical Organization of Social Group Sizes,” *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 272, no. 1561 (February 22, 2005): 439–44.

⁶⁵ John F. Nash, “Two-Person Cooperative Games,” *Econometrica* 21, no. 1 (January 1, 1953): 128–40.

⁶⁶ John F. Nash, “The Bargaining Problem,” *Econometrica* 18, no. 2, (1950): 155–62.

John F. Nash, “Equilibrium Points in N-Person Games,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 36, no. 1 (January 1, 1950): 48–49.

⁶⁷ R. B. Myerson, “Refinements of the Nash Equilibrium Concept,” *International Journal of Game Theory* 7 (June 1978): 73–80.

⁶⁸ John F. Nash, “Non-Cooperative Games,” *The Annals of Mathematics* 54, no. 2, Second Series (1951): 286–95.

Diplomacy is bargaining; it seeks outcomes that, though not ideal for either party, are better for both than some of the alternatives. In diplomacy each party somewhat controls what the other wants, and can get more by compromise, exchange, or collaboration than by taking things in his own hands and ignoring the other's wishes.⁶⁹

12. Bargaining and collaboration requires connection. This has not gone unnoticed in public diplomacy; networks and relationships are increasingly common terms. Among scholars, Kathy Fitzpatrick has presented a movement from messaging to mutuality and R. S. Zaharna the movement from battles to bridges.⁷⁰ In practice, this emphasis is perhaps most evident in the use of social media whether in terms of 21st Century Statecraft, PD2.0, or strategies for cyberspace.⁷¹
13. As Craig Hayden put it, “implies recognition that more people share some responsibility for diplomacy.” It represents “a kind of redistribution of labor in international relations.”⁷² While it may be true, as Juliana Geran Pilon argued, that in this “bewilderingly over-connected world everyone is in some sense a public diplomat.”⁷³ The strategic focus of a *professional* public diplomat is the aggregated connections and interactions between activists and communities across society. Single issue, hyphenated diplomacy initiatives—“water,” “science,” or “faith” among others—may have an important role within this endeavor. However, professional public diplomacy strategies are based on an overview of existing interactions, bridging numerous issue areas, and an understanding of the behaviors most likely to facilitate connection or collaboration.
14. Connectivity is more than a rhetorical flourish about many-to-many communication. Connection is fundamental to the health and success of an individual in their community. Relationships have been shown to influence how individuals seek information or advice and even find a job.⁷⁴ In addition, the health of an individual can be influenced by changes in the health of close friends—and more distant individuals.⁷⁵ Social isolation has even been identified as a risk factor for early death comparable with that of smoking.⁷⁶ The influence of connection and the tendency of

⁶⁹Thomas Schelling, “Arms and Influence,” in Thomas Mahnken and Joseph A. Maiolo (Eds.), *Strategic Studies: A Reader*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2008).

⁷⁰Kathy Fitzpatrick, “U.S. Public Diplomacy in a Post-9/11 World: From Messaging to Mutuality,” *CPD Perspectives on Public Diplomacy*, Paper 6. October 2011.

⁷¹Bureau of Public Affairs Department Of State, The Office of Electronic Information, “21st Century Statecraft,” March 16, 2011, <http://www.state.gov/statecraft/overview/index.htm>.

⁷²Public Diplomacy in the Twenty-First Century [Rush Transcript; Federal News Service],” *Council on Foreign Relations*, n.d., <http://www.cfr.org/diplomacy/public-diplomacy-twenty-first-century-rush-transcript-federal-news-service/p16698>.

⁷³Craig Hayden, “The Lessons of Hyphenated Diplomacy,” *PDIN* 2, no. 4 (April 2011), http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/index.php/pdin_monitor/article/the_lessons_of_hyphenated_diplomacy/.

⁷⁴Juliana Geran Pilon, “The Art of Connection through Public and Cultural Diplomacy,” May 2011, http://www.iwp.edu/doclib/20110517_PublicandCulturalDiplomacy.pdf.

⁷⁵Mark Granovetter, *Getting a Job: A Study of Contacts and Careers*, 1st ed. (University Of Chicago Press, 1995).

Nerida Creswick and Johanna I. Westbrook, “Social Network Analysis of Medication Advice-Seeking Interactions among Staff in an Australian Hospital,” *International Journal of Medical Informatics* 79, no. 6 (June 2010): 116–25

⁷⁶Nicholas Christakis and James Fowler, “The Spread of Obesity in a Large Social Network over 32 Years—NEJM,” *New England Journal of Medicine* (2007): 370–79.

Ali, M. M., Dwyer, D. S., “Social Network Effects in Alcohol Consumption among Adolescent.” *Addictive Behaviors* 35, no. 4: 337–41.

Ali, M. M. et al., “Adolescent Weight Gain and Social Networks: Is There a Contagion Effect?,” *Applied Economics* 44 (August 2012): 2969–83.

⁷⁶James S. House, K. R. Landis, and D. Umberson, “Social Relationships and Health,” *Science* 241, no. 4865 (July 29, 1988): 540–45.

James S. House, “Social Isolation Kills, But How and Why?,” *Psychosomatic Medicine* 63, no. 2 (March 1, 2001): 273–74.

humans to huddle in small clusters make the development of connective relationships a fundamental aspect of collaborative public diplomacy.

Beyond assertive strategies and representational mindsets

15. Many perspectives on public diplomacy have emphasized “staying on message,” getting an image out, and understanding the “short-term ability to ‘move the needle,’” in terms of perception.⁷⁷ However, as R. S. Zaharna has demonstrated, this addresses neither the underlying relationships nor the communication dynamic at play within the contemporary context.⁷⁸
16. An interpretation of public diplomacy based on an expanded conception of network communication has the advantage that it analyzes the engagement between actors in the information environment within which they interact. The analysis of public diplomacy becomes the analysis of the information ecosphere within which a project was conducted. The ecosphere, or infosphere, is a complex multi-hub and multidirectional network. This more closely represents the operational environment than interpretations based on monologue or dialogue.
17. Approaches based on monologue and even dialogue focus on the egosphere of a particular public diplomacy actor rather than the complex network of relationships. An egospheric perspective focuses on relationships that connect with the single chosen organization, group, or community. The implicit assumption is that everyone orbits around that single group. As a result, monologue and dialogue disproportionately focus on the role of one node with a network, despite the complexity of real-world networks.
18. The difficulty created by an egospheric perspective is that it places a single organization at the center of the network. In doing so, it diminishes the role of relationships between other actors. While there are times when an organization does have a central position, but this can only be shown once the relationships with other actors have been taken into account. An assertive approach to public diplomacy, in R. S. Zaharna’s terms, tends to be unidirectional. It focuses on changing the behavior of others that are conceived as orbiting around the public diplomacy actor. The assertive approach assumes that an organization has “the answer” to a particular challenge or situation and focuses on an attempt to make others follow. It does not leave space for asking questions or engaging in negotiation. When this is seen from the perspective of a network, assertive approaches in practice take little, if any, account of the role and resources of other nodes. This is due to the attempt to achieve dominance by crowding out other perspectives from the information horizon of a target audience.⁷⁹
19. As Diane Sonnenwald argued, “within any context and situation is an ‘information horizon’ in which individuals can act. Information horizons, which may consist of a variety of information resources, are determined socially and individually, and may be

B. Lown, “Sudden Cardiac Death: Biobehavioral Perspective,” *Circulation* 76, no. 1, Pt. 2 (July 1987): 186–96.<AU: Kindly check if “!” is required.>

⁷⁷ Nicholas J. Cull, “Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past,” *CPD Perspectives on Public Diplomacy* (2009), <http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/publications/perspectives/CPDPerspectivesLessons.pdf>.

⁷⁸ R. S. Zaharna, *Battles to Bridges: US Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy After 9/11* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

⁷⁹ Sonnenwald, D. H., “Information Horizons,” in K. Fisher, S. Erdelez, and L. McKechnie (Eds.), *Theories of Information Behavior: A Researcher’s Guide* (Medford, NJ: Information Today, 2005), 191–97.

conceptualized as densely populated solution spaces.”⁸⁰ Conceptually, information dominance would limit the potential solutions within the horizon. However, the influence of shifting networks and relationships makes genuine dominance extremely difficult and neglects the underlying relationship. People feeling pressure to think a particular are more likely to resist. While social media has increasingly highlighted the role of networks in the spread of information, their influence dates back before the computer, as the studies of innovation, diffusion, and social networks elegantly attest.⁸¹

20. The associative approach demonstrates the importance of the relationships that combine to form networks. In addition, a collaborative approach considers the relative importance of different roles within a network and the contribution each actor can make to the realization of a collective goal. This moves beyond centralizing and unidirectional positions of the assertive approach and builds on the insight of the associative interpretation. This study develops the conception of negotiation within the multi-hub, multidirectional nature of collaborative public diplomacy.

Power of collaboration:

21. In a collaborative approach, successful actors are those most able to interact in a network with the result that certain outcomes become more likely. The collaborative actors are not contained within traditional notions of power that approximate to making others follow that actor’s will. Collaborative actors are results or outcome orientated but in a very different way to those using assertive strategies. They do not determine a specific policy or message and then seek to make it sound attractive so that others will follow when it is presented *ex cathedra*.⁸² Instead, collaborative actors value the input of others at all levels of decision making. The result is a collective refinement of objective, consideration of all relationships within the relevant network, and subsequent cocreation of message if a message-orientated approach is to be used.⁸³
22. Collaboration in public diplomacy creates the potential for greater diversity of cognition, experience, and perspective.⁸⁴ Through collaboration, new solutions can enter an information horizon. Through greater diversity a decision-making process can become more likely to be innovative, relevant to a wider community, and less likely to be the result of a narrow political perspective—such as the “with us or against us” that damaged US public diplomacy after 9/11.

⁸⁰ Sonnenwald, D. H., “Evolving Perspectives of Human Information Behavior: Contexts, Situations, Social Networks and Information Horizons,” *In Exploring the Contexts of Information Behavior: Proceedings of the Second International Conference in Information Needs* (1999), 176–90.< AU: kindly provide the place and publisher details.> *Library Management*, Vol. 21 No. 1, pp.49 - 55

⁸¹ Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*;
Valente, “The Diffusion Network Game.”
Valente, *Social Networks and Health*.

Scott, *Social Network Analysis*.

Karl M. van Meter, “Terrorists/Liberators: Researching and Dealing with Adversary Social Networks,” *Connections* 24 (2002): 66–78.

Tom Koch, “The Map as Intent: Variations on the Theme of John Snow,” *Cartographica* 39, no. 4 (2004): 1–14.

Bonnie Erikson, “Secret Societies and Social Structure,” *Social Forces* 60, no. 1 (1981): 188–210.

⁸² Ali Fisher, “Music for the Jilted Generation: Open-Source Public Diplomacy,” *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 3, no. 2 (2008): 129–52.

⁸³ For the range of options for influence see; Ali Fisher and Aurélie Bröckerhoff, *Options for Influence: Global Campaigns of Persuasion in the New Worlds of Public Diplomacy* (British Council, 2008).

Ali Fisher, “Four Seasons in One Day, the Crowded House of UK Public Diplomacy,” in Nancy Snow and Philip M. Taylor (Eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, New ed. (Routledge, 2008).

⁸⁴ James Surowiecki, *The Wisdom of Crowds* (Anchor, 2005).

Data and complex international systems

23. From engaging with activists in closed societies to countering the efforts of Jihadist groups; there has never been a better time for diplomats to get into data. Never before has there been so much publicly observable and open data available about which communities are communicating with and influencing others. This data can empower the UK soft power resources to make greater use of collaborative strategies and facilitative approaches to shaping international networks of influence.
24. While there is no doubt that technology can be disruptive for authorities, diplomats, and scholars, these technologies can also be empowering for those seeking to understand behavior within complex environments.
25. Combining big data analysis and visualizations with the nuanced understanding of context, already central to diplomacy, can open opportunities for collaboration and to push the boundaries of what is imagined to be possible within 21st century public diplomacy and the deployment of the UK 'soft power resources'.
26. The amount of data available is greater than ever, perhaps 90% of which was generated in the last [two years](#). At the same time, more people globally are communicating in ways that generate data which is publicly observable, for example through the API of social media platforms. Equally, the tools to analyse data have expanded rapidly, allowing users to search [large amounts of data quickly and efficiently](#).
27. Certainly, as Nassim Nicholas Taleb noted during the [Moneyball Diplomacy](#) event, there is a need for discrimination in analysis, due to the level of "noise" in data. Identifying what '[signal](#)' is meaningful to the task of diplomacy will require diplomats and scholars to become increasingly comfortable engaging with, analysing, and using increasingly large and often [unstructured](#) data. Engaging in this type of work can open further opportunities for collaboration and to push the boundaries of what is imagined to be possible within public diplomacy.

What are the options for UK soft power resources?

28. As I have written [previously](#), the opportunity in the era of big data comes not from drowning in a sea of data but navigating the most useful ways to derive insight and develop innovative strategies from that data.
29. Getting into what can be loosely termed big data does not have to come with a big price tag, at least not until users have begun to develop fairly large-scale projects. One way diplomats can get into data and gain comfort with the approaches and research questions to which big data lends itself, is to participate in the growing amount of open source projects, use the software programs which result and experiment with the range free web-based software-as-service.
30. Now is a good time for UK soft power resources to get into data, as there have been recent updates to [Scraperwiki](#), [Sparkwise](#), and [SwiftRiver](#). In addition, there are tools such as [Gapminder](#) which seeks to be a "fact tank" that promotes a fact based world view by providing time series development data. Moreover, the recently launched [Google Databoard](#) allows users to build custom graphics based on Google

research studies. These tools and data such as [GDELT](#) (Global Data on Events, Location, and Tone), if used effectively, can enable diplomats to integrate big and unstructured data into their current tools and processes for planning, monitoring, and evaluating their specific projects.

31. In addition, given the [relational](#) nature of public diplomacy, tools which allow the analysis of [relational data](#) and networks, provide further opportunities to track whether an organisation is engaging with specific communities, to understand the position of a user in the 'greater network' or to navigate the information landscapes of communication around an issue. A recent article in [Forbes](#) highlighted some of the ways [NodeXL](#) has been used and further examples of network analysis can be seen in the [Gephi](#) gallery on [Flickr](#).

What use is big data to UK soft power resources?

32. Previous examples of using, for example, network analysis have been discussed in relation to identifying [meaningful networks](#) in public diplomacy and specific events. Examples can be seen during events like President Obama's trip to [Brazil](#), information sharing during the [Arab Spring](#), or the protests following the 2009 Presidential Election in [Iran](#). Studies such as these can allow diplomats to understand the 'greater network' to identify individuals or communities with which to engage, understand the nuance in their discussion, and find ways to collaborate. For example these studies could facilitate the achievement of their objectives where they intersect with the aims of diplomats.
33. Equally, there is an opportunity to use data to analyse the strategic communication of groups a diplomat is responsible for challenging. This can give diplomats an edge over adversaries in contested environments. For example, an [article](#) I wrote with Nico Prucha published in the CTC Sentinel showed how Jabhat al-Nusra (JN) is using Twitter as a beacon for sharing shortlinks to content dispersed across numerous digital platforms. This method means videos shot on the battlefield in Syria are being uploaded onto YouTube and shared with followers via Twitter. Knowing which content is being most frequently shared and the nature of that content can help diplomats frame their responses and develop strategies to disrupt the networks disseminating content.
34. To take full advantage, diplomats will need to be able to leverage genuinely interdisciplinary approaches, which combine in-depth knowledge of big data techniques and network analysis, with rich multilingual understanding of the ideological, religious, and cultural foundations of the groups they seek to challenge.

Avoiding Misconceptions

35. Identifying the opportunity which big data and open data present is not to suggest that diplomats are currently without knowledge, great nuance, and understanding. Equally, as [Kate Crawford](#) highlighted in a recent Foreign Policy article, the numbers do not speak for themselves. Data needs interpreting by those with a nuanced understanding of the context and the imagination to identify insights and develop innovative strategies.
36. It would be as absurd to suggest that diplomacy should be conducted only on the basis of big data. However, it would be equally absurd to conduct public diplomacy

without using big data when it is available. The greatest opportunity for influence comes from the synthesis of big data insights with the nuance, experience and understanding developed by generations of diplomats.

Conclusion

37. Combining big data analysis and visualizations with the nuanced understanding of context, already central to the work of UK soft power resources, can open opportunities for collaboration and to push the boundaries of what is imagined to be possible within 21st century public diplomacy and the deployment of collaborative strategies by the UK 'soft power resources'.

September 2013

Dr Iginio Gagliardone, University of Oxford – Written evidence

CHINA'S SOFT POWER IN AFRICA. LESSONS FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM

This submission focuses on China's most recent initiatives in the media and telecommunication sectors in Africa, on how China is crafting a unique soft power strategy and on what lessons this bears for the United Kingdom, both in Africa and globally. It is divided in three sections. The first two sections explore China's increasing presence and influence in Africa. The final section explores implications and possible lesson for the UK to engage with African audiences and with rising powers.

China's new initiatives in the media and telecommunication sector in Africa

China has been seeking greater engagement with African audiences and has dramatically boosted its potential to shape narratives in ways that can favour its image or interests abroad. This process has displayed signs of continuity and discontinuity with China's previous attempts to influence ideas and perceptions on the continent. It has included both old and new communication technologies and has developed through a mix of bold policy decisions and trials and errors.

The relocation of the Regional Editorial Office for Africa of the state controlled news agency Xinhua from Paris to Nairobi in 2006 represented the first symbolic step of this new strategy. The same year, China Radio International began to seek partnerships with national broadcasters in Africa to relay some of its content and make it more accessible to local audiences (Cooper, 2009). In January 2012, state-owned China's Central Television (CCTV) launched CCTV Africa, China's flagship effort to win hearts and minds on the continent. CCTV Africa immediately became the largest initiative of an international TV broadcaster on African soil, counting more than one hundred and twenty staff-members of which around eighty are African (mostly Kenyans) and forty Chinese. The expansion of traditional media has been followed by unprecedented initiatives in the new media and telecommunication sector. In 2011, Xinhua launched what it labelled as the first "mobile newspaper" in Africa (Xinhua News Agency, 2011). Developed in Kenya in partnership with Huawei, China's largest telecommunications and service company, and Safaricom, Kenya's leading mobile operator, it allowed mobile subscribers to receive news selected by Xinhua via Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS). Alongside these media initiatives, which have been aimed at reaching wider audiences in Africa through different channels, since 2006 the Chinese government and Chinese companies have also begun to play an increasingly important role in the continent's telecommunication sector, as symbolized by the multi-billion dollar loan from China's EXIM Bank to enable Ethio-Telecom, Ethiopia's sole telecom operator, to increase access to the Internet and mobile phones, a project later undertaken by Chinese telecom giants ZTE and Huawei (Gagliardone, Stremmler, & Nkrumah, 2012).

Consequences of China's greater engagement in Africa

The Chinese government has signalled its lack of interest in exporting its own development model, and its intention to simply respond to the demands of its African partners. Ongoing research has largely confirmed that this 'no strings attached' approach is consistent, but this does not mean that China's presence on the continent is neutral or has no impact on development policies and practices (Brautigam, 2009; Gagliardone, 2013). China is indirectly influencing media/IT policies and practices in at least three ways.

First, while Western donors have tended to favour media projects benefiting the private sector and the civil society, often seeking to create incentives for the state to open a dialogue with other forces in society, China has exhibited a tendency to privilege government actors, thus increasing governments' capacity vis-à-vis other critical components in the development of a media and telecommunication systems.

Second, with the launch of media projects such as CCTV Africa China has dramatically boosted its potential to shape narratives, exert soft power, and allow different voices to shape the political and development agenda. While international broadcasters such as the BBC World Service and Aljazeera have often tended to rely on civil society organisations as gatekeepers of information, CCTV has so far shown less interest in these actors, privileging the formal over the informal and also as part of its effort to provide more positive news from the continent.

Third, China's domestic example to balance between investment in media and telecommunication and efforts to contain the risks of political instability that new technologies may bring, has the potential to act as a legitimising force for other states that share concerns of balancing both development and security, and that are actively seeking justifications for limiting voices and uses of technology that are considered potentially destabilising.

Implications and lessons for the UK

China is increasing its presence in the African media at a time other international broadcasters, including BBC World, are struggling to maintain their presence and influence on the continent. In addition, initiatives such as CCTV Africa are supporting an idea of "positive reporting" which is tapping into a "rising Africa" narrative, connected to the rapid growth of many countries on the continent. This is further helping to frame Chinese media as allies of African actors who have long attempted to revert the negative image of their continent in the Western media as one that is blighted by wars, HIV and hunger. The risk is that, while the BBC has historically been perceived as an instrument to bring independent reporting into nations that enjoyed few or no free media, it may now be increasingly perceived as an outlet that perpetuates a negative image of the continent.

At the same time, China's poor domestic records regarding freedom of expression and the democratic deficit that affects its institutions constitute a significant legacy for its foreign channels, constraining their expansion into Africa. The blocking of Facebook and Twitter in China has, for example, placed CCTV Africa in an awkward position. While there is awareness among African and Chinese journalists and editors working for CCTV Africa that social media are essential for the operations of a modern international broadcaster, CCTV Africa has been timid in developing a strategy on these platforms. CCTV Africa's official twitter account was created only six months after "Africa Live" went on air and as of April 2013 it had reached only 3,802 followers. CCTV Africa's facebook page was launched after ten months and on the same date had only 501 fans. These numbers are dwarfed by its most direct competitor, the BBC: on the same date BBC Africa's twitter account had 171,267 followers, while its facebook page had 116,290 fans. In addition, the support the Chinese government has provided to developing the communication infrastructure in countries such as Ethiopia, which actively filters political blogs, has attracted criticism and concerns.

China's increasing presence in the media and telecommunication sector in Africa should be interpreted both as a challenge and as an opportunity. It forces 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. It forces the BBC, for example, to 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. Similarly, the British Government should be able to offer clearer guides to companies engaging in work related to media and communications abroad, preventing UK-based companies to engage in activities that may be detrimental to freedom of expression and privacy (e.g. 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. Finally Africa can be an important terrain for engagement with new rising powers, including China. As China competes for loyalties in new terrains, it also needs to change its strategy to appeal to new audiences (Price, 2002). CCTV Africa's style has become more aggressive and has taken on traits that have historically characterized international broadcasters such as the BBC. Chinese journalists in Africa tend to be more open to experimentation and hybridization of styles and genres and this can open the door to initiatives that can also influence Chinese media back home. In a post-Cold War scenario, there are multiple opportunities for traditional and new players to engage on new terrains and test new forms of cooperation. A new soft power strategy in Africa can go in this direction, showing to foreign audiences the ability of a country to move beyond partisan interests and work for a greater goal that can rally old and new players alike. The UK has both the historical and moral leverage to lead along this path.

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September 2013

Dr Jamie Gaskarth, University of Plymouth – Written evidence

Background on contributor:

Dr Jamie Gaskarth is Deputy Director, School of Government at Plymouth University, and the convenor of the British Foreign Policy Working Group of the British International Studies Association. He is the author of *British Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013) and co-author with Oliver Daddow of *British Foreign Policy: The New Labour Years* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011) as well as numerous academic articles on foreign policy and security. In 2011 he was a Visiting Research Scholar at the Center for British Studies, University of California at Berkeley.

Summary of main points:

- Governments find it difficult to exploit the cultural aspects of soft power to policy ends.
- One thing the UK government can do is devise an attractive identity for their state in world politics and promote it through more consistent policymaking.
- To do so, the UK needs to think strategically about what identity is most likely to fit with its values whilst also serving its future global needs.
- It then has to be prepared to make some hard choices, dropping outdated ideas and relationships and forging new ones. It also may have to accept the policy constraints that come with living up to a particular identity in anticipation of future soft power benefits.

The problem of soft power

1. As the call for evidence for this inquiry states, the concept of soft power has been defined by its originator, Joseph S. Nye, as “the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments”⁸⁵. Two important questions follow from this definition:

What makes states attractive?

What can governments do to increase their state’s attractiveness to other actors?

2. Nye notes that a state’s soft power arises from “the attractiveness of a country’s culture, political ideals, and policies”⁸⁶. Many commentaries on soft power focus on the cultural aspects of this combination and produce inventories of the cultural resources of a state⁸⁷. These can be a useful reminder of how a country projects its culture abroad. Whether it represents a ‘toolkit’ for policymakers to exploit is another matter.
3. The difficulty is that many cultural facets of soft power develop and flourish organically, involve non-state actors, and resist any attempts by governments to use

⁸⁵ Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), x.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ E.g. John Holden, *Influence and Attraction: Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century* (British Council/Demos, 2013).

them instrumentally to serve national goals. For example, in the arts freedom of expression is usually the most highly valued resource a government can provide. Therefore, any attempt to interfere with creative choices to promote political ideas is seen as undermining rather than supporting potential soft power benefits. It is for this reason that governments have often struggled to know what to do with the concept of ‘soft power’⁸⁸.

What can governments do?

4. There was another aspect to Nye’s calculus of attractiveness that often gets less attention but is very important to soft power: a state’s policies. In particular, the way a state’s foreign and domestic policies construct an attractive (or unattractive) identity for it in world politics⁸⁹. That is something that governments can try to do something about and would have tangible benefits in terms of shaping political outcomes to the state’s advantage.
5. The UK has held a number of different and at times conflicting identities in recent years. These include ‘status quo power’, supporter of the rule of law and multilateral organizations, bridge between Europe and the US, pivotal power, reliable ally of the United States, liberal interventionist, networker, thought leader, arms dealer, aid superpower, tolerant and multicultural Olympics host, education provider, advocate for neoliberalism, Eurosceptic state and the country that wants to be ‘tough on immigration’.
6. The result is confusion over what Britain stands for. What kind of international legal order would the UK like to bring about? Does it want to have an open economy and multicultural society or retreat behind its borders? Would it prefer to support protesters for democracy or the UK arms industry? Is its future orientation towards Europe, the US or the emerging powers? Does it want the UK to crack down on tax havens or become one? Too often these choices are dismissed; as if the UK can be all things to all peoples. But there are real costs and benefits to the policies the UK adopts. The identities they imply appeal to different audiences. Without any overarching sense of Britain’s identity in the world, it is difficult for other governments and peoples to hold a consistent image of the UK to which they might be attracted.
7. 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. It then has to be prepared to make hard choices between competing identities. Within this discussion needs to be some consideration of who the UK is trying to attract, what images of Britain would be most attractive to them, and what policies are required to maintain each identity. This approach is rather different from the empirical, bottom up approach that tends to dominate British foreign policymaking – whereby the government works out what resources it has and then decides what to do with them. But, it would result in a stronger narrative

⁸⁸ See Christopher Hill and Sarah Beadle, ‘To wield or not to wield, that is the question: Britain’s soft power options in the 21st century’ Paper presented at a British Academy Workshop on Soft Power, 10-11 Carlton House Terrace, London, 11 July 2013.

⁸⁹ Ibid, 13.

about British identity that could galvanise public support at home and abroad for British foreign policy.

8. The UK foreign policy community has historically been resistant to thinking strategically and planning for the long term⁹⁰. It is even less keen on discussing identity⁹¹. The consequences are that policymaking is costly - since resources have to be spread across a wider range of potential objectives – and at times contradictory, as the government hasn't thought through how policies in one area might impact on another.
9. There are also periodic schisms in the foreign policy community as conflicting ideas about Britain's global identity compete for influence. The most recent example is the debate and votes on military action against Syria on 29 August 2013. Polls indicated a substantial majority of the public against British involvement in this international police action⁹². Nevertheless, both major parties moved motions that paved the way for the use of force.
10. Other countries reacted with surprise when the result failed to secure agreement. Some individuals in the UK predicted the end of Britain's reputation as a reliable ally and great power⁹³. On the one hand, such an outcome could have negative impacts on the UK's soft power – particularly in the United States. Given the importance of this relationship, particularly in the defence and intelligence fields, this would be a significant cost. On the other hand, the assertion of democratic control over the executive might bring alternative soft power benefits. The political ideals that have long been trumpeted as evidence of the strength of British culture – parliamentary democracy, respect for the rule of law, freedom of speech and conscience – have arguably been affirmed in the most public fashion. At present, debates on these matters happen by accident rather than design and so the government is always struggling to rationalise its policies after the fact.
11. The government should capitalise on this development to 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 do so. Recent parliamentary inquiries into national strategy and foreign policy have called for just such a re-examination but have thus far gone unheeded⁹⁴.

The pros and cons of strategizing identity

⁹⁰ Peter Mangold, *Success and Failure in British Foreign Policy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 5, 68.

⁹¹ John Coles, *Making Foreign Policy: A Certain Idea of Britain* (London: John Murray, 2000), 11.

⁹² <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/aug/31/poll-british-military-action-syria>; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-23931479>.

⁹³ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/10275565/Syria-crisis-Paddy-Ashdown-ashamed-of-Britain-over-Commons-vote.html>; <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-2408040/ANDREW-ROBERTS-Hideously-amoral-Little-England-stepped-looking-glass.html>.

⁹⁴ House of Lords/House of Commons, Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy, *First review of the National Security Strategy 2010* (27 Feb 2012) HC 1384, 18-19,

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt201012/jtselect/jtnatsec/265/265.pdf>; Public Accounts Committee (2011) *Who Does UK National Strategy?* Further Report (25 Jan), para 7,

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmpublic/713/71303.htm>. See also Christopher Hill, 'Tough Choices' *The World Today*, April 2010, 11-14.

12. Advantages

Promoting a particular identity in world politics has a number of potential positive outcomes for the UK's soft power:

It allows foreign policymakers to shape how Britain is viewed by others.

It provides greater public understanding and involvement in policymaking.

It reduces misunderstanding among allies and enemies by increasing the predictability of UK policy choices.

It gives a clearer framework for devising policies (and underlines their attractive qualities).

It allows resources to be deployed more strategically and effectively to serve policy goals.

13. Disadvantages

Of course, it could also result in negative outcomes, such as:

Distracting policymakers from immediate priorities.

Pursuing identity goals at the expense of material interests.

Pursuing identities that are no longer relevant, or fail to acknowledge changes.

Loss of flexibility over range of policy choices.

Predictability of foreign policy could be exploited by rivals.

14. Nevertheless, if the UK made a concerted effort to project a coherent identity in its foreign policy, and provided regular opportunities to reappraise that identity, many of these negative potential outcomes could be avoided. The positive soft power implications of giving a clear sense of what the UK stands for, and why it is an attractive society, would be substantial.

15. To conclude, I would like to offer an illustrative example of a foreign policy identity that is in accord with British values, would be attractive to other states (particularly the rising powers of China, India, Brazil and Russia), and could be exploited by policymakers to advance foreign policy goals.

Example: The Rule of Law state

16. The UK has a reputation, with long historical roots, of being a supporter of international law. This has been challenged in recent decades by the UK's willingness to use force outside the framework of international law in Kosovo, and on a questionable legal basis in Iraq in 2003. It has also allegedly cooperated with rendition operations on an extra-judicial basis. This had negative soft power impacts in the developing and Muslim worlds and undermined support for foreign policy at home. It also affects the UK's ability to insist on the rule of law and sovereignty in disputes such as those over the status of the Falkland Islands and Gibraltar.

17. A re-affirmation of the identity of Britain as a state that respects the rule of law at home and abroad would bring substantial positive outcomes. As a declining power, it is in the UK's interests to constrain emerging and potentially rival powers within a framework of international law. This would allow the UK to consolidate its gains and assert its rights when they are infringed. Important powers the UK wishes to engage

with, such as China, Brazil and India, value the rule of law, due process and sovereignty internationally.

18. To promote this identity, the UK could increase financial contributions to international legal organizations, emphasise its commitment to the due process of law, including the importance of the UN Security Council and UN Charter as its central foundations, and offer to host conferences and symposia on thorny legal problems. Rhetorically, it could emphasise the significance of UN approval for international action, whilst promoting reform of key institutions to make them more representative of the emerging power configuration. To be credible, it may also have to publicly express regret for transgressing international law in the past – albeit with an explanation of why it felt this was necessary.
19. Meanwhile, at home, the commitment to the rule of law could be demonstrated by reining back on criticisms of judicial decisions, enforcing regulation (such as in the banking and arms industry sectors), repealing unnecessary security legislation and offering greater transparency in the judicial process. In short, it could engage in a rigorous public diplomacy effort to underline the renewed importance of this aspect of British identity.
20. The primary benefits of this approach would be:
 - to reinforce international legal frameworks that are important to world order and the UK's place within it;
 - to instil the image of Britain as a constructive actor in world politics that acts in good faith;
 - to attract support for the idea that the UK's policy goals are legitimate;
 - to connect British foreign policy to domestic and international mechanisms of accountability;
 - to provide a clear steer on the limits and possibilities of UK action, including the use of force.
21. This is only one possible identity the UK might adopt and the author does not necessarily advocate it over other possibilities. It is merely designed to show how having a strong sense of an underlying British identity could feed into the policy process in a way that might be utilised to attract other global actors to the UK's viewpoints and so further its goals. The UK might have to accept constraints on its behaviour. The emphasis on international law and the UN in particular would mean it could not simply take it upon itself to act without authorisation – distinguishing this identity from the more permissive idea of 'good international citizenship' which was prominent in the 1990s⁹⁵.
22. However, in a trajectory of relative decline in its hard power, the attractive potential in being a state that contributed substantially to international law and society would enable the UK to continue to shape the rules and values of global politics. In other words, Britain's soft power could be translated into lasting influence.

⁹⁵ Wheeler, N. J. and Dunne, T. (1998) 'Good International Citizenship: a third way for British foreign policy' *International Affairs*, 74,4, 847-870.

Professor Marie Gillespie and Dr Alban Webb, Open University – Written evidence

The BBC World Service and British Council as Premier UK Soft Power Assets

The focus of this submission is on the BBCWS and BC as premier UK soft power assets. This submission is based on research carried out at the Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change (CReSC) at the Open University which is funded by the UK's Economic and Social Research Council (www.cresc.ac.uk). It is written by Prof. Marie Gillespie and Dr. Alban Webb. It is our synthesis of the findings, relevant to this call for evidence, of a large-scale collaborative research project on the BBC World Service conducted over the last decade⁹⁶. The wider research has involved over a dozen leading scholars, based in the UK and internationally, including Dr Ramy Aly, Dr Gerd Baumann, Prof. David Herbert, Dr Hugh Mackay, Professor Annabelle Sreberny, Dr Massoumeh Torfeh, Dr Andrew Skuse, Dr Jason Toynbee and Prof. Kath Woodward. More recently, Gillespie and Webb's research develops a comparative analysis of the changing cultural value of the BBC World Service (BBCWS) and the British Council (BC) and we include findings where relevant here. Page 1-7 summarise the key points of this submission. Pages 8-16 provide more extensive responses to those questions most relevant to our research. The endnotes provide details of key publications based on our research. The Appendix includes our response to the 'Public consultation on BBC Trust governance of BBC World Service, via an operating licence' [not reproduced here] which is relevant to this submission. We also include two academic papers for your consideration:

Gillespie, M. and Webb, A., eds. 2012. *Diasporas and Diplomacy: Cosmopolitan Contact Zones at the BBC World Service 1932-2012* London: Routledge. pp. 1-21 [not reproduced here]
Gillespie, M., 2013 'BBC Arabic, Social Media and Citizen Production: An Experiment in Digital Democracy before the Arab Spring'. *Theory, Culture and Society*. Vol 29 No 3. pp 92-131 [not reproduced here]

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE TO HOUSE OF LORDS SELECT COMMITTEE ON SOFT POWER AND THE UK'S INFLUENCE

The meaning and importance of soft power

- The term soft power is used in a confusing variety of ways and is often accompanied by a simplistic transmission model of communication whereby it is wrongly assumed that the message intended is the message received.
- A major problem with the concept is its focus on the projection rather than reception of meanings in complex cultural and communication environments.
- There is an urgent need to reframe and appraise uses of the term soft power and the policies and practices based on it and to devise suitable means and methods for assessing soft power projects.

⁹⁶ See project website <http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/diasporas/>. The first research (2007-10) was funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) followed by a second round of AHRC funding for a project on 'The Art of Intercultural Dialogue: Evaluating the Global Conversation at the BBCWS'.
<http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/diasporas/news/public-policy-fellowship-at-the-bbc-world-service>

- An overly instrumental view which views culture simply as a tool carries risks. Unless there is a genuine cultural experience and engagement, soft power projects are doomed to fail.
- Influence is built up over time, via institutions like BBCWS Service and the BC and the trust and empathy that they create, channel and reproduce as a by-product of their essential work.
- When soft power becomes the objective in its own right, it is liable to struggle or fail.
- Investment in long term strategic soft power institutions is a much better way of maintaining UK influence in the world, especially in a digital age and era of austerity.
- In this context it becomes imperative to understand how and why the BBCWS and BC matter for 21st Century – their role in democratization, development, civil society, diplomacy, human rights and security.
- We are dismayed to find that in the call for evidence, academics are not featured as a group from whom the committee 'is keen to take evidence'. There is an over-reliance on market research and concepts drawn from the literature on Public Relations in this domain.

How important is a country's soft power? What is the evidence that soft power makes a difference?

- Our independent research over a decade provides abundant evidence that these organisations enable the UK to punch above its weight in the international cultural domain – for relatively little economic cost, the cultural and soft power gains are outstanding.
- The trust, respect, empathy and loyalty built up over eight decades by BBCWS is now gravely endangered following devastating funding cuts following the Comprehensive Spending Review of 2010), that continue to have convulsive effects on the BBCWS and have all but eliminated its cultural programming.
- Funding cuts reflect the present government's lack of understanding of the historical and contemporary role that these organisations have played as the UK's pre-eminent agencies of soft power. It is our hope that Lords Committee can exert some influence to redress this.
- Awareness of the value of the BBCWS falls below the radar of the vast majority of British public and the risk is that when it comes under the licence fee, it will become even more vulnerable and exposed.
- How these major shifts in finance and governance, technology and editorial focus play out will matter greatly for how Britain is perceived around the world and for its ability to influence by attraction – its exercise of 'soft power'.

- We urge the House of Lords Committee to pay keen attention to these developments and we include with this document, our response to the Public Consultation on BBC Trust governance of BBC World Service, via an operating licence (see Appendix [not reproduced here]) which argues the case for more substantial protection of WS, its staff in the Language Services and its distinctive culture of broadcasting.
- Our independent research makes visible 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 as one of the world's most credible and trusted international broadcasters. 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.

In a digitally connected world, is soft power becoming more important? If so, why, and will this trend continue?

- BBC World Service and the British Council are becoming digital organisations and there is therefore an urgent need to re-think and re-formulate ways of working with overseas publics and the work of international cultural relations.
- The key task is to devise appropriate new ways of working that build on the successes of the past and face to face interactions in order to engage new audiences.
- Real-time quantitative or 'big' data' on user activities presents real opportunities as well as challenges. In order to understand how soft power functions, we need to understand the quality of individual cultural experiences and how such experiences are valued.
- But while the technologies may change the essential work of these organisations remains the same in communicating credible and independent news and providing opportunities for overseas groups to engage in meaningful ways with Britain and the world.
- The 'global conversations' around BBCWS news and world events, cultural and artistic activities, facilitated by digital media demonstrate a level of trust which will be critical for both organisations to harness. However, a lot more investment in creating a social media strategy and means of assessment is required.
- Digital media change the nature of trust in/resulting from cultural organisations as they can no longer exercise the same levels of control over narratives or audiences in specific geographic territories so we need to understand more about how trust and empathy are made, maintained and broken on line.
- Soft power is more important in a digital age because issues of identity, trust, conflict and security take on new dimensions. And digital media have the power to shift the

narrative frame of governments and news agencies, to orchestrate mass protests and help to depose autocratic leaders.

- Citizens and publics now expect credible and convincing explanations and appropriate evidence from governments and if they don't get in mainstream media they look to social media.
- Our and other research on social suggests that users are more likely to trust and believe their peers rather than politicians or media.

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?

- At a time of austerity it is sometimes difficult to look beyond economic imperatives. However, to assess the value of soft power in predominantly economic terms, as the British government is prone to do, reveals a deep misunderstanding about the nature, impact and efficacy of soft power activities.

Are there spheres of influence in which the Government should do more to promote the UK?

- Higher Education. Current restrictions on studying in UK HE for overseas students are incomprehensible in terms of UK soft power.
- Disinvestment in arts education and funding and arts and cultural exchanges - is seriously damaging future possibilities for fostering a creative, multilingual Britain that is open to the wider world.
- Cultural and Arts programming at BBCWS is a key area which can promote the UK. It is a well-known saying at BBCWS that 'audiences come for news but stay because of the rich mix of drama, sports, music and other genres.' Funding cuts mean that news is the chief focus. Arts, drama and culture are deemed by some as 'soft news' but without arts and cultural genres the UK loses vital soft power tools.
- The cosmopolitan work force, culture and ethos of the BBCWS and BC and the skills in translation (linguistic and cultural) of its workforce have much to teach other international organisations. This could be further exploited as part of UK soft power⁹⁷.

Can you give examples of where attempts to employ soft power have been unsuccessful, for instance because they delivered counter-productive results?

⁹⁷ For the cosmopolitan culture see *Tales From Bush House*. 2012. Eds. Ismailov, H., Gillespie, M., and Aslanyan, A. London: Hertfordshire Press ISBN 978-0-9557549-7-5 <http://oro.open.ac.uk/36280/> and Writers at Bush House. Special Issue. Guest editor, Gillespie, M. Wasafiri : International Writing No 68 Winter 2011

- Soft power doesn't respond to rigid objectives. It works best when institutions do what they do well.
- Soft power is not part of the main objective or purpose of either the WS or the BC. It is a long term outcome and capability not short term objective.
- Soft Power can be used to exert influence and deliver short term advantages in tactical ways and can exert the right kind of influence and pressure at critical moments and in an appropriate context (London Olympics 2012).
- In the long term, to maintain their soft power, institutions have to carry out their activities in ways that people recognise as credible and valuable over a long period of time.

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

- Long term and stable investment in key agencies of soft power is most important.
- Investment in the evaluation of soft power and its cultural, diplomatic, and technological drivers and impact also needs more investment with a range of partners including (not excluding) academics.
- A sense that UK soft power actors/agencies have an understanding of their relationship to each other and more an awareness of their mutual influence. This will require strategic oversight. Over the last decade attempts to build this capacity, especially in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, have suffered successive funding cuts to the detriment of UK public diplomacy.

Soft power and diplomacy: 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?

- Communication and information must be credible and consistent. BBCWS has always had to face competition from other organisations and respond to new initiatives to some extent (satellite broadcasting and now digital media) but to maintain soft power the BBCWS must not and does not traduce its long established journalistic ethos by mimicking the likes of Al Jazeera in the same way that they didn't mimic Goebbels.
- Digital media provide a range of new opportunities. Traditional elites are no longer a discrete group. There are many new players and influencers in social networks that we need to understand. To do this, however, requires a commitment to investment in appropriate evaluative methodologies. Sadly this is not being done.

How can the UK promote its values abroad without being accused of cultural imperialism, propagandising, or hypocrisy?

- It is the enactment of these values, for example the UK's demonstrable commitment to freedom of speech, human rights and the rule of law that provide the most credible means with which to promote them. Good examples include: fair play during the London Olympics, the pedagogic rigour and conduct of British Council exams, or the reporting by BBCWS of division in British society on the question of military intervention in Syria. These are exemplary of the values the UK wishes to promote and which in some cases are embedded in the activities of UK soft power agencies. How people relate to, understand, engage with and trust UK soft power actors can be as important as the information/news/message they are conveying. How agencies of soft power exude and emanate values is the key to understanding how soft power works.

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?

- It depends of the measure of success one chooses. It is clear, however, that others, especially the BRIC countries are investing a great deal more money and effort into their international media and public diplomacy agencies than the United Kingdom.

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?

- Investing in arts and cultural programming to sit alongside the provision of news in international broadcasting has a long tradition in the BBCWS and delivered important soft power dividends in the past. For most of its life the BBCWS broadcast translations of great works of literature, show cased new musicians from all over the world, introduced overseas audiences to the arts in the UK. It is to the detriment to its soft power capability that this has more or less disappeared with arts and culture reported only as news with rare exceptions.
- The provision of educational resources overseas must be a crucial part of the UK's soft power strategy and the restrictions on international students studying in the UK should be lifted.

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?

- UK Higher Education and the desire to learn the English Language go hand in hand and are vital to soft power.

- Promoting and teaching the English language is the primary mission of the British Council. Their offices and libraries around the world have been one of the most visible material markers of Britain abroad. Anything that weakens their ability to fulfil this mission depleted UK soft power.
- The BBCWS is a major tool for promoting the English language alongside the BC. Both organisations are looking for new ways of working and partnering and the research partnership forged with the Open University - another tool of UK soft power – is but one example of the potential of public/private partnerships to project the UK abroad via a judicious combination of culture and education – informing, educating and entertaining in the digital sphere.

What is the long term impact of budgetary cuts to publicly funded bodies promoting British culture overseas?

They will either become reliant on other sources of commercial funding which will inevitably influence their objectives and may result in conflicts of interest for UK soft power, or cease to have influence across a broad spectrum of activities and lack capacity for reach and engagement with overseas publics.

EVIDENCE TO HOUSE OF LORDS SELECT COMMITTEE ON SOFT POWER AND THE UK'S INFLUENCE

The meaning and importance of soft power

• What is your understanding of 'soft power'? What does it mean for the work that you do?

'Soft power' is a useful shorthand term, when used in popular and public discourse, to refer to the various ways in which nation states deploy a variety of resources (including arts, culture, education, sports and business) to project a positive national image overseas and communicate values which they seek to promote. It involves, in Joseph Nye's terms, the power to influence by attraction – 'to get what you want'.

Nye appears to conflate the power of nation states and individuals. So while it is a useful shorthand term, from an academic perspective, it is a confused and confounding concept. Part of the problem is that use of the term soft power is often accompanied by a simplistic transmission model of communication – long since dismissed in academic studies of international communications.

The assumption is that if policy makers can design the right 'messaging' strategy, strategic narrative or strategic script then audiences will receive it in a relatively unproblematic manner. Often, such narratives concern human rights, better governance, democratic principles, civic responsibilities and gender equity. A common assumption is that power lies in the hands of the media and the communicator to shape meanings. This ignores 80 years of audience research which shows that the messages intended and messages received are not equivalent and that the contexts of reception mean that audiences interpret messages and reshape meanings in very diverse ways. So a major problem with the concept is its focus on projection rather than reception.

The uncritical use, overuse and abuse of the term ‘soft power’ have reached new heights in recent times. It is used to refer to branding nations and places, marketing for sports events and religious groups, and public relations for celebrities, promoting gay rights and gender equality. ‘Soft’ is an adjective that is often used as a synonym for culture - soft power as opposed to hard, kinetic and military power and, as result of this, it seems always and inevitably to be a good thing. But is it? Any term that seems to convey something inevitably good is suspect and is doing a good deal of ideological work. Who can argue against using soft power instead of hard power? Even Joseph Nye recognises some of the inherent problems with the term and has started using the term ‘smart power’ to overcome these difficulties and to argue the case for a strategic combination of soft and hard power. This not only seems to be a rather simplistic way of communicating life and death issues but also the conceptual boundaries between soft power and public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy and soft power are unclear and this causes further confusion.

Nevertheless academics, like Prof John Holden in a recent report for the British Council, deploy the term to argue that the UK risks losing out in the game of ‘influence and attraction’ and what he refers to as ‘the race to soft power in the 21st century.’⁹⁸ This is an important report but it begs a number of questions about the kinds of data that are mobilised to evidence the success of soft power projects. There is a need for fresh thinking about new ways of working in the field of international cultural relations in a digital age. Not enough emphasis has been given to evaluating soft power projects and the best means and methods for doing so. And evaluation becomes even more important in a digital age of interactive and dialogic media which are transforming our ways of communicating. New forms of evidence, including ‘big data’ are being integrated into institutional processes of accountability, governance, strategy and development.

Like it or not, soft power is a term with which we have to contend as actions and resources are deployed to increase and enhance it in our name. Politicians, policy-makers, academics and citizens alike need to understand the ideological work that the term and associated activities are doing in different zones of political and cultural activity. We also need to develop new ways of assessing the value of soft power initiatives in a digital world. At the Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change at The Open University, we are drawing on the findings of nearly a decade of research that we have conducted, from a multi-disciplinary perspective – Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities) on the BBC World Service, as well as more recent work the British Council (see endnote 1).

As two of the UK’s foremost ‘soft power’ international organisations, our current research investigates how influence, attraction and soft power are assessed and measured by these organisations and the UK government, the methods used and how various kinds of data are used to evince success or failure. This is critical because both governments and mass media tend to understand and construct culture(s) in a colloquial sense, as a set of short-hand de-contextualised traits, behaviours or attitudes that can ultimately be shifted. Such concerns open spaces for thinking about the cultural nuances that specific organisations such as the BBC World Service and British Council bring to the soft power agenda.

This is part of a wider research project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council on Cultural Value.⁹⁹ Its central goal is to rebalance our understanding of both the

⁹⁸ <http://www.britishcouncil.org/press/changing-soft-power-report>

⁹⁹ <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funded-Research/Funded-themes-and-programmes/Cultural-Value-Project/Pages/News.aspx>

instrumental and intrinsic value of cultural organisations and their activities – the pendulum has swung too far towards government seeing culture in purely instrumental terms – and this is a risk that overuse of the term soft power. Our research shows that unless there is a genuine cultural experience, soft power projects are doomed to fail.

We are interested in what culture can do for government but we argue that we must not lose sight of the actual experiences of culture (whether a film, a play or a news bulletin) in which meanings are made and remade, contested and rejected. Influence is built up over time, via institutions like BBCWS and BC and the trust and empathy that they create, channel and reproduce as a by-product of their essential work. When soft power becomes the objective in its own right it is liable to struggle or fail. Investment in long term strategic soft power institutions is a much better way of maintaining UK influence in the world, especially in an era of austerity.

This task of assessing the changing cultural value of the BBC World Service and the British Council becomes even more urgent as these organisations are facing a critical turning point in their 80 years' history. These organisations and their activities are experiencing a sea change in funding, governance and technological innovation and this is reshaping how they operate in the international sphere as instruments of British Soft Power. As they become digital organisations, and as big data sets become available that make it possible to analyse the nature, scope, scale and quality of interactions between these organisations and their users and audiences, they can become more transparent and accountable. New data sets allow us to analyse information flows, the global communication networks in which users are embedded and the new kinds of influence and influencers at play in the new media landscape. In this context, it becomes imperative to understand how and why the BBCWS and BC matter for 21st Century – their role in democratization, development, civil society, diplomacy, human rights and security.

The work of this committee is therefore of great interest to us as CRESC researchers. But we are dismayed to find that in the call for evidence, academics are not featured as a group from whom the committee 'is keen to take evidence'. Why is this so?

• How important is a country's soft power? What is the evidence that soft power makes a difference?

Our research has brought together international scholars and CRESC researchers to work collaboratively to examine and evidence diverse aspects of the BBCWS, for example, the evolution of World Music¹⁰⁰, global sports¹⁰¹ and drama¹⁰² as well as a range of more conceptually focussed themes including diaspora nationalism¹⁰³, religious fundamentalisms and trans-nationalism in online environments¹⁰⁴, and the politics of translation¹⁰⁵. We provide empirical case studies on a wide range of issues : from changing audience configurations for BBWS from the 1930s onwards through to World War Two political satire and the problems of reporting Jewish persecution, to the historical role of the BBC and UK diplomatic relations in South Asia, the Middle East and Iran (see endnote 10). Much of our

¹⁰⁰ See: Toynbee, J. and Dueck, B., eds. 2011. *Migrating Music* London:Routledge

¹⁰¹ See: <http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/diasporas/core-research/sports-across-diasporas>

¹⁰² See: <http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/diasporas/core-research/drama-for-development>

¹⁰³ See: <http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/diasporas/core-research/diasporic-nationhood>

¹⁰⁴ See: <http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/diasporas/core-research/religious-transnationalism>

¹⁰⁵ See: <http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/diasporas/core-research/politics-of-translation>

recent work has focussed on the way new interactive online media are transforming audiences, creating 'digital diasporas', and challenging established journalistic principles. All this research provides solid evidence that the soft power created and channelled by the BBCWS makes a huge difference for how the UK is viewed, the values it seeks to promote and the trust and empathy the enjoys and imparts.

Putting aside the conceptual difficulties with the term soft power itself, we argue that the work of the BBCWS and BC have been absolutely vital to UK soft power – to how the UK is seen abroad, the level of trust it enjoys and the attractions, for example, of the UK's Higher Education, tourism and doing business in and with UK. We also argue that the trust and respect for, empathy and loyalty to the UK built up over eight decades is now gravely endangered by the present government's lack of understanding of the historical and contemporary role that these organisations have played as agencies of soft power.

The BBC World Service, often referred to as the 'voice of Britain abroad', is very well known to over 192 million people around the globe who regularly tune in or log on to one of its 27 language services (plus English). But awareness and knowledge of BBCWS (as well as the British Council) fall below the radar of the British public, with the exception of intrepid travellers, digital natives, and insomniacs who listen to BBC Radio 4 in the darkest hours of the night when World Service programmes are broadcast. This is a shame because from April 2014, British citizens will pay for its services.

Ongoing major changes in its governance, funding, and place in within the internal organisation of the BBC (it has been absorbed by BBC Global News, itself a division of the BBC News Group) pose significant threats to the distinctive voice, international perspective and unique cosmopolitan culture that makes BBCWS so successful. They also offer opportunities to deliver a more integrated news service with a stronger international perspective in domestic output utilising the skills and capacities of multi-lingual and cosmopolitan staff. How these shifts play out will matter greatly for how Britain is perceived around the world and for its ability to influence by attraction – its exercise of 'soft power'. We urge the House of Lords Committee to pay keen attention to these developments and we include with this document, our response to the Public Consultation on BBC Trust governance of BBC World Service, via an operating licence (see Appendix [not reproduced here]).

It seems to us deeply ironic that, at a time when rising powers of BRIC countries are investing in international broadcasting and public diplomacy initiatives to project their strategic narratives onto a world stage, Britain is disinvesting in its best soft power tools – the BBCWS and the BC. It could be argued that international broadcasters like BBC World Service, Deutsch Welle and France 24 are remnants of a bygone era – colonial relics and Cold War propaganda tools that have no place in a media-saturated, multi-polar world. But that would be to ignore a rich history of cultural encounters and translation activities that enabled the BBC to forge its own a unique brand of cosmopolitanism that sits very well alongside a benign patriotism – building trust and empathy for the UK among audiences. What is often forgotten in political debates is that for the last 80 years, the World Service derived much of its intellectual, creative and diplomatic significance from the diasporic broadcasters who have been at the heart of the BBC's foreign language service. Refugee intellectuals, dissident poets and migrant artists have provided the essential skills and creative energies that power the BBC's international operations. Yet, they have remained largely absent from the public understanding of the World Service. Yet their diasporic

voices and the intimacy they create with audiences in imparting trusted information and news is critical to the WS's soft power.

We provide copious and ample evidence for these arguments in our book *Diasporas and Diplomacy: Cosmopolitan Contact Zones at the BBC World Service 1932-2012* (introduction provided as Word document). This book, based on a decade of research, makes visible the role played by successive waves of exiled, refugee, dissident and migrant intellectuals and writers who have helped to establish and renew the BBC's reputation as one of the world's most credible and trusted international broadcasters. 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. And the independent academic assessment and current evidence that we have at our disposal, despite positive reports from the WS, suggest that the WS is bleeding audiences in key markets and as a result losing trust and empathy that has a long and rich legacy.

Devastating funding cuts will impact over time but it will be too late then to restore lost trust. And even in flagship foreign language services like BBC Arabic, there is not adequate staff and resources (especially social media resources) to run an operation that can compete effectively in Middle East media markets. And yet for a relatively small sum of money, the WS delivers vital and enduring soft power benefits for the United Kingdom.

• In a digitally connected world, is soft power becoming more important? If so, why, and will this trend continue?

Both the BBC World Service and the British Council are investing digitally with the aim of engaging new audiences. For the World Service, the internet is as important as radio or television in key markets, and their purpose is to curate online audiences in a 'global conversation'. The British Council increasingly uses the internet to share the UK's 'great cultural assets' and so 'build trust' worldwide.

Real-time quantitative or 'big' data' on user activities present real opportunities as well as challenges in understanding how soft power functions in relation to the quality of individual cultural experiences and how such experiences are valued. But while the technologies may change the essential work of these organisations remains the same in communicating credible and independent news and providing opportunities for overseas groups to engage in meaningful ways with Britain and the world. Nevertheless, we will need to develop new methodological approaches to how trust and empathy are built online – such as the innovative and interdisciplinary evaluative research being conducted at the Open University in CReSC.

Understanding the changing cultural value of the WS and BC through the lens of digital interactions is valuable because they can be tracked and analysed, offering unprecedented insights into users' cultural experiences. Our research suggests that s 'global conversations' about news and world events facilitated by digital media demonstrate a level of trust which will be critical for both organisations to harness. However, a lot more investment in creating a social media strategy and means of assessment is required¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰⁶ See the following special issues of refereed academic journals:

'The BBC World Service and the South Asian Diaspora'. Special issue. *South Asian Diaspora*. 2010. 2/1. Eds. Gillespie, M., Pinkerton, A., Baumann, G., and Thiranagama, S.

The BBC World Service and the Greater Middle East: Comparisons, Contrasts, Conflicts. Special Issue. *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*. 2010. 3/2. Special issue: Eds. Sreberny, A., Gillespie, M. and Baumann, G.,

The BBC World Service, 1932-2007: Cultural Exchange and Public Diplomacy. Special Issue. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 2008. 28/4. Eds. Gillespie, M., Baumann, G., and Webb, A.

Digital media change the nature of trust in/resulting from cultural organisations as they can no longer exercise the same levels of control over narratives or audiences in specific geographic territories¹⁰⁷. Culture and geography are unbound in the digital domain which makes communication across cultural boundaries and ‘soft power’ influence more difficult to create and assess. New digital projects also involve trade-offs between fundamental organisational values. Peer-to-peer communication relies on recommendation, openness, transparency and engaging the individual in immersive and atmospheric experiences or as current WS editorial strategy puts it, ‘Living the Story’. Traditional organisational values of impartiality, objectivity and distance are being challenged by new media. So this begs the question of what constitutes trust and empathy in digital domains? How are trust, empathy and intercultural understanding, reflective individuals and active global citizens nurtured via digital and social media? These are essential questions for anyone interested in soft power. Our current research contributes to understanding and researching cultural value in international organisations by combining quantitative and ‘big data’ analyses with culturally sensitive qualitative and ethnographic insights, bringing the bird’s eye view into dialogue with the snail’s eye perspective or in Weber’s terms, arriving at *verstehen* (understanding) by *begreifen* (grasping the bigger picture). We hope to report on this project in March 2014 just before the BBCWS comes under the licence fee.

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?

Without doubt the BBC World Service and the British Council are among the most important soft power assets of the UK and we can and should put both an economic and a cultural value on these organisations – which is precisely what our current research is doing (as outlined above).

How we ascribe value to the UK’s soft power resources is problematic, given the diversity of audience engagement with the narratives that are promoted. However, Soft power approaches are possibly most evident and measurable in the terrain of international development, where programs promoting rule of law, transitions to democracy or the observance of human rights speak to wider values that are espoused by the UK and are vigorously promoted. Often such programs are couched in terms of achieving a measurable behaviour change, which in turn is often expressed in terms of positive shifts in knowledge, attitudes and practices. Numerous DFID and FCO-funded BBC Media Action communication initiatives set clear objectives and define behaviour change targets (expressed as a % increase in positive attitudes, etc.) that are measurable. In a very direct way, development (though not couched in the language of soft power) provides an avenue for gleaning insights into how the value and impacts of soft power may be measurable¹⁰⁸.

• 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?

¹⁰⁷ ‘BBC Arabic, Social Media and Citizen Production: An Experiment in Digital Democracy before the Arab Spring’. Theory, Culture and Society. Vol. 29. No 3. Gillespie, M. 2013.

The BBC World Service, Twitter and the London Olympics: The Challenges of Social Media. Gillespie, M., Proctor, R., O Loughlin, B., Shreim, N. Aslanyan A., Targhi, M., Aslan, B., Dennis, J and Voss, A. (Available on request from marie.gillespie@open.ac.uk)

¹⁰⁸ See our book *Drama for Development: Cultural Translation and Social Change*. Eds. Skuse, A., Gillespie, M., and Power, G. New Delhi: Sage India.

At a time of austerity it is sometimes difficult to look beyond economic imperatives. However, to assess the value of soft power in predominantly economic terms, as the British government is prone to do, reveals a deep misunderstanding about the nature, impact and efficacy of soft power activities. There is too much short-term thinking and quick fixes. There are too many damaging cuts. More strategic investment in the BBC World Service and British Council – especially in the sphere of arts and culture and in their digital and social media activities – is required. As they become digital organisations, BC and BBCWS are reconceiving their ways of working with international partners. They can deploy a wide range of soft power strategies that balance economic, strategic and cultural value – strategies that do not reduce culture to an instrument of policy.

• 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?

UK Higher Education - current restrictions on overseas students coming to UK to study need urgently to be revised.

Culture and the Arts –current disinvestment in arts education and funding as well as in the kinds of arts and cultural exchanges for which the British Council are well known - is seriously damaging the ability to foster a creative cosmopolitan Britain. Patriotic cosmopolitanism was amply demonstrated during the London Olympics 2012 but our research suggests that this stance of world openness and benign national pride was short lived. Government need to consider the long term effects of disinvestment in the arts and cultural sectors and find creative solutions to supporting non-commercial projects if UK soft power is to be maintained.

Can you give examples of where attempts to employ soft power have been unsuccessful, for instance because they delivered counter-productive results?

Soft power doesn't respond to rigid objectives. It works best when institutions do what they do well. It is not part of the main objective or purpose of the WS or the BC, it is a long term outcome and capability. While Soft Power can be used to exert influence and deliver short term advantages at critical moments and in an appropriate context (London Olympics 2012), in the long run, to maintain their soft power, institutions have to carry out their activities in ways that people recognise as credible and valuable over a long period of time.

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

Long term and stable investment in key agencies of soft power is most important. Investment in the evaluation of soft power and its cultural, diplomatic, and technological drivers and impact also needs more investment with a range of partners including academics. A sense that UK soft power actors have an understanding of their relationship to each other and more awareness of their mutual influence. This will require strategic oversight. Over the last decade attempts to build this capacity, especially in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, have suffered successive funding cuts to the detriment of UK public diplomacy.

Soft power and diplomacy

• 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?

Communication and information must be credible and consistent. BBCWS has always had to face competition from other organisations and respond to new initiatives to some extent (satellite broadcasting and now digital media) but to maintain soft power, the BBCWS must not and does not traduce its long established journalistic ethos by mimicking the likes of Al Jazeera in the same way that they didn't mimic Goebbels.

Digital media provide a range of new opportunities. Traditional elites are no longer a discrete group. There are many new players and influencers in social networks that we need to understand. To do this, however, requires a commitment to investment in appropriate evaluative methodologies. Sadly this is not being done. For example, the vastly reduced staffing in audience research at the BBCWS is badly hampering its ability to get to grips with the new digital opportunities. This is an area that will become increasingly important and one where the UK cannot afford to lose traction. If it does the UK's soft power capability will be seriously undermined.

• How can the UK promote its values abroad without being accused of cultural imperialism, propagandising, or hypocrisy?

It is the enactment of these values, for example the UK's demonstrable commitment to freedom of speech, human rights and the rule of law that provide the most credible means with which to promote them (e.g. fair play during the London Olympics, the pedagogic rigour and conduct of British Council exams, or the balanced reporting by BBCWS of the divisions in British society on the question of military intervention in Syria are exemplary of the values the UK wishes to promote and which are embedded in the activities of UK soft power agencies. In this context, how people relate to, understand, engage with and trust UK soft power actors can be as important as the information/news/message they are conveying. How agencies of soft power exude and emanate values provides a key to understanding how soft power works for policy makers.

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?

Depends of the measure of success one chooses. It is clear, however, that others, especially the BRIC countries are investing a great deal more money and effort into their international media and public diplomacy agencies than the United Kingdom.

• 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?

Investing in cultural programming to sit alongside the provision of news in international broadcasting has a long tradition in the BBCWS and delivered important soft power dividends in the past. For most of its life the BBCWS broadcast translations of great works of literature, showcased new musicians from all over the world, introduced overseas audiences to the arts in the UK. It is to the detriment to its soft power capability that this has more or less disappeared with arts and culture reported only as news with rare exceptions. The provision of educational resources overseas must be a crucial part of the UK's soft power strategy and the restrictions on international students studying in the UK should be lifted.

Aspects of 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?

UK Higher Education and the desire to learn the English Language go hand in hand and are vital to soft power.

This is the mission of the British Council. Making it more difficult more overseas students to come to the UK and study is a major way in which UK soft power is being undermined.

What is the long term impact of budgetary cuts to publicly funded bodies promoting British culture overseas?

They will either become reliant on other sources of commercial funding which will inevitably influence their objectives and may result in conflicts of interest for UK soft power, or cease to have influence across a broad spectrum of activities and lack capacity for reach and engagement with overseas publics.

September 2013

Jonathan Glennie, Overseas Development Institute, International Alert, Transparency International UK and Ian Birrell, Columnist and Foreign Correspondent– Oral evidence (QQ 126-151)

Jonathan Glennie, Overseas Development Institute, International Alert, Transparency International UK and Ian Birrell, Columnist and Foreign Correspondent– Oral evidence (QQ 126-151)

[Transcript to be found under Ian Birrell, Columnist and Foreign Correspondent](#)

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

1. SUMMARY

This is a cross-Whitehall response to the call for evidence from the House of Lords Committee on Soft Power and the UK's influence, coordinated at the request of the Committee by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO). Contributing departments include FCO, Cabinet Office, BIS, UKTI, MoD, DfID and Home Office. The introduction sets out how we see UK power as a combination of soft and hard power used by Government to influence and attract in support of Britain's interests. The case studies provide concrete evidence of this and reflect the themes and questions raised by the Committee.

2. INTRODUCTION: UK SMART POWER

I want the UK to look out, not in, and that is why for the first time in a decade UK foreign policy is on the advance. By 2015 we will have opened up twenty new diplomatic posts around the world, employed three hundred extra staff in the fastest growing regions of the world. We are having to make cuts in the UK, but this is something we are not cutting, we're expanding. 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. We are a global nation with global interests and a global reach, and if you think all of this is somehow an unashamed advert for the UK and UK business you're absolutely right. Everything I do is about making sure we're not just competing in that global race, but we're succeeding in it.

Prime Minister David Cameron's speech to the World Economic Forum in Davos, 24 January 2013

The UK has a wide range of assets that enable us to project influence overseas, often drawing on elements of both soft and hard power, in a 'smart power' approach. As Figure 1 shows, our soft power assets include the English language, heritage and culture – including the Monarchy – our science, engineering, technology and financial skills, our creativity and innovation, our historic universities, the arts, media and sport, as well as our citizens, our institutions, our strong democratic values and the sheer diversity of our society. 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. Our hard power includes the ability to impose sanctions or, as a last resort, to take military action.

We don't see these elements in isolation. The most widely accepted definition of soft power – 'the ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and elicit positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes' – can be read as a neat definition of diplomatic activities writ large. But these various soft and hard instruments are all part of the UK's foreign policy 'toolbox', to be drawn on as appropriate in the exercise of smart power, as illustrated in Figure 2. Our diplomacy needs to encompass the full range of

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence
ways in which we can achieve influence in the world, recognising that the most powerful multipliers of UK soft power lie outside Government.

The UK is one of the few countries that can turn the dial on some of the greatest international challenges of our time. We do this through framing the agenda, building partnerships and responding in an agile way to challenges as well as opportunities. Moreover, we do so in a way that has real impact: both the Somalia Conferences and the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative have demonstrated our ability to mobilise the international community to take action that makes a difference on the ground. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games were extraordinarily successful examples of the projection of British soft power.

An outward-facing Britain is a safer and more prosperous one. That is why, for the first time in decades, British diplomacy is on the advance. We have now opened or upgraded 13 posts, increasing our presence in the emerging powers, and strengthened our existing Posts in Asia, Latin America and parts of Africa. We remain committed to our longstanding networks such as the Commonwealth. It is important that an outward facing UK is representative of the whole of the UK. The Government at Westminster co-operates with the Devolved Administrations in international activity as well as in the Administrations' pursuit of their international priorities from supporting their international offices to working together in the run up to events such as the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

We continue to explore new ways to inform and influence both our traditional partners and new audiences including civil society, businesses, pressure groups, UK citizens and diaspora communities. Our International Defence Engagement strategy is extending the reach of our defence diplomacy and our ability to exercise smart power. We are ambitious about promoting the UK's Prosperity. The GREAT campaign brings together our strongest soft power assets to promote UK trade, tourism inward investment and education. To date, it has generated £500m in economic benefit to the UK. The FCO/BIS Science & Innovation Network seeks to maximise the impact of the UK's strong capability in science and innovation. We are also extending our reach through digital diplomacy and increased engagement with diaspora communities.

Internally, we co-ordinate across-Whitehall through collective Government mechanisms which enable us to use our assets in an integrated way. Overseas, our missions are responsible for articulating the overarching vision to local audiences. Through the 'One HMG' agenda, the Government ensures departments across Whitehall are united in their aims and activities in the UK and overseas. This unified approach is evident in the range of activity related to the Emerging Powers, including: an increase in the number of Chevening Scholarships to target countries; the on-going development of English language consortia to support British English language providers to win contracts; and a tourism push that will enable VisitBritain to increase substantially the number of visitors to the UK by 2020.

Our approach is pragmatic. The case studies in this paper give a snapshot, rather than an exhaustive account, of the extent and use of the UK's smart power across our network and across the world. They demonstrate an agile, innovative approach to projecting Britain which celebrates our strengths and our partnerships. There is much to achieve, but we have shown time and again that the UK can set priorities, shape principles, lead by example and, most importantly, that we have the resources and political will to continue doing so.

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

'I sometimes urge British diplomats to imagine that we had just woken up today to find our country had been planted in the world overnight, and that we'd been given 60 million industrious citizens, a language that is spoken throughout the world, a seat on the UN Security Council, membership of the European Union, NATO and the Commonwealth, a diplomatic network that is the envy of many nations, a nuclear deterrent, some of the finest Armed Forces in the world and one of the largest development programmes in the world, all of which we have in the United Kingdom. And on top of that, we had all the ingenuity, creativity and resilience that is such an ingrained part of our national character. We would rejoice in our good fortune, not be filled with gloom that others have strengths as well.'

Foreign Secretary William Hague's speech on rejecting decline and renewing Western diplomacy in the 21st century, 26 June 2013

Figure 1: Soft Power Assets

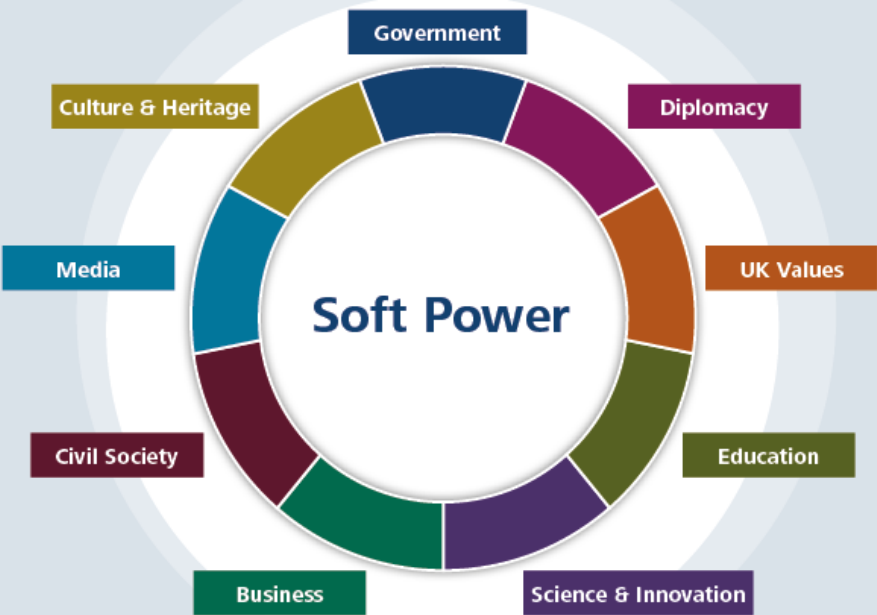
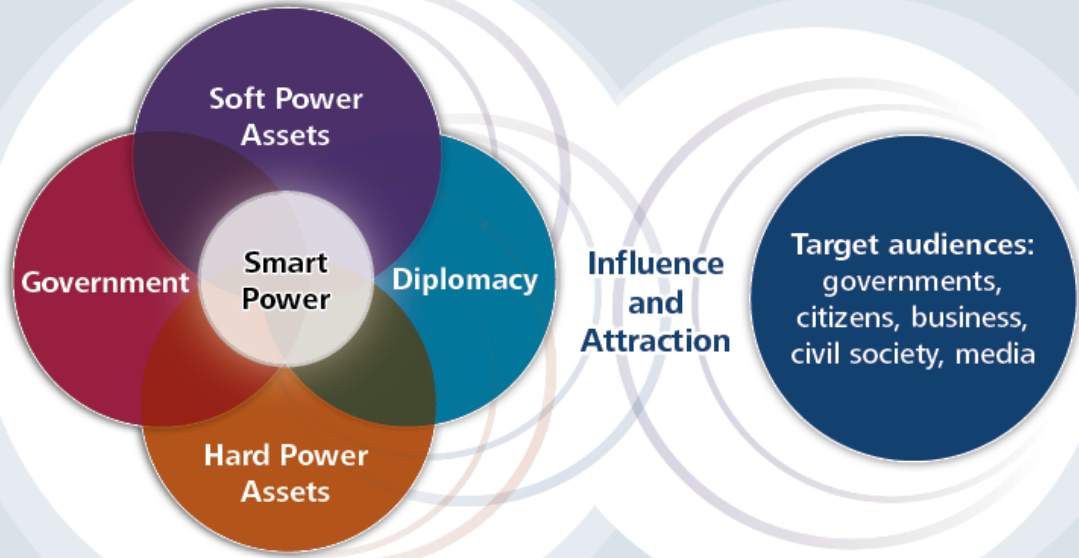


Figure 2: Smart Power In Action



Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

CASE STUDIES: SOFT POWER IN ACTION

3. SOFT POWER AND DIPLOMACY: USING OUR NETWORKS

The UK lies at the centre of an increasingly networked world. Through our UN, EU and Commonwealth connections we are able to build powerful international coalitions to tackle injustice and the abuse of human rights, to promote the rule of law, freedom and democracy and to help build stability and prosperity around the world.

THE PREVENTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE INITIATIVE (FCO)

The Foreign Secretary has led an international campaign to end the culture of impunity for sexual violence in conflict. In May 2012 the Foreign Secretary, together with the Special Envoy of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Angelina Jolie, launched an initiative on Prevention of Sexual Violence in Conflict. The international campaign aims to end the culture of impunity for sexual violence crimes and replace it with one of deterrence by building national and international capacity to tackle sexual violence in conflict.

Working with the UN Special Representative for Sexual Violence, Zainab Bangura, and the Special Envoy, the UK has increased international focus on the eradication of sexual violence in conflict. We held a series of high profile events, including a projection of the PSVI campaign messages onto the Coliseum in Rome on International Women's Day, a screening of the film *In the Land of Blood and Honey* (directed by Angelina Jolie) in Tokyo, and participation in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence in the UK. The Foreign Secretary's visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with Angelina Jolie, generated extensive, positive UK and international media coverage – our FCO Storify page has the full digital story at <http://storify.com/foreignoffice/this-week-at-the-foreign-office-16/elements/f8fd39d6b6ca0f5d87c1f75e>.

The proactive use of our networks, including NGOs as well as the UK's strong convening power, has resulted in further commitments from our international partners. Under the UK's leadership in April 2013 the G8 Foreign Ministers adopted a historic Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence declaring that rape and serious sexual violence in conflict are grave breaches of the Geneva Convention - a vital step towards eradicating safe havens for perpetrators. This international effort is accompanied by engagement with countries including Bosnia, DRC, Kosovo, Libya, Mali and Somalia, including joint funding with the UAE to support PSVI practical action in Somalia, to strengthen national capacity to investigate allegations of sexual violence and support survivors. On the Syrian borders alone UK experts have trained over 40 health care professionals and human rights defenders who are helping hundreds of Syrians including survivors of sexual violence.

We have amplified our messages through an extensive digital diplomacy campaign. During the UN Security Council Debate in June 2013, the hashtag #TimeToAct was used over six thousand times on Twitter, reaching an estimated five million accounts. We built on this in the run up to the UN General Assembly with extensive social media activity, including launching a Thunderclap campaign which reached an audience of nearly 2.5million people, to encourage countries to support the new Declaration of Commitment to end Sexual Violence in Conflict which was endorsed on 24 September 2013 in New York by 119 countries. The Declaration sets out practical and political commitments to end the use

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence of rape and sexual violence as a weapon of war. It is the clearest statement to date that the international community must and will confront these crimes.

THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY (FCO)

Our strong, persistent stance on UK values and work with external partners has helped us contribute to long-term progress on the abolition of the death penalty. International law does not forbid the use of the death penalty and states which retain the death penalty can be difficult to influence. Cooperating with external partners, including the Foreign Secretary's expert sub-group on the death penalty as well as in-country organisations - means they can influence the opinion of foreign legislators, legal office holders and the general public, in ways which direct intervention by HMG could not. For instance, in 2012-13 we funded and facilitated visits by members of the All Party Parliamentary Group on the Death Penalty to the United States of America, the Caribbean and countries in South East Asia to promote abolition and share UK experience.

Abolition is a long-term goal, but our approach is delivering results both at the UN and in individual countries. In 2012, 111 states (of 193 UN members) voted in favour of the biennial General Assembly resolution for a worldwide moratorium on the death penalty, compared with 109 in 2010, continuing a positive trend. Our projects have led to changes in different countries such as constitutional rulings reducing the number of offences for which the death penalty applies, alternative sentencing guidelines for prosecutors and judges, and trained capital defence lawyers.

THE ARMS TRADE TREATY (FCO)

Levering the UK's convening power over a seven year period, we led international efforts to secure an international Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), including through engagement with non-traditional allies, and the effective use of media. On 2 April, 2013 we succeeded as 154 states voted to adopt the ATT. Civil society, governments and industry described this as a historic moment.

The UK drew on its experience as an exporter to shape the ATT, listened to the developing world, to the priorities of the emerging powers and the needs of victims so that the treaty had broad appeal. We formed new alliances to facilitate discussion across traditional regional and political boundaries, aiming to influence and persuade. At the heart of this were the co-authors (Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, Finland, Japan, Kenya and UK). As representatives of every region, we designed and championed the UN process. We used our global reach to influence others – from the EU to the African Union to the P5.

Our partnership with a coalition of NGOs (the Control Arms Coalition) enabled us to amplify the message that the ATT matters to people as well as governments. We campaigned from a shared platform and involved them in the work of our delegation. The NGOs created and maintained momentum behind the ATT and our work with businesses gave us the expertise to design a Treaty that could be implemented. Like the NGOs, they could influence countries that might not have listened to governments alone.

Twitter was an effective way to spread our message via the hashtag #armstreaty. The FCO Minister for the Middle East and North Africa, Alistair Burt, responded to a Twitter Q&A on the Arms Trade Treaty available on Storify at <http://storify.com/foreignoffice/alistair-burt->

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence
twitter-q-and-a-on-arms-trade-treaty. The Foreign Secretary's statement welcoming the adoption of the Treaty was circulated via Twitter and was re-tweeted 178 times.

UK PRESIDENCY OF THE G8 2013 - THE TRANSPARENCY REVOLUTION (CABINET OFFICE)

The UK is using its leadership of the G8 in 2013 to drive an ambitious push for greater transparency, freer trade and fairer taxes (the 3Ts). On 15 June, the UK hosted a high-profile 'Open for Growth' event to catalyse a world-wide movement towards greater Transparency. The 'Open for Growth' event occurred before the main G8 summit, and our use of soft power here – including making use of our diplomatic network particularly with Africa governments, and engaging with a wide range of business and NGOs – helped pave the way for the high-ambition outcomes at the G8 Summit in support of UK values and economic interests.

Developing countries, international organisations, business and civil society and G8 members participated at senior level, and launched ambitious individual and collective commitments on the 3Ts. The G8 digital platform provided live video streaming, accompanied with live tweeting from UK government accounts and the use of a unique hashtag for the event.

One of the event's themes was how to achieve greater transparency and accountability through the supply of government data and the use of digital technology. This resulted in commitments on open data which drive growth and innovation; release economic and social benefits; and promote new businesses and efficiencies. Mozilla launched a UK wide campaign to inspire a generation of young people to create, as well as use, digital technologies. The World Bank announced its 'Open and Collaborative Private Sector Initiative' that will use open data to accelerate support for economic growth. The Open Data Institute announced an Open Data Certificate which will rate or classify the quality of any dataset published on the internet/web and will be available to anyone to use.

OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP (DFID)

Building on the G8 summit, the UK is co-leading the Open Government Partnership (OGP) with the theme 'Transparency Drives Prosperity'. This global collaboration between governments and civil society is working to promote greater transparency, accountability and economic growth. It was established in September 2011 and now has 58 member countries.

To join, countries must meet its eligibility criteria covering budget transparency, asset declaration, freedom of information and citizen engagement. Member countries must deliver National Action Plans setting out commitments to extend and deepen open government, developed consultation with local civil society. The OGP has achieved a lot in a short time, most notably in securing agreement from a large range of countries to agree to important principles about open government.

The UK will host the next meeting in London in October 2013. OGP members will repledge their commitment to open government, announce new commitments and launch the OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism. At the end of the Summit, the UK will hand over its lead co-chair role to Indonesia.

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS (FCO)

The UK is working towards more liberal market environments internationally in which commerce can flourish, which are stable and sustainable over the long term and where transparency, good governance and the rule of law prevail. Through an ambitious new Business and Human Rights Action plan, launched by the Foreign and Business Secretaries on 4 September 2013, we will use our international reputation for high corporate standards and respect for human rights to help British companies succeed in a way that is consistent with our values.

The UK is the first country to set out guidance to companies on integrating human rights into their operations. The Action Plan builds on a range of soft power assets including the global reach of UK companies, the UK's vigorous pursuit of high corporate standards (exemplified by the Bribery Act 2010 and recent changes to the Companies Act) as well as the trust between HMG, companies and NGOs. This will support our efforts to strengthen and expand membership of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights, which provide guidance for extractive companies to ensure that their security operations respect human rights, during our Chairmanship of the Initiative in 2014. We will also be founder members of the multi-stakeholder voluntary global oversight mechanism for Private Security Companies this September.

Our promotion of business with respect for human rights will benefit UK prosperity. As the Business Secretary Vince Cable said at the launch 'A stronger economy depends on investors, employees and the wider public having trust and confidence in the way companies conduct themselves both at home and abroad.' Through the Action Plan, we will work towards the respect of human rights becoming a standard operating consideration of all UK companies.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN COLUMBIA (FCO)

UK lobbying over impunity in cases of violence against human rights defenders contributed to a decision to establish a new unit in the Colombian Prosecutor's Office to investigate these crimes more systematically. The British Embassy in Bogota supported a project with the Public Prosecutor's Office to establish regional working groups of human rights defenders and local civil servants to discuss threats and protection measures. Embassy officials have visited lawyers collectives, indigenous communities and victims groups to express support for their work. They have made representations on the cases of a number of Columbians in prison pending trial, including Lilianny Obando, a trade unionist and human rights activist, who was released in March 2012.

THE COMMONWEALTH (FCO)

A strong Commonwealth is important to global prosperity and to the national interests of all its member states. The Commonwealth network, which has influence in nearly every international country grouping, is a key soft power vehicle for co-operation in a rapidly changing global landscape. Through the Commonwealth we are able to promote democratic values and good governance and, through mutual trade and investment, increase the prosperity of every Commonwealth member including the UK.

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

We support the Commonwealth to use its non-governmental networks for advocacy, consensus building on global issues, in facilitating South-South, North-South cooperation and making the voices of small and vulnerable states heard. We also aim to modernise the Commonwealth's internal institutions and increase respect for its values to ensure the network endures and strengthens in influence. The new Commonwealth Charter is the most ambitious reform for more than a decade, and the culmination of a UK drive to support the Eminent Persons Group to identify necessary reforms and to build consensus within Commonwealth networks around change.

The Commonwealth Games (CWG) will be held in Glasgow from 23 July to 3 August 2014. The CWG is traditionally preceded by the Queen's Baton Relay (QBR), with a Baton passing through each of the 71 participating nations and territories before returning to Scotland for the Opening Ceremony. The QBR is a unique soft power opportunity to promote the CWG, Glasgow, Scotland and the wider UK in each CWG nation, appropriately themed to focus on issues such as trade, education or tourism, or promoting the values of Britain and the Commonwealth. This public diplomacy campaign is now being developed by the FCO, in conjunction with UKTI, the Scottish Government and other Scottish stakeholders.

You can see how the UK network celebrated Commonwealth Week 2013 on the FCOSTorify page at <http://storify.com/foreignoffice/celebrating-the-commonwealth>

FUTURE INTERNATIONAL LEADERS PROGRAMME (FCO)

The FCO's Future International Leaders Programme, launched in March 2013, promotes lasting partnerships with a new generation of talented people with the potential to become leaders with a direct impact on the UK's global interests. There will be four visits in 2013/14 and six per year from 2014/15. Each visit brings together ten Future Leaders from different countries including the Emerging Powers, members of the G8 and Australia and some high growth economies. Our two pilot visits in March and May 2013 brought 20 rising stars from 18 different countries to the UK. There will be 3 further visits this financial year. Each visit includes a senior UK participant. Visit programmes showcase diverse aspects of the UK and includes high level engagement with government, Parliament, media, business, education and civil society.

The benefits of the programme will emerge through building relationships over the long term. The first participants have already said they would be more likely to do business, or enter into partnerships, with the UK as a result of participation in the programme.

As the number of alumni grows, we will strengthen and nurture this network to build lasting relationships and a continued exchange of knowledge between participants and the UK.

UK DEFENCE DIPLOMACY: Western Balkans and the Middle East (MoD)

The Government launched the UK's International Defence Engagement Strategy (IDES) in February 2013. IDES is the means by which we use our defence assets and activities, short of combat operations, to achieve influence. We prioritise our effort on countries most important to our national interest and where we are most likely to achieve our security objectives. IDES aims to protect British citizens abroad, influence in support of UK national

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

interests, promote and protect UK prosperity, understand other nations' security objectives, build international capability, capacity and will and deter threats to UK interests.

The UK has developed engagement strategies with countries and regions where we have key security interests. The global network of over 117 UK Defence Attachés plays a critical role in delivering these strategies. For example, the UK is leading the 'Changing Perception' project in Serbia, a NATO-neutral Partner for Peace. Serbia is keen to play a role in international security by supporting EU and UN peacekeeping missions as a responsible international partner. The UK, through the Defence Attaché network, is working closely with the Serbian Government and military to help develop Serbia's role in fostering regional and wider stability and security, and help change for the positive, the public's negative mindset on working with NATO and within the framework of Euro-Atlantic cooperation.

Senior UK military personnel are also working with the Kosovo Government and security forces to help build a civilian-led military administration based on international law, doctrine and standards. This is having a positive impact on Kosovo's relationship with NATO, its approach to national and regional security issues and on the bilateral relationship between the UK and Kosovo. It is helping Kosovo develop into an effective Euro-Atlantic security supplier and partner in the region.

Ten years ago the Peace Support Operations Training Centre was established in Sarajevo; this was a British concept which drew on multi-national donor funding support. It is now regarded as one of the top five international training centres in the world, delivering high quality NATO and UN-accredited training, rooted in UK values and military ethos, to students across the Western Balkans. This has helped strengthen UK political and military influence in the region, created a more professional cadre of pro-NATO, pro-UK Bosnian officers and NCOs, improved cross-border relations as a result of joint training and enabled well trained Bosnian troops to share the burden of security duties in Helmand province.

In February 2011 the UK appointed a Senior Defence Advisor to the Middle East to represent the UK's defence and security interests in the region. The Defence Advisor has established military links with Libya, UAE, Qatar, Jordan and, more recently, with the Egyptian Army - the first such high-level engagement with the Egyptian military for many years. These links helped ensure successful engagement by the UK on Libya, alongside the UAE and Qatar and promote UK defence sales in the region, notably Typhoon aircraft.

ENGAGEMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL MEDIA (FCO)

The FCO's International Media Officers (IMOs) work to influence, inform and facilitate reporting by international media based in London resulting in a positive perspective of the UK. The FCO is the only government department that has dedicated IMOs.

The IMOs build strong relationships with the estimated 2000 London-based international correspondents, whose coverage of the UK will influence perceptions in their home countries. The media see the IMOs as facilitators - enabling journalists to reach a variety of sources, build up trust with contacts and develop a balanced view of the UK. These relationships are based on shared values of media freedom, democracy and freedom of expression. The IMOs share their expertise with other Government departments, arts and civic organisations and other who want to engage with London based international media.

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

This engagement leads to a positive loop of visits, briefings, and interviews which results in increased and sustained positive coverage about the UK and our institutions. The IMOs promote a range of projects: the drive for prosperity; sporting opportunities created by the Olympics; regeneration in business parks and politics and peace in Northern Ireland.

PAKISTAN ELECTIONS (FCO)

The UK has a strong international reputation for its democratic values and well established electoral systems, which we have drawn upon to lobby for credible elections across the world, including in Pakistan. The elections in Pakistan on 11 May 2013 were a crucial milestone in the country's democratic history, the first time that power was democratically transferred between one civilian government and another, after a full term.

In advance of the elections, through co-ordinated cross-Government funding, the British High Commission in Islamabad helped the Election Commission develop a better electoral roll, linked to the national database. The roll now contains over 85 million registered voters, with 38 million unsubstantiated voters removed. We helped the Election Commission reach out to under-represented groups including minorities and women, produce codes of conduct, and train over 300,000 election officials. The UK funded Aawaz programme promoted and strengthened women's and marginalized groups' rights to active and safe participation in public events such as elections. We supplied international standard ballot boxes to allow more polling stations in remote areas. We helped Pakistani civil society observe every by-election and train over 43,000 domestic monitors to oversee these elections.

During the elections we also supported the process through an election observation mission. Consisting of 25 observers, it was one of the largest international observation teams and was deployed throughout Pakistan. We also supported the EU Election Observation Mission and part-funded the Commonwealth's election observers.

The elections were among the most credible in Pakistan's history, with a strong electoral register and the highest-ever number of women and new voters. Some 50 million people went to the ballot box. The part that the UK played in this, followed quickly by official visits to Pakistan by the Prime Minister, the first western head of state to do so after the election, the Development Secretary and Foreign Secretary, has created strong foundations on which to continue and build our engagement with the new Pakistan government.

DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT (PAKISTAN) (DFID)

The UK has one of the world's largest Pakistani diaspora communities, with around 1.2 million people. With strong family and business links in Pakistan, the diaspora has an important voice in both the UK and Pakistan. DFID engages with the diaspora, including journalists in a number of ways in order to increase awareness and understanding of UK aid to Pakistan and to identify areas for shared outreach activities to encourage support for development work.

The Secretary of State for International Development has prioritised the Department's work on community engagement, through for example, her recent attendance at a London diaspora event on minority rights in Pakistan. DFID regularly engage with community groups

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

including through the attendance of senior officials at diaspora outreach events in Birmingham and Manchester.

DFID is exploring further opportunities to increase diaspora support for development in Pakistan, for example through donations or volunteering and is considering how to broaden existing initiatives, such as 'UK Aid Match', to make funding more accessible to UK diaspora organisations involved in development work in Pakistan.

See more on DFID's Storify page at: <http://storify.com/DFID/pakistan-progress>

4. SOFT POWER AND HARD POWER: SMART POWER

Our ability to solve the complex problems in today's world and advance our values and interests will depend on how effective we are at using all our assets and partners both to coerce and to persuade.

IRAN (FCO)

Our dual track process of engagement and pressure on Iran combines the soft power of diplomacy and engagement with the hard power of economic sanctions in a smart power approach. Through this, we aim to achieve a negotiated settlement with Iran that addresses UK and international concerns about Iran's nuclear programme.

We work with the European External Action Service and the P5+1 (US, France, Russia, China, and Germany) to encourage Iranian engagement in meaningful talks. Through close cooperation with our partners and agreement on our collective aims and concerns we have maintained unity within the P5+1 and supported the process of engagement with Iran. While we are clear about the consequences of Iran not changing direction on their nuclear programme, we have also ensured that incentives are included in the P5+1 offer to Iran.

Our use of digital diplomacy helps to frame the public narrative and influence public opinion both in the UK and abroad in support of our Iran policies. Our 'UK for Iranians' website provides detailed and up-to-date information on the UK position. We release regular statements on social media sites in both English and Farsi to disseminate our views to a wide and varied audience and to encourage public debate.

The hard power element of our policy focuses on implementing restrictive measures against Iran, including an unprecedented round of oil and financial sanctions agreed by the EU in 2012. These sanctions have brought the Iranians back into negotiations and have helped slow the nuclear programme. Reaching agreement on these sanctions required a concerted diplomatic effort: working with the EU; ensuring co-ordination between the EU and the US; engaging likeminded countries and lobbying countries, in the region and beyond, to amplify the effect of these measures.

DEFENCE EDUCATION: UK Defence Academy (MoD)

The UK has a strong international reputation for education, training and advice on the global challenges around defence, security and resilience.

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

Defence Education makes a relatively low cost contribution to International Defence Engagement, which offers a subtle, non-threatening and efficient way to gain access, insight and influence - contributing to HMG's overseas priorities including upstream conflict prevention and promoting the UK brand and values. It can also be used to 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. Our approach - how to think, not what to think - generates high demand for places on our courses, allowing us to influence future commanders and leaders in defence and wider government world-wide. For example, 1050 students from over 90 countries attended Defence Academy courses in 2011/12 and the Defence Academy's Managing Defence in the Wider Security Context, an 'expeditionary' course, now has 4300 cross-government alumni from 150 nationalities. International places at UK officer training academies at Dartmouth, Lymington, Sandhurst and Cranwell continue to be oversubscribed and highly prized and, between them, can boast more than 30 alumni currently serving as Chiefs of Defence or Service Chiefs with civilian alumni having served as Heads of State or Ministers.

The Defence Academy works with academic partners to offer a broad range of Defence Education opportunities including: counter corruption, cyber security, equipment acquisition, languages and cultural awareness, through to bespoke capacity-building programmes for individual countries. The Academy has developed strong relationships with its counterpart institutions around the world and is providing specific expertise to both existing and new military colleges in a number of countries. Taken together, this approach allows the UK to influence in support of UK national interests; understand other nations' security objectives, capabilities and intent; and build international capability, capacity and will.

ANNUAL COUGAR DEPLOYMENT: Forward Deployment of the Response Force Task Group (MoD)

Under the annual COUGAR deployment, elements of the UK's high readiness Response Force Task Group (RFTG) undertake activities in support of regional security operations. In 2011, the RFTG undertook a series of demanding exercises throughout the Mediterranean, before events led to elements splitting off to support NATO operations to protect civilians in Libya.

They also undertook exercises with Saudi Arabia, Oman and the United Arab Emirates which reinforced the UK's commitment to, and strengthened the UK's relationship with, our partner countries in the Middle East. Military exercises between the Royal Navy and Albanian armed forces (a new NATO member) reinforced our commitment to the NATO alliance. The 'smartness' of the RFTG can be seen in its scalability and flexibility to move through the spectrum from soft to hard power when required. The COUGAR II deployment demonstrated that the UK retains the ability to contribute to current operations in Afghanistan whilst also preparing for contingent operations with a task group spread across several oceans. Ultimately, hard power was used as the RFTG, then joined by other capabilities including a Trafalgar Class attack submarine, participated in NATO operations alongside our international allies. This included commanding the first maritime strike missions by the Army's Apache attack helicopters launched from the sea against military targets ashore, and the use of Tomahawk land attack missiles.

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

COUGAR 11 was followed in 2012 by COUGAR 12 which successfully demonstrated the UK's post-Olympics contingent maritime capability, helped develop the UK / France Combined Joint Expeditionary Force, and facilitated regional engagement and capacity building in a number of countries including Albania, Algeria and Malta. Elements of the RFTG participating in COUGAR 13 deployed mid August 2013 to the Mediterranean and East of Suez to undertake training, capacity building, engagement and reassurance with partner nations throughout the region, demonstrating the effectiveness of the UK's maritime capability.

UK VISA POLICY (Home Office)

The UK's visa policy aims to offer an internationally competitive visa system while also controlling immigration and the movement of goods to protect the UK's interests in support of both our prosperity and security objectives. The Home Secretary has made it clear that the UK should provide a high quality visa service and customer satisfaction for those who want to come here legally.

The UK Visa and Immigration Service has taken action to address concerns that the visa system is too slow or too difficult to use by providing greater choice to those requiring a visa. A priority visa service is now available in over forty countries around the world in which customers get their visa decision in three to five days. In India we have launched a same-day Super Priority visa service which means that customers for visit visas can apply in the morning and get their visa and passport back by the close of the working day.

We have launched a number of new services and improvements to meet the needs of key customer groups in China working with partners in and outside Government. In response to feedback from travel agents, we made a number of changes to the application process, including simplified revised application forms and document requirements. We also now offer extended opening hours in application centres and the option for customers to retain their passports during the application process to allow them to apply for a Schengen visa at the same time. We have worked closely with partners to review the existing visa service offering and to better promote it both in China and the UK, including promotional roadshows with leading tourism providers. Early figures show a significant increase in the overall number of visitors to the UK from China.

5. ASPECTS OF SOFT POWER: LEVERING OUR SOFT POWER ASSETS

CULTURE AND HERITAGE

The Government supports and promotes the UK's cultural and artistic heritage through the British Council and other arm's lengths bodies. Cultural exchanges and increased people to people links enable people from around the world to learn from and understand each others' history and culture.

CULTURAL EXCHANGE (DCMS)

One of the highlights of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad was the *Globe to Globe* season. It brought together 37 international theatre companies to perform all Shakespeare's plays in 37 different languages including *Troilus and Cressida* in Maori, *The Tempest* in Bengali and

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

Richard III in Mandarin. UK excellence in digital technology is enabling theatres including the National Theatre and the Royal Opera House, museums and other cultural institutions to relay live performances to all points of the compass, from Shanghai to Santiago.

As well as traditional international festivals, we are also building bilateral relations through longer seasons and years of culture focused on individual countries. For 2013, we have the UK-Qatar Year of Culture; 2014 will see the UK-Russia Year of Culture and in 2015, culture will be at the heart of the UK Year in Mexico. *Transform* arts and creativity programme is a British Council initiative to strengthen bilateral relations, celebrate cultural and artistic dialogue between the UK and Brazil and bridge the four year period between the London and Rio Olympics.

UK NOW (DCMS)

In 2012, the British Council coordinated the *UK Now*, the largest ever festival of UK culture in China positioning the UK as China's cultural partner of choice. The Chinese Culture Minister, Cai Wu described it as having deepened Sino-British cultural exchanges and moved bilateral cultural relations to a higher level.

Over its nine month life *UK Now* provided a showcase for 776 UK artists to perform at 225 events in all art forms which were seen by over four million people in 166 venues in 29 cities across China. *UK Now* events had 1.46 billion media impressions, and the website had 710,828 unique visitors.

THE CYRUS CYLINDER (DCMS)

As custodians of the world's art and cultural heritage, UK museums and galleries demonstrate universal values; the importance of scholarship to cultural relations and help enhance the UK's international influence.

During a period of challenging UK-Iran bilateral relations, the British Museum loaned the 2600 year old Cyrus Cylinder to the National Museum in Tehran in 2010-11. The cylinder, which is often referred to as the first bill of human rights, is seen globally as a symbol of tolerance and respect for different people and faiths. The original loan of three months was extended allowing over half a million Iranians to visit the exhibition.

LITERARY FESTIVAL IN BURMA (FCO)

We aim to transform the UK's relationship with Burma through a public diplomacy campaign that focuses on soft power, complementing the hard power tools, including economic sanctions, we used during the years of Burma's military regime. UK values, including freedom of expression, are at the forefront of our efforts.

The support of the British Embassy and British Council in Rangoon for the inaugural Irrawaddy Literary Festival in January 2013, founded and directed by Jane Heyn, made a significant contribution to the success of the Festival. Aung San Suu Kyi was patron and several high profile international authors, including Vikram Seth and Jung Chang attended, as well as over one hundred of their Burmese counterparts and thousands of Burmese people.

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

The Burmese and international media viewed the Festival, which promoted English language and culture as well as freedom of expression, as a watershed moment, after Burma's years of isolation. The Financial Times commented that it was a 'potent sign of change in a country edging towards democracy'. The Daily Mail reported that 'authors hailed the festival as a breakthrough for the country's creativity, after years lost to censorship'. Burmese Ministers have since said that the Festival had a significant impact in communicating a new era of freedom of speech. A second Festival is planned for 2014.

ROYAL HERITAGE (FCO)

The British monarchy is a unique soft power and diplomatic asset, embodying UK ideals of peace, friendship, freedom and tolerance. HM The Queen has made over 260 official visits to over 116 different countries during her reign as an unsurpassed Ambassador for the UK overseas and Head of the Commonwealth. She has promoted reconciliation on her visits to West Germany in 1965 and Japan in 1975; given encouragement to nations after profound change, such as her visit to Russia in 1994 and to South Africa in 1995. More recently, her historic State Visit to the Republic of Ireland in 2011, the first British Head of State to visit, was an opportunity to celebrate peace and reconciliation as well as the strong UK-Ireland relationship.

The Royal Wedding in 2011 and the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 2012 attracted thousands of visitors to the UK and showed the best of the UK's heritage, culture and values to millions around the world, generating renewed respect and admiration for the Monarchy and strengthening the bonds of trust and friendship between the UK and our international partners. Events to mark the Diamond Jubilee weekend at over 100 overseas Posts attracted 50,000 guests and resulted in media coverage reaching over 1 billion individuals.

EDUCATION

Education is the second most valuable global sector after healthcare. UK education exports were worth £6.6bn in 2011, three quarters of which were generated by international students studying in the UK. The Government's education strategy aims to help the whole UK education sector, which already enjoys a strong reputation overseas, respond to the growing international demand for secondary and higher education to contribute both to UK economic growth and to building global relationships and trust through educational partnerships.

HMG SCHOLARSHIPS (FCO / DFID)

Our scholarships programmes draw on UK expertise in education to help us build a strong, international network of friends of the UK who will rise to increasingly influential positions over the years. The Chevening programme (FCO), is offered to 118 countries, the Marshall (FCO) to US citizens and the Commonwealth (DFID) to all Commonwealth countries. They are key features of British soft power diplomacy and give scholars both a first class academic qualification and exposure to British values, culture and diversity.

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

Proactive engagement with former scholars and fellows builds lasting positive relationships that can support the achievement of HMG's objectives.

Chevening has built an influential alumni network of 42,000 scholars with large alumni communities in China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Russia and South Korea. We intend to expand significantly the Chevening programme, particularly in the emerging powers.

In an increasingly challenging bilateral environment the British Embassy in Buenos Aires places a high value on its network of Chevening alumni and has developed an impressive programme of engagement linking Embassy staff, alumni and other stakeholders. Many alumni have held senior positions including a provincial governor, the Economy Minister for Buenos Aires province, a National Congressional representative and a former National Economy Minister. Continued engagement with alumni therefore supports our access to decision makers and policy advice in a complex political context. Our ongoing investment in the scheme is a public commitment to strengthening links between people of both countries.

The 1,500 Marshall alumni are a valuable network who support the UK's political and business outreach in the US and help British officials in the US secure high-level access to senior US political and business leaders.

Commonwealth Scholarships are part of the wider Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP), under which governments offer scholarships to citizens of other Commonwealth countries. It is one of the best recognised activities of the Commonwealth. There are over 800 UK Commonwealth Scholarships awarded annually and over 17,000 members in an active alumni network. These include Heads of State, Prime Ministers and Cabinet Ministers, Ambassadors and High Commissioners, Central Bank Governors and Deputies and senior judicial figures. Other prominent alumni include the former Solicitor-General of the UK and the current Governor of the Bank of England.

EDUCATION AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN KAZAKHSTAN (FCO)

There are many opportunities for the UK to engage with Kazakhstan through our soft power assets, particularly education and the English language. The Kazakhstani government's decision to shift the medium of education from Russian to English and their hosting of the 2017 World Expo and the 2017 Student Winter Games means, Kazakhstan says, that 30 000 more English speakers will be needed for each event. The Joint Statement on a Strategic Partnership between the UK and Kazakhstan signed during the Prime Minister's visit from 30 June to 1 July 2013 includes a commitment to forging stronger educational and cultural links between the two countries building on the UK's popularity as the principle western destination for Kazakhstani students going abroad in 2012.

The BIS/UK Education Unit works with the British Embassy in Astana to support UK Education providers as they respond to business opportunities such as English Language Teaching; professional development; curricula design; publishing; education-standards; innovative equipment and technology. This had a swift, positive impact as a UK provider won a contract to establish schools of engineering in a network of new vocational colleges being set up across the country. This work is backed up by the Education is GREAT campaign which promotes UK education in Kazakhstan whilst working with the Home Office to allay

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

the concerns of genuine students about the visa process. New initiatives announced after the Prime Minister's visit included support for links between young researchers in both countries, and a British Council MOU with the national teacher training agency to train hundreds of Kazakhstani teachers in the UK each year. The British Council is promoting the use of digital technologies, including an SMS 'English Phrase of the Day' subscription model with 50,000 subscribers.

The Embassy also engages with Kazakhs who have previously studied in the UK, including through the British Alumni Club of Kazakhstan, increasing links between UK businesses and future political and commercial leaders in Kazakhstan. Partnerships with institutions such as the Centre for International Programmes, National Science Committee, the national TVET agency, Kasipkor Holding and the National University of the Arts have all been founded or grown on the basis of relationships with UK alumni.

UK-INDONESIA DIKTI SCHOLARSHIPS (BIS)

Capitalising on the UK's excellence in education, the UK-Indonesia DIKTI programme is strengthening UK-Indonesia relations and positioning the UK as Indonesia's partner of choice in education. It is also promoting educational cooperation through training of up to 750 permanent or prospective faculty members from Indonesian universities and administrative staff employed by DIKTI or Indonesian state universities.

UK Minister for Universities and Science David Willetts and Indonesia's Education Minister Mohammad Nuh signed a joint statement on enhanced co-operation on education during the Prime Minister's visit to Indonesia in April 2012. During the Indonesian President's State Visit to UK in October 2012, the Ministers signed a framework celebrating nine new long-term partnerships in higher education and committing to exploring potential skills and vocational education collaboration.

One of the nine partnerships, the UK-Indonesia DIKTI scholarship programme, was officially launched on 1 June 2013 and will run for 5 years. To date, 77 UK Higher Education Institutions, across all academic disciplines and research areas have signed up. Up to 150 Indonesian students will study for PhDs at UK universities each year, with the first students scheduled to arrive in January 2014. The Indonesian Government will cover the first three years of study, study with UK universities covering fourth year costs.

BUSINESS, CREATIVITY & ENTERPRISE

'We possess the skills, creativity and and boldness of spirit... to continue that long history of innovation which has shaped Britain today... We have the largest creative industry in Europe... Our advanced materials sector is at the forefront of developments in global manufacturing... And we have the world's largest foreign exchange market, its biggest insurance market and one of the largest centres in the world for fund management and international legal services.'¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ Foreign Secretary William Hague's British American Business Speech, 13 September 2013. <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/british-american-business-speech>

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

UK INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY (FCO)

In 2012 the Government launched a new Industrial Strategy to strengthen the competitiveness of key UK industrial sectors in a rapidly expanding and increasingly competitive global market place and to build new international business partnerships, in particular with the emerging economies. The Strategy is built around four core principles: long-term, in partnership with business, whole of Government approach and developing confidence to invest and 11 key sectors: life sciences; aerospace; nuclear; oil and gas; the information economy; construction; professional and business services, automotive; age-tech; education and offshore wind energy.

COMMERCIAL DIPLOMACY (FCO)

Commercial diplomacy is central to the Government's prosperity agenda, bringing together the Government's international activity in support of the UK economy, aligning UK foreign policy goals with the Government's overall objective of returning the UK to strong economic growth and using diplomacy to help create and promote the conditions for that growth through trade and investment.

The FCO, BIS and UKTI work in partnership to help create and promote the conditions for growth through international trade and investment. Together they are able to support business 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 expert 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.

The British Embassy Abu Dhabi was instrumental in Shell winning a contract in the UAE worth £6bn for the development of the Bab sour gas field. UKTI and Political Teams coordinated closely with Shell to ensure that not only was the deal commercially right, but that it stacked up politically and that the right impact was made with key decision takers. The strong bid was supported by high level lobbying over a sustained period from FCO Ministers, as well as Lord Marland, Greg Barker (DECC) and Alan Duncan (DFID).

Carillion plc has been awarded a major contract to construct the first phase of the re-development of Battersea Power Station. British High Commission Kuala Lumpur, maximising on opportunities such as the Global Investment Conference on the eve of the London Olympics, the Royal Visit, and visits by the Prime Minister and Lord Marland, have helped cultivate a close relationship with SP Setia, part of the Malaysian Consortium that purchased Battersea Power Station, an investment worth up to £8bn. This enabled Carillion, who were introduced in November by UKTI Kuala Lumpur, to make a successful pitch to SP Setia's top management team.

The Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary and Business Secretary supported a sustained campaign coordinated by DfT, FCO, UKTI and the BE Moscow, resulting in easyJet launching its inaugural London-Moscow service. High-quality policy and legal advice, together with the FCO's ability to identify lobbying opportunities, understand local institutional and regulatory

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

arrangements, and satisfy the demands of protocol, was crucial to Russia giving the go-ahead. easyJet's CEO, Carolyn McCall hailed it a 'historic day' for the company, which has also launched a Moscow- Manchester service allowing a further 60,000 passengers a year take advantage of the first-ever direct scheduled link between the two cities, a massive boost to UK-Russia business.

In Cameroon UK companies have been increasingly successful in either increasing market share (Guinness, Standard Chartered Bank) or winning new contracts. In the energy sector, and with support for over a year from BHC Yaoundé Joule Africa signed an agreement with the Cameroon Government for a \$1.2 bn 600 MW dam that will add 40% to domestic power and enable potential for power exports to Nigeria. This is outstanding progress for a project of this size in Central Africa and is a both testament to the dynamism and commitment of this UK company and high level support from the High Commission.

BAE Systems signed a £2.5bn contract with the Omani Ministry of Defence to supply 12 Typhoon and 8 Hawk aircraft. The Prime Minister visited Muscat to mark the occasion. Government to Government contacts were a critical part of the campaign. British Embassy Muscat and DSO coordinated closely with the company over three years to deliver a deal that will safeguard 6,000 UK jobs, and may open the door to further, even larger, contracts for Typhoon.

Intervention by Lord Green during his visit to Russia in November and lobbying by British Embassy Moscow have strengthened ties between the British alcohol industry and the Russian Federal Alcohol Regulation service. As a result a licence was issued to Maxxium – an Edrington Group-Jim Beam joint venture - for extension of a warehouse to accommodate fast growth in business. Delay in securing a licence had been costing the company \$1m in lost revenue and preventing it from expanding in the market.

The FCO and UKTI healthcare teams have worked hand-in-hand to support British Telecom enter the healthcare market in China. In April, BT signed a consultancy contract on hospital IT in Ningxia province that could be worth around £30m. BT credited the Embassy FCO and UKTI healthcare team for building the vital local contacts and market knowledge to help secure this deal. We now have a new Prosperity project where BT will partner with the Chinese government to help China integrate their health systems through innovative IT solutions. Not only is this fulfilling a key demand of China's health reforms, but we hope this project will also provide valuable new contacts and market intelligence to help BT secure further contracts.

THE GREAT CAMPAIGN (FCO)

The GREAT Britain campaign is the Government's most ambitious international marketing effort to date. With support from some of Britain's strongest soft power assets, GREAT showcases British excellence to encourage the world to visit, study and do business with the UK. The campaign enables our diplomatic network, as well as UKTI trade missions, VisitBritain and the British Council to promote the UK through a recognisable brand, advance our prosperity interests and support the London 2012 legacy. The campaign has had a significant impact internationally and is delivering a strong and measurable return on its first year investment of £37 million. An independent evaluation of GREAT said that

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

campaign has generated around £550m worth of economic benefits to the British economy so far.

GREAT resonates at posts and supports their prosperity and public diplomacy work. For instance, GREAT has led to UK-South Africa partnerships in youth development, education and culture through the British Council's [Connect ZA](#) programme of cultural co-operation in 2014. Cape Town's 2013 GREAT week in Cape Town included an Innovation is GREAT Supersonic Car Driving Experience to showcase the UK Bloodhound, and generated at least £80 000 in advertising value equivalent. In Colombia, this summer's tour of a GREAT branded London bus to seven priority cities generated more than £150,000 in advertising value equivalent and promoted British business interests including the new UK Colombia Trade entity and British infrastructure expertise in Barranquilla. Visit Britain, in partnership with Sony Pictures, ran a 'Bond is GREAT' campaign to use the universal appeal of James Bond to boost tourism to the UK from key markets, resulting in over £3.5million worth of exposure for the GREAT Britain You're Invited brand. As well as the support of the bond franchise, GREAT has attracted the active endorsement of over 150 world-renowned British companies and celebrities, including McLaren, Jaguar LandRover and British Airways, as well as David and Victoria Beckham, Sir Richard Branson and Sir Paul Smith.

The Government has committed a further £30m to continue GREAT into 2014/15. This will drive the campaign forward in key markets where GREAT is performing well, particularly China, India, US and Brazil. Tourism activity will be extended to the Gulf, while trade and investment-focused activity will also target new emerging markets where GREAT can help the UK gain a competitive advantage, including Russia, South Korea, Mexico, Turkey, Indonesia, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania. Target return on investment for 2013/14 is anticipated to be 20:1.

SCIENCE & INNOVATION

The UK is a world leader in science and innovation, in space technology, aerospace and automotive engineering and one of the world's top publishers of scientific papers.

UK ADVICE TO JAPAN AFTER FUKISHIMA DISASTER (FCO / BIS)

Following the Great East Japanese Earthquake and Tsunami in March 2011, the UK used its scientific expertise to advise the Japanese Government on action based on clear scientific evidence, resulting in stronger collaboration between the UK and Japan on science related issues.

After the earthquake, the UK Government Chief Scientific Advisor (GCSA) swiftly gathered world-leading experts who determined that the evacuation of Tokyo was unnecessary. The UK was the first country to recommend that travel to Tokyo could resume and that business should return to normal. This third party endorsement of the Japanese Government's advice, spread through social media, influenced the Japanese people's perceptions of the situation and helped Japanese business stabilise and improved their manufacturing output.

This swift, reasoned response and the impact of the communications provided by the GCSA was extremely well received in Japan, is still remembered, and enables us to speak with

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

authority on other science-related issues. This has opened the door to opportunities for UK plc to present our technologies, to the Toykyo Electric Power Company other Japanese utility companies, the sharing of which is being cemented by framework agreements between companies. It has also laid the foundations for future research collaboration between the UK and Japan on nuclear safety and investment in UK-based research by Japanese companies.

UK-SOUTH EAST ASIA INNOVATION FORUM (FCO / BIS)

Through our Science and Innovation Network in Southeast Asia (SIN SE Asia), we raised awareness of UK strengths in innovation, design and technology so that the UK could benefit from the region's shift towards more knowledge-based economies.

With the British Council, SIN SE Asia arranged a high profile event, opened by Lord Green and his Singaporean counterpart, on innovation, design and technology as part of the UK Southeast Asia Knowledge Partnership. The emphasis was on creativity, collaboration, the importance of small businesses and the role of UK and Singapore as hubs in their respective networks. The event brought together UK and regional participants including the Technology Strategy Board, McLaren Applied Technologies and Wing Commander Andy Green (holder of the World Land Speed Record and a member of the Bloodhound project looking to beat it), the Managing Director of Singapore's Agency for Science Technology and Research, the CEO of their National Research Foundation and a Deputy Minister from Indonesia's Ministry of Research and Technology.

GREAT branding helped achieve significant impact with good feedback from participants across the programme. A joint op-ed by the ministers, together with an article on Andy Green in Singapore's main newspaper, a BBC television interview and blog posts helped us to obtain extensive Singapore and regional impact.

A partnership between McLaren and IO on data centres in Singapore was announced during the forum. There was also good take up of the education packs produced by Bare Conductive, one of the small UK businesses featured in the forum.

Exhibition boards on UK innovation and the Bloodhound Driving Experience simulator are providing a helpful resource for sustained engagement. We are following up on key opportunities for collaboration, particularly with TSB's catapult centres and the 'Eight Great Technologies'.

QUEEN ELIZABETH ENGINEERING PRIZE (FCO / BIS)

Using our network of Science and Innovation Network (SIN) teams, we supported the November 2011 launch of the £1m Queen Elizabeth Prize (QEP) for Engineering. The award aims to recognise and celebrate outstanding advances in engineering that have changed the world and increase awareness of UK leadership and innovation in the fields of science and engineering.

SIN teams supported international outreach by the Royal Academy of Engineering (RAEng) through: raising awareness with key local stakeholders; formation of a panel of high-calibre international judges; and by hosting a series of high-profile launch and celebratory events at Posts around the world. At a launch event in France, Rolls Royce Director R&D Rik Parker

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

spoke about the importance of industrial engineering and international cooperation to a high-level audience from industry, business, academia and CAC40 companies. UKTI and Rolls Royce representatives also used the launch to explore business opportunities with key engineering companies and buyers in France.

Following the announcement that Louis Pouzin, a Frenchman, was one of the five winners of the Prize, with GSK and the National Council of Engineers and Scientists of France, SIN France organised a reception to focus on the next generation of engineers, attended by many young engineers and distinguished French scientists, including Claudie Haigneré, France's first female astronaut. Sir Tim Berners-Lee (the UK winner) sent a video message highlighting the importance of engineering and of engaging future generations. The award, which was recognised as promoting and celebrating engineering as a career generated strong media coverage in France, including an article in the Economist.

AID AND PEACEBUILDING

The UK is one of the world's leading nations in human rights and development and committed, through our aid programme, to improving the condition of humanity.

O.7% COMMITMENT (DFID)

The UK's commitment to spend 0.7% of GNI on aid from 2013 is leading the way, encouraging others to fulfil their commitments and has been widely praised. At the MDG Summit in New York in September 2010, UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon praised the UK's decision and urged others to meet their commitments, arguing that "we must not balance the books on the backs of the poor". The UK's reputation as a major provider of very effective international cooperation has also led developing countries to encourage others to use it as a model. Afghanistan's Minister of Public Health recently wrote to his Indian counterpart to request that India collaborate with the UK on health issues in Afghanistan, modelled on the UK-India bilateral programme. Ethiopia has also expressed an interest in working collectively with India and the UK, particularly in women's empowerment.

UK HUMANITARIAN AID (DFID)

The UK's tradition of providing high quality humanitarian aid reflects the strong commitment of the British people to helping those suffering from disasters. As a result, the UK is one of the most important global providers of humanitarian aid and has an enviable reputation for the speed, scale and effectiveness of our response to emergencies. Much of our response is provided through British organisations with specialist skills but, unless there are specific security concerns, all UK-funded assistance is recognisable by the Union Flag logo introduced in 2012 which raises awareness of the UK's contribution.

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

Here are examples of UK aid branding in use in humanitarian emergencies:



DFID provided basic temporary but reusable shelter materials in response to the Pakistan floods in Sindh.



In November 2012, in response to the drought that left some parts of Malawi facing a serious food crisis, the World Food Programme used UK funds to transport sacks of maize and peas across the country, and cobranded the sacks accordingly.

Photo: Gregory Barrow/WFP

An example of UK aid branding in a DFID-funded UN Farming and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) development programme in Somalia:



A project that makes use of waste livestock bones, and trains Somali young women to make them into soap and sell them, creating jobs and income.

USING AID TO INFLUENCE DEVELOPING COUNTRY GOVERNMENTS (DFID)

A stable and predictable development partnership with developing countries is important in delivering results and supporting countries to achieve their priorities. However, in certain circumstances, the UK can also be influential by withholding or withdrawing aid in order to encourage changes in developing country government behaviours. In Uganda, when evidence of corruption was uncovered involving the aid contributions of the UK and other countries, we suspended budget support, as did nine other budget support donors, and suspended other financial aid to government. This collective effort, in which the UK played a leading role, was influential in helping to drive forward a range of public financial management reforms by the Ugandan Government.

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

All donors retained the suspension for eight months, whilst they worked closely with the Government to develop a comprehensive plan to tackle corruption and restore confidence in the Government's fiduciary systems. No donor has returned to General Budget Support and high level dialogue continues on a regular basis with the Government on corruption

concerns Safeguarding against corruption – and taking action against it if uncovered - is a natural part of DFID's application of due diligence in its use of public funds.

MULTILATERAL AID REVIEW (DFID)

The UK's leadership in addressing multilateral effectiveness has significantly influenced approaches across the international community and increased the pressure on multilateral agencies to reform. The Multilateral Aid Review (MAR) was published by the UK Government in March 2011. It provided, for the first time, a comprehensive and systematic assessment of the multilateral agencies funded by the Department for International Development. Not only was this the first time that such an assessment had been published, it also had an important impact on funding decisions. The MAR led to an increase in interest in multilateral effectiveness among other donors. New assessments have been carried out by a range of Governments including Australia, Netherlands, Denmark, and Sweden, and assessments are planned or in progress in other countries too.

TRANSPARENCY OF DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE (DFID)

The UK has led efforts to increase the transparency of its development assistance and support our partners to do the same. Making information about aid spending easier to access, understand and use means that taxpayers in donor countries and citizens in partner countries can more easily hold governments to account for using funds wisely. It also helps reduce waste and opportunities for fraud and corruption.

The Government introduced an Aid Transparency Guarantee (ATG) in June 2010. In 2011, DFID published financial information and project documents for all new DFID projects to show why we have chosen a particular project; how it will be implemented; how much it will cost; what results we expect; and ultimately what has actually been achieved.

DFID has led the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) – a multi-stakeholder initiative involving donors, partner countries, civil society organisations and other providers of development cooperation – which has developed and agreed a common, international open data standard for publishing detailed information on development flows. The standard is designed to make data easier for users to find, compare and re-use. Membership is now 37 major donors and 22 endorsing partner countries. Over 175 organisations, including many UK and international civil society organisations are now using the standard. The Government has also built a new open data platform for development assistance, the 'Development Tracker' (<http://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk>), which uses IATI standard open data to present timely and detailed information on UK programmes and expenditure and will be available for others to use. In October 2012, DFID was ranked first (out of 72 organisations) in the 2012 Publish What You Fund Aid Transparency Index.

SOMALIA (FCO)

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

Helping to bring peace and stability to Somalia after over twenty years of conflict is a top UK foreign policy priority. Although the gains are fragile, there has been real progress in Somalia in recent months, and the UK has played a key role in supporting this.

On 7 May 2013 the UK co-hosted the second international Somalia Conference in London in partnership with the Federal Government of Somalia. The goal of the Conference was to secure international endorsement and financial support for the Federal Government's plans to improve security, increase access to justice, reduce poverty, strengthen public financial management and support economic recovery.

The UK was able to convene high-level representatives due to the leading role we have taken on Somalia through our soft power influencing. For instance: we were the first EU country to reopen an Embassy in Mogadishu (in April 2013); we have led Somalia related work in the UN and EU; under the cross-government (FCO/DfID/MoD) Building Stability Overseas Strategy we have contributed towards the internationally shared objective of a stable, democratic Somali state, including through bilateral financial and technical support to the Africa Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), the DfID Development Programme, and the humanitarian crisis response.

The Conference put Somalia under the spotlight. Although it was not a pledging conference, international partners used the opportunity to pledge nearly \$350m in new financial support to Somalia. As a result, the Federal Government now has the plans, resources and international support it needs to make a difference to the lives of the people of Somalia, and is making progress on developing the cornerstones of a secure state.

ARAB PARTNERSHIP (FCO / DfID)

The joint FCO-DFID Arab Partnership (AP), set up in 2011, leads HMG work to support political and economic reform in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) with a particular focus on Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Morocco, Jordan and Algeria. The Arab Partnership puts UK values as well as shared interests at the centre of our relationship with the MENA region. Whilst we are clear about UK values, including democracy, we don't seek to dictate solutions. Instead, we partner with a wide range of actors on the ground who are leading reform, including parliamentarians, the judiciary, media and civil society organisations. We seek to deliver through long-term engagement – including through our £110m Arab Partnership Fund (2011-2015), and cooperation with partners in the EU and G8. The Arab Partnership Fund is divided into a £40 million Arab Partnership Participation Fund supporting political participation, public voice and good governance, and a £70 million Arab Partnership Economic Facility supporting economic reform. Throughout our work, we focus in particular on engaging the youth and women.

Our funding for political reform has strengthened democratic institutions, particularly in areas where UK soft power is strong, such as the media and parliament. In Tunisia, we supported Electoral Reform International Service (ERIS) to raise levels of participation amongst first-time voters. Close to 23,000 students participated in extra-curricular training on the electoral process, democratic principles, voter awareness and citizenship. In Morocco, 1040 participants representing 270 NGOs and 217 local councillors participated in the compilation of recommendations on the upcoming organic law on local and regional

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence authorities. The Independent Commission for Aid and Impact (ICAI) recently reviewed the APPF, noting it as a swift and strategic approach to Arab Spring.

SECURITY SECTOR REFORM: International Military Advisory & Training Team (MoD)

Sierra Leone's civil war, which began in 1991, ended in January 2002 after a decisive military intervention by the UK in 2000. From the early stages of its engagement the UK provided a British Military Advisory & Training Team (BMATT) to help structure the Sierra Leone Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces. The BMATT was transformed into an International Military Advisory & Training Team (IMATT) in November 2000 with support from a number of Commonwealth countries, including Canada as the second largest contributor.

By 2002 IMATT had 160 personnel, filling senior executive and command appointments in both the Ministry of Defence and Sierra Leone Armed Forces. Brigade Advisory and Support Teams were deployed to each of the three brigades and to Freetown Garrison with small teams based with each battalion. A dedicated training team was located at Benguema to develop recruit, NCO and officer training. IMATT eventually covered all aspects of defence management, including personnel procedures, procurement and civil control of the Armed Forces.

Gradually IMATT shifted from direct involvement in executive and command functions and delivery of advice and training to supporting the Horton Academy for officers and a reduced senior advisory role in the Ministry of Defence and the Joint Force HQ. It also increasingly facilitated Peace Support Operations training. As a result IMATT reduced to approximately 35 personnel by 2012. Following Sierra Leone's third successful elections since the civil war IMATT was replaced by a nine-man International Security Assistance Team (ISAT) in April 2013 with a smaller military component. ISAT has a broader and more strategic security sector reform remit, including civil policing, and a regional role.

Sierra Leone Armed Forces are now able to take part in international operations in Darfur with UNAMID and in Somalia with AMISOM. Sierra Leone can take considerable pride in having moved from being a recipient of international peace missions to being a contributor. The Sierra Leone Armed Forces are also now one of the better respected organisations in Sierra Leone – a success largely attributed (by others) to the UK.

REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING: British Peace Support Team (East Africa) (MoD)

British Peace Support Team (East Africa) (BPST (EA)) was established in 2000 to train Kenyan units joining UN peacekeeping missions. It established and built the Peace Support Training Centre, a Kenyan training institution for 50 students a year and the International Mine Action Training Centre (IMATC) in 2005 to train Kenyan and Rwandan de-miners. Rwanda was declared mine-free in 2008. The Centre was later gifted to the International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC) which, with BPST (EA) support and funding, is now an independent, internationally funded organisation training 2,600 students a year.

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

In 2005 BPST (EA) built the headquarters of the Eastern Africa Standby Force's Coordinating Mechanism and Planning Element. BPST (EA)'s current activity is focused on three main pillars:

- Assisting with the development of the Eastern Africa Standby Force, and in particular the East Africa Standing Force, in order that they achieve full operational capability by 2015.
- Training troops for current Peace Support Operations, particularly AMISOM but also including UNAMID and UNMISS.
- Improving a small number of regional institutions that support both current and future Peace Support Operations, through education and training.

BPST (EA) also conducts a number of small-scale and low-cost activities such as MANPAD assessments on airports, physical security and stockpile Management courses in support of efforts to counter the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, Counter Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) training to security forces, and support to other government departments on a range of security activities in the region.

Over BPST (EA)'s 12-year lifespan HMG has provided around £50m of funding from the tri-departmental Conflict Pool. The UK's effort has helped East African states become better able to respond to security challenges within the region and to cooperate with the international community, contributing to the region's stability and helping to prevent further conflict.

SPORT

FOOTBALL IN AFGHANISTAN (FCO)

Drawing on the UK's reputation for great football, the British Embassy Kabul supported the development of Afghanistan's national football competition – the Afghan Premier League (APL) to help reinforce a shared national identity, promote ties between communities and build Afghan confidence in the political process and government. These outcomes contribute to the UK's wider objective of a stable Afghanistan which is capable of managing its own security and delivering for its citizens.

UK support has funded regional APL tournaments to increase involvement and engagement at the provincial level. We have also funded APL tournaments for women's football teams and youth teams. This support is helping create credible and accessible Afghan role models in the form of sports personalities. These new footballers, who come from all parts of Afghanistan, not only provide a positive image for young people to aspire to, but also amplify key UK messages about the importance of political participation and transparency in public life. The APL is being used as a vehicle to communicate messages around the forthcoming elections, including the importance of voting. We also funded a Premier Skills project to train grassroots Afghan football coaches, delivered by the British Council and Premier League and involved an Everton coach and a former Crystal Palace player.

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

The APL has attracted participation from across Afghanistan with all major ethnicities represented. Two of the eight teams included Afghan refugees from Pakistan and Iran, demonstrating that football can successfully break down barriers and contribute to a more stable Afghanistan. The final game of the 2012 season attracted 10,000 spectators (5,000 in the Kabul Stadium and 5,000 watching from screens outside the stadium). Ten football clinics for over 1,000 school children (both boys and girls) were held in cooperation with the education departments of each province and involved the distribution of merchandise with messages around peace, unity, education and the dangers of drug use. We hope, through sponsorship revenues and ticket sales, that the APL will eventually become self-financing. On

20 August 2013 the Afghan national football team played Pakistan for the first time since 1977, this was also the first time Afghanistan had hosted an international football game for over ten years. The initiative was supported by the UK. The game was widely covered in local, regional and international media. The vast majority of reporting was positive, emphasising key messages of national unity and friendship.

LONDON 2012 (FCO)

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games were a unique opportunity to show the rest of the world the modern, open, inclusive and creative Britain of today, drawn from our rich culture and heritage. Key to the success of the Games is how we are able to build on the reputation the UK secured, not just for being able to put on a good show but also to deliver cutting-edge design, technology and innovation in infrastructure, transportation and security, management and organisational skills and social inclusion through multicultural volunteering and cultural programmes and championing the rights of the disabled to participate as equals in society.

The hosts of future international sporting events are looking to the UK to provide the facilities and management. During the London Games over 100 Brazilian officials and administrators worked alongside the Games organisers and in Government Departments to learn from the UK how to deliver an Olympic and Paralympic Games. UK sporting, transport and security experts are working alongside the Brazilian authorities and over 37 UK firms have won a total of £130 million through 62 sports contracts in Brazil as they prepare to host the 2014 World Cup and the Rio Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2016. We are already well placed to make the most of the opportunities presented by Tokyo 2020, including on events infrastructure and security, communications, English language teaching and environmental issues.

Having persuaded all 193 UN member States to co-sponsor the Olympic Truce Resolution - the first time in Olympic history - the UK has been working to embed the UK's Olympic Truce legacy in the UN and international Olympic Committee systems, you can see examples of our activity on the FCO Storify account at <http://storify.com/foreignoffice/olympic-truce>. Since the London Games we have worked closely too with the Russian authorities and Russian Olympic Committee to ensure that the commitments made under the Resolution are taken forward at the Sochi Winter Olympics in February 2014. We are also using the opportunity of Sochi to raise broader human rights issues with Russia, including our concerns on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights.

The British Council, UK Sport and UNICEF are working together on *International Inspiration*, a legacy initiative to use sport, physical education and play to enrich the lives of 12 million

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence
children in over 300 schools in 20 countries: Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, Egypt, Ghana, Jordan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Palau, Pakistan, South Africa, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda and Zambia, partnering with 287 UK schools.

PROMOTING UK EXCELLENCE IN REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGIES THROUGH THE PARALYMPICS (FCO / BIS)

Through the SIN and UKTI in France, we used the momentum of the Paralympic Games in 2012 to successfully promote UK excellence in rehabilitation technologies.

Working closely with Health Tech and Medicines Knowledge Transfer Network, the Royal Academy of Engineering, ESPRC and UKTI Life Sciences team, SIN France designed a series of complementary events, to attract international experts in rehabilitation technologies to UK excellence and expertise in this field.

With SIN and UKTI partners, we identified and managed the international delegations at the Global Business Summit on Advances in Assistive Medical Technologies (including a visit to Stoke Mandeville Hospital), and organised an event the next day on how sport can drive engineering innovation, with presentations and discussions featuring key experts from UK and international academia and Industry. David Lidington, Minister for Europe (whose constituency includes Stoke Mandeville), gave the keynote address. Making the most of their 'global brand', Stoke Mandeville is exploring opportunities to set-up a R&D centre around assistive medical technology.

SIN Russia was also closely involved, bringing a select delegation of clinicians to the events. This has resulted in Russian interest in investing in UK biomechanics technologies. UK research centres are now connected via Brazilian experts to the Brazil 2016 Paralympic Games.

As a result of this work, £60K investment was made in Imperial College technology designs and PhysioFunction', one of the UK's leading providers of specialist hands-on Neurological Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Technology have agreed to deliver a set of rehabilitation master classes.

6. LEARNING FROM OTHERS: SOFT POWER IN COLLABORATION

SOFT POWER IN BRAZIL (FCO)

Sharing our practical experiences on soft power with others helps us learn how to make the most of our assets and identify opportunities for future collaboration. For example, in March 2013 an FCO-funded Wilton Park roundtable on 'Applying Soft Power: the British and Brazilian perspectives' took place in Sao Paulo. Attendees included senior political and cultural figures who discussed a range of issues from digital engagement, education and English Language Training to the role of the respective diaspora communities and the work of museums. The Brazilian Minister for Culture, Marta Suplicy, spoke about the diversity of

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence
Brazilian culture and the need to broaden awareness of Brazil beyond football and carnival. She said that Brazil has much to learn about soft power from the UK.

The conference had immediate impact, strengthening the Brazilian Minister of Culture's focus on UK-links, including a stronger relationship with the Victoria and Albert Museum, as well as, new engagement with, amongst others, the Science and Natural History Museums and the Tate Gallery. The British Embassy in Brasilia is now working with Wilton Park to deliver a series of focussed on-line discussions covering education, language and museums to support a wide range of soft power work in Brazil from the GREAT campaign to education, science and sport.

For another example of soft power collaboration with Brazil see DCMS' Storify on Young UK athletes competing in Brazil as part of an exchange programme with the 2016 hosts <http://storify.com/DCMS#stories>.

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAMME – WORKING WITH BRAZIL (DFID)

The UK's work with Brazil on nutrition demonstrates how the UK's international engagement on development can move from aid to strategic partnership. Our strong partnership with Brazil to tackle undernutrition is important for a number of reasons. For example, Brazil itself has had great success reducing undernutrition, hunger and poverty; Brazil is a key influencer of other middle income countries who we want to encourage to scale up their efforts to tackle undernutrition; as the next Olympic host, there have been many opportunities to publicly engage with Brazil on this issue and so draw international attention to it.

The UK used the opportunity of the London 2012 Olympics and its Presidency of the G8 to co-host two high profile events with Brazil, to mobilise international commitments to tackle undernutrition: the *Olympic Hunger Event*, on the day of the closing ceremony of the Olympics; *Nutrition for Growth: beating hunger through business and science* on the 8 June 2013. At *Nutrition for Growth* 27 businesses pledged to improve the nutrition and consequently the productivity and health, of over 927,000 members of their workforces in more than 80 countries, see the Storify page at <http://storify.com/DFID/nutrition-for-growth-beating-hunger-through-busine>. Brazil has committed to hosting a follow up event at the Rio 2016 Olympics.

UK-USA ENERGY RESEARCH COLLABORATION (FCO / BIS)

Through our SIN in the USA, we successfully broadened UK-USA energy research collaboration beyond its previous focus on fossil fuel energy.

The UK signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the US Department of Energy (DOE) in 1991 on research collaboration in energy and energy technologies. Over the first 20 years of the agreement, the overwhelming majority of the work undertaken was in the area of fossil energy, with the US National Energy Technology Laboratory and the Technology Strategy Board funding nearly all the collaborative work. In 2009, we concluded it would be beneficial to the UK to broaden the scope of the MoU to facilitate joint working in a broader range of disciplines and technologies.

Government (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Cabinet Office, Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)) – Written evidence

In April 2012, after a sustained campaign of relationship building and influencing, the US Secretary of Energy Steven Chu and the UK Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change Ed Davey signed the expanded MoU. In late 2012, DOE issued their first ever international call for proposals, focusing on small and medium size reactors. SIN is currently exploring DOE-UK collaborations in high-performance computing, nuclear engineering, and frontier areas of energy science under the umbrella of the newly signed and expanded MoU.

SCIENCE WITHOUT BORDERS (FCO / BIS)

'Science without Borders' is a Brazilian Government flagship scholarship programme to send 101,000 Brazilian students on undergraduate and PhD courses to study science, technology, engineering, mathematics as well as courses in the creative industries to universities around the world.

We are using the UK's excellence in education to strengthen UK-Brazil relations, to promote the programme through road show events around Brazil, GREAT campaign and other funds to help students understand what it is like to study in the UK. The Brazil SIN Network Brazil is supporting signing of cooperation agreements between UK and Brazilian universities to maintain the flow of students once the 'Science without Borders programme' ends.

The UK was the first country to offer a centrally-managed placement service for Brazilian students (run by a discreet team at the UK HE International Unit). The British Council Brazil has run 'crash courses' for students whose level of English Language falls just short of the required standard for entry to the UK.

Over 1000 Brazilian students from more than 100 Brazilian universities are now studying and living in the UK. A number of businesses are supporting the scheme, with placements and sponsorship: GlaxoSmithKline; General Electric; Harris Pye; BG Group; Unilever; Rolls Royce; Cisco; National Grid; Centrica.

September 2013

Government (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Department for International Development and Foreign and Commonwealth Office) – Oral evidence (QQ 1-22)

Government (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Department for International Development and Foreign and Commonwealth Office) – Oral evidence (QQ 1-22)

Evidence Session No.1

Heard in Public

Questions 1 - 22

MONDAY 10 JUNE 2013

Members present

Lord Howell of Guildford (Chairman)
Lord Forsyth of Drumlean
Lord Foulkes of Cumnock
Baroness Goudie
Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts
Lord Janvrin
Baroness Morris of Bolton
Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne
Baroness Prosser
Lord Ramsbotham

Witnesses

Maddalaine Ansell, Head of the International Knowledge & Innovation Unit (Global), Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, **Hugh Elliott**, Director of Communication and Engagement, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, **Barbara Hendrie**, Deputy Director of Global Partnerships Department, Department for International Development, **Andrew Mitchell**, Director of Prosperity Directorate, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and **Keith Nichol**, Head of Cultural Diplomacy, Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Q116 The Chairman: Good afternoon, everybody. On behalf of the Committee, I thank the witnesses for attending today. We are very pleased to have an opportunity to exchange thoughts and enlarge our own understanding of the subjects to hand, and to do so in the presence of five very senior members of the Administration, from four different departments. That is excellent. I will not list all your roles because they are on the paper in front of the Committee. Any enlargement of particular work or interests can come when you answer some of our questions, which I will proceed with in a moment.

Before I do so, the Committee has to go through a necessary and important procedure, which is that each person who speaks in this first formal hearing of the Committee is obliged

Government (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Department for International Development and Foreign and Commonwealth Office) – Oral evidence (QQ I-22)

to state their interests and the possible relevance of their interests to the work that the Committee is undertaking. This is a particular problem with this Committee because the scope of our international observance and involvement is very wide indeed. Nevertheless, that is necessary and therefore as the Chairman I must set the pattern by indicating that my interests and concerns are as in the *Register of Lords' Interests*, and cover my advice to international Japanese companies, a big investment fund from Kuwait, the Chambers of Commerce, various energy groups and the Council of Commonwealth Societies. I am the president of the Energy Industries Council. I am also a personal adviser to the Foreign Secretary on energy security and give him advice on a personal basis from time to time—whether he takes it is, of course, another matter. That is what I have to say before my questions to you now; other Members will be prefacing their questions with similar recitations, as they wish.

My first question is aimed mostly at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. We are very pleased that we had the chance to meet you, Mr Elliott, when you talked to us informally at a private session about some of the broad questions arising from our interest in soft power and the UK's influence around the world. You are now here in a formal role, so I will put a formal question to you—and to Mr Mitchell, and other members of the group if they wish to join in, but we shall be aiming questions at them specifically in due course so their time will come. Question: what is the standing of the whole concept of soft power in the work of the Government and of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office? Are all your departments—not just the FCO—conscious of this line of thought and the way in which it has developed in recent years? How much of a priority is soft power promotion for the Government, and where does it fit in to the phraseology and concept of the “global race”, which the Prime Minister was talking about today in fact, and many Ministers have spoken about, in which this country is now perforce involved more energetically and more critically than ever before? Perhaps I could start with you, Mr Elliott.

Hugh Elliott: Thank you very much, my Lord Chairman. It is a pleasure to be back in front of the Committee in a formal capacity with my colleagues from the other three departments. If I might start by addressing the definition of “soft power”, which is such a slippery term in some respects, it is worth recalling that the definition most commonly used, given by Joseph Nye, is as, “the ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes”. It is worth dwelling on that for a moment. In many respects, I think it would be widely agreed that that describes the core business of the Foreign Office writ large. That is very much what we as an organisation seek to do. It would be possible to frame an argument under which almost anything that the Foreign Office did constituted an exercise of soft power to some degree. I hope that some concrete, specific illustrations of that will come out in our session this afternoon. Particularly when we address some more specific strands, processes and campaigns through which soft power is addressed, it will be important to bear in mind that those are only elements of a much broader framework in which the whole of the Foreign Office's activity is touched in one way or another.

Specifically, the standing of soft power in the department is extremely high, we are extremely conscious of it in our work and it is a major priority for us. We believe that it is a central tool of our foreign policy and it is core to achieving the Government's international objectives, which are to extend the UK's influence, to promote international understanding through persuasion, and advance UK security and prosperity interests. The concept is threaded through our various departmental business plans and our individual country business plans through which work across government is brought together and articulated

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overseas on a country-by-country basis. These business plans integrate the breadth of soft power and how it is expressed through not just our diplomacy but our science and innovation, trade and investment and other work through the Government.

We believe that soft power works best as a tool for government when it is focused and tailored for specific regions, countries, themes or audiences as an integral part of policy. It brings together all our different elements of influence in pursuit of policy objectives that can unify. For example, we deliver soft power under that definition through our cross-government conflict prevention work; through international development, which I am sure we will hear about more later; through education and culture; through parliamentary exchanges; through the work of the British Council and the BBC World Service; and through our work in promoting human rights, for example, through the Foreign Office's Gulf initiative and Arab partnership, which are very specific examples of where we have sought to exercise influence. These cross-government efforts are aimed at strengthening regional security, at building commercial, economic, cultural and educational links and ties, and at key foreign policy priorities of the Government. I would like to mention that the visits by members of the Royal Family are instrumental in extending the UK's influence overseas.

A specific example of one campaign through which the Foreign Office has sought to change the international agenda through the exercise of its indirect influence and soft power would be the Foreign Secretary's initiative on the prevention of sexual violence in conflict, which he launched on 29 May 2012. I will not go into the detail for reasons of time, but this has culminated already this year in a declaration by G8 Foreign Ministers. We have been working through political and diplomacy channels and in the area of capacity development to practically strengthen the ability of governments on the ground to address this and move the stigma from the victims to the perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict, which simply had not been addressed by the international community before but now has been brought right up the agenda. We have been able to do that because we have had the ability to direct and focus the influence and attraction that we have towards this very specific agenda.

The GREAT campaign is another area that I am sure we will touch on, in which we have adopted very much a campaign approach to changing the dial. I would like to refer to the speech that the Foreign Secretary gave at the Lord Mayor's Banquet just a couple of months ago because this sums up the definition of how we can best exercise our influence internationally and the credibility that we have to do this. He said: "Britain is a diplomatic and cultural power, and one of the few countries that can 'turn the dial' in world affairs. We are diplomatically active in most countries on earth, able to project military force if necessary, outward-looking and open in our disposition, and skilled at using our democratic institutions, our experiences, our language and our culture to work with other nations to help them overcome their problems". As a broad introduction, I will leave it at that and perhaps my colleagues will continue if you would like answers from other departments.

Q117 The Chairman: Thank you very much indeed. That was an excellent opening survey and indeed, as you say, an entrée to your other colleagues to expand on that very telling phrase, "a diplomatic and cultural power"—and presumably, we hope, a trading and business power as well. Still within the framework of this question, perhaps I could ask your colleague from the Foreign Office, Mr Mitchell, if he would like to add a few comments on that aspect.

Andrew Mitchell: By all means. Thank you, Lord Chairman. To talk a little bit about the challenge, first of all, we recognise that sustainable economic growth in the United Kingdom

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will be delivered only through energetic action overseas. The United Kingdom is a strong economy. What the Foreign Office is in a position to do, working with its partners overseas, is to help to create the global conditions for continued and sustained growth. Through our missions overseas, through the person of the head of mission, 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.

You mentioned in your introduction that the Prime Minister had been speaking again today about the global race. Through the work that we do overseas, we recognise the importance of the British economy being competitive. We recognise that we need therefore to bring to bear all the assets of Government overseas. The heads of mission in our embassies and high commissions around the world are responsible for integrating that work. There will be a single business plan in every mission overseas, a very important aspect of which will be how we pursue our prosperity interests around the world, using and leveraging the various assets of other Government departments to good effect. As my colleague said, if one has been in that position of leveraging our assets overseas, there is no doubt that our credibility—the quality of the influence we are able to bear—is a function of Britain’s soft power. We are a member of multiple international institutions. We have genuine global reach as a nation. We are a member of a number of multilateral international organisations that help to extend and expand that reach. From our perspective in supporting British business overseas, that is a very important aspect of the way in which we exercise that soft power.

The Chairman: That is the broad aims; we are obviously going to come on to the performance in a moment.

Q118 Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: Chairman, perhaps I might pose a supplementary question to the two representatives from the Foreign Office, particularly to Hugh Elliott. I know that it is your job to be as positive as possible about all the things that you are doing. Did you not feel, in what you said to us, that you were sounding a wee bit complacent, that there is nothing more to be done?

Hugh Elliott: Lord Foulkes, no, I did not. If I gave the impression of being complacent, I apologise. Absolutely not, this is an ever-changing panorama in terms of the context in which we have to adapt to successfully project and use soft power in order to achieve the outcomes that we want. I know that questions may be directed to us in the future around the digital revolution, which is a major challenge for the Government, as it is for all institutions, in having to adapt to a transformation of the way in which people communicate around the world. So absolutely not, we are by no means complacent—lots more to do.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: You spoke about our democratic institutions. Let us be self-critical here. We know about some of our problems in our democratic institutions. Should we not be a bit more—not modest—careful in explaining what the United Kingdom and how we operate, and say that we have things to learn? The whole purpose of this Committee is not for us to say how wonderful we are and have been, but to find out how other countries are doing it and what new ideas there might be. Have you set your mind to that as well?

Hugh Elliott: Absolutely. We are very conscious that the ability to exercise this sort of influence is very much a factor of one’s credibility as a nation. I referred to that before and I

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think it is a very important issue. One's credibility is also determined by the nature of positive bilateral relationships with important nations, as well as multilateral relationships, and those are achieved through understanding the interests and activities of others as much as of discussing one's own. So I absolutely agree with you.

The Chairman: I am going to be a slightly maddening Chairman, Lord Foulkes, and say that the thrust of your questions is absolutely right and we are going to come to the whole pattern of what is holding us back and what this Committee can contribute, but first, a smaller matter: did you have any interests to declare?

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: Oh, yes, sorry. I should have said that right at the start. Apart from what is included in the Register, I am also president of the Caribbean Council but I am not paid for it.

The Chairman: Still in the framework of this question—we were on the prosperity theme—perhaps I can turn to Maddalaine Ansell of BIS to ask how her department sees this whole concept.

Maddalaine Ansell: Absolutely. We are very well aligned with the Foreign Office's objectives in this. The overarching objective for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills is to return the economy to growth, and we recognise that this needs to be exported. As part of that, we are working very closely with the Foreign Office; for example, on encouraging rules-based trade with other countries, particularly the emerging powers that do not necessarily have the same systems that we do. We also work very closely with the FCO on science, innovation and education, not only for the direct benefits that this brings to growth or education exports but for the soft power collateral benefit that we gain through that.

Q119 The Chairman: Thank you very much. The words of the Foreign Secretary about diplomatic and cultural power were quoted. One of the phenomena that we will be looking at much more closely is the relationship between creativity and cultural activity and its consequent impact on business relations and other aspects of government. Perhaps Mr Nichol would talk to us for a moment about that.

Keith Nichol: Thank you, Lord Chairman. This area of soft power certainly is a priority for my Secretary of State. She sees it as central to the DCMS agenda. I echo the points that were made about what the Prime Minister said about the global race. We know that other countries are increasingly seeking to deploy their soft power assets, so we are in a competitive situation. There is absolutely no scope for complacency. When we hear very positive messages about how the UK is perceived as a world leader in culture and the creative industries, that is reflected economically through the export of creative industries—everything from fashion to film to broadcasting—but we cannot rest on our laurels.

We have been given a terrific position by London 2012 and it is a key part of our Olympic legacy to deploy our cultural assets for the benefit of the UK as a whole. In doing so, we also promote the UK's values around the world and we support our bodies in a way that is respectful of the arm's-length principle. What we cannot do, for example, is direct our cultural bodies to go to Singapore and put on a show there, but we can align our activity with what they want to do. Working in partnership with the Foreign Office, the British Council and UKTI, we have an increasing alignment—a coalition, if you will—to pursue these activities in a way that benefits the UK collectively.

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Reciprocity is absolutely vital here. This should not be just about us doing things to the rest of the world. It should be about us welcoming the best in contemporary culture from around the world to expose the UK audiences to that and, in doing so, build the trust that we need to have relations with countries for the future.

The Chairman: Thank you. Finally, I will turn to the Department for International Development. Barbara Hendrie, you are a considerable and established expert in very important fields to do with development. You are an anthropologist, I think. In the halls and portals of DfID—where you have a very substantial budget, of course—how do you all react when the subject of soft power comes up?

Barbara Hendrie: Thank you, my Lord Chairman. As you will know, DfID’s mission is focused on development and poverty reduction. When we think about our contribution to soft power, it is primarily through the impact and the results that we produce and the integrity of our development programme. We have had very positive feedback for DfID as a global leader in development, generated out of our commitment to reduce poverty and to reach the international target of 0.7% of gross national income provided as official development assistance. We will become the first G8 country to hit that target this year, as well as the first EU country¹¹⁰. Making good on our commitment may have, for example, translated into the Secretary-General asking Prime Minister David Cameron to co-chair his high-level panel on the post-2015 development agenda, which will basically set the global agenda for the new set of global development goals for the next generation. That panel has recently produced a very influential report. We feel that the capability of our development programmes generates soft power for the UK by enabling us to play a leadership role on the global development agenda.

The Chairman: Thank you. I think that brings us to the end of round one. We have had all the departments now giving their overview. Perhaps Lord Forsyth will develop this theme.

Q120 Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Thank you, Lord Chairman. I declare my interests as on the Register. The only thing I can think of that is not on the Register is that I am a patron of a charity that helps women in India. We have heard phrases like “turn the dial”, “soft power”, “collateral benefit” and “rules-based trade”, and Barbara Hendrie has just told us how marvellous it is that we have such a fantastic input in terms of resources towards development programmes. Can you focus on the outputs and tell me specifically what your departments have achieved in enhancing the UK’s attractiveness and influence abroad and in furthering the UK’s priorities, and how you measure that? Perhaps you could give us some examples of successes and how they have been measured and of failures and how they have been measured. It is very difficult to believe that there are systems in place that look at effectiveness if you are not able to come up with examples of failures and how they have been turned round, as well as successes.

The Chairman: Who would like to start? Mr Elliott?

Hugh Elliott: I would be happy to kick off. Thank you, my Lord Chairman. In terms of what we have done to enhance the UK’s attractiveness and influence, and the extent to which we have achieved what we have set out to achieve, I would like to answer this in two parts, if I may. I am sure that my colleagues will have a lot to contribute. I go back to my first point, which is that when we are talking about projecting the UK overseas and the UK’s attractiveness and influence, we are talking about the whole broad range of the UK’s foreign

¹¹⁰ The UK will not be the first EU country to reach the 0.7% ODA/GNI target. In 2012 and in previous years Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Sweden spent over 0.7% of their GNI as ODA

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policy. I would refer the Committee to our annual report for 2011-12 and the annual report for 2012-13, which will come out shortly. I appreciate that that is just one part of the question—

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Forgive me for interrupting you, but I am looking for specifics. For example, I am looking at the pound having fallen by about 25% and our exports remaining pretty well neutral. I am looking for specific examples of where you have achieved these objectives.

Hugh Elliott: Absolutely. I was just about to come on to that. I just wanted to reinforce the point that the generic issue is important because a lot of activity goes on underneath that. I will give you one specific example which is perhaps illustrative of what goes on around the world in so many ways, in so many different places and by so many different posts. This is something that was carried out by our embassy in Mexico. The problem with Mexico was that the UK brand was relatively low and that in the UK people were partly ignorant of Mexico or had insufficient knowledge of it as a potential market. The problem was that we were not exporting as much as we should have been doing. We were not exploiting the potential of Mexico as a bilateral partner to the degree that we should have been.

When we talk about the embassy, as I hope we will illustrate further on, we are talking across Government here, the embassy working as Government joined-up overseas. The embassy launched a campaign in 2012 to promote the UK in Mexico. I will not go through every detail, but there was a whole part of that campaign that had to address the problem of those perceptions. That was done partly through cultural visits and government visits; it was done partly through the blessing that was the Olympics last year, which gave us global projection and global visibility; and it was done partly through the GREAT campaign, which we will also hear about. In a nutshell, it was a sustained campaign, with top-level visits both ways—the Prime Minister to Mexico, the Mexican President to the UK—and a whole series of events, some of them quite small; for example, little things such as putting GREAT branding on the disabled entrance to the UK embassy. That was quite a small but totemic thing to happen in Mexico City and it is still there on the pavement.

Cutting straight to the chase, what did that campaign achieve? The figures were that goods exports to Mexico went up by 13% from 2011 to 2012 to more than £1 billion, and that visitors to the UK increased by 7% to 84,000 in 2012. Those numbers may seem relatively small. What does “turn the dial” mean specifically? It means having that sort of impact in a relatively short space of time, and what we are doing around the world and focusing on priority markets and countries is to try to achieve that sort of specific objective.

The Chairman: Lord Hodgson, would you like to pursue the same theme but still wider?

Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts: I think that Lord Forsyth wants a follow-up.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: I asked each department if they would answer the question.

The Chairman: Fine. Which department do you want to focus on now?

Q121 Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: I want to hear from all of them. Perhaps we should start with BIS.

Maddalaine Ansell: Yes, of course. I can talk about some of the specific work strands that colleagues are leading on in this agenda. I might have to give the very specific achievements from my own area of science, innovation and education, because I will not otherwise have

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the details at my fingertips. Among the things we do, we ensure that we take a leading role in delivering trade liberalisation agreements that suit UK interests, including mobilising the Government to support an EU-US trade agreement. A fairly recent achievement in that area is that UK retailers are now able to operate in India in a way that they were not able to a year or so ago. We also look to tackle market access barriers and threats to UK business investment, both through the EU and through bilateral dialogues and direct lobbying.

Perhaps you would not usually describe this as a market access barrier, but one of the achievements we have made in Brazil is an agreement with FAPESP, which is the organisation that delivers research funding in the state of Sao Paulo, which is the most important state in Brazil for science funding. We agreed with FAPESP that it would use the same criteria as we do for allocating research funding. It is important to us that research funding is allocated for the most excellent research, decided by peer review. Some countries prefer to have a more top-down approach to allocating research funding. The achievement in Brazil was that by creating one single peer-review process involving Brazilian reviewers in a process that we would recognise, it has been possible for far more UK-Sao Paulo research to take place than would otherwise have been the case. We are currently following the same approach with the Ministry of Science and Technology in China, which also has quite a top-down approach, and we are looking to work with it to introduce peer-reviewing processes.

Another kind of market barrier that we are working to address is around a mutual recognition of qualifications in the education field. We are working very closely at the moment with India and the United Arab Emirates, and we hope very soon to be working with Russia, to find ways in which we can mutually recognise each other's qualifications, which makes it easier for students to study overseas and know that the degree they have achieved overseas will be recognised when they come back to the UK.

BIS also does a fair amount of work supporting the activities of the G8 and the G20. Again, in my own area, we are working to deliver the G8 science ministerial on Wednesday. We are also looking to encourage open access and open data, and to see if we can work together to tackle problems such as antimicrobial resistance, all of which are important for soft power because they enhance the UK's standing as a key science nation. We find that when countries are thinking about what areas they would like to work on with the EU, many of them think of science and education as important areas for engagement.

BIS also works very closely with UKTI, which we co-sponsor with the Foreign Office. Again, I do not have the figures at my fingertips but I know that UKTI has quite a comprehensive set of targets for measuring trade increases that are brought about by its activity.

Q122 The Chairman: That is an impressive list. Shall we just hear from DCMS on outputs?

Keith Nichol: Thank you. Of course, the Olympics was not solely a DCMS project but across Government as a whole, but there were a couple of outputs from the Olympics; for example, the Cultural Olympiad and the demonstration of our world-leading arts and culture. Shakespeare's Globe put on the "Globe to Globe" season during the Olympics: Shakespeare's plays in 37 languages from 37 countries around the world. That has already stimulated both another Globe season this year, as well as all sorts of demand from around the world for partnerships with arts organisations during the Shakespeare 400th anniversary in 2016. Those partnerships are flourishing. It is not something that came to an end at the end of the Olympics. We hear from around the world that the Paralympics was a tremendous vehicle in helping to create a more enlightened attitude towards disability in

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several countries. Having the first Olympics where every country sent a woman athlete was an output that Ministers regard as very successful.

In a different area, you have the work of organisations such as the British Library or the British Museum in preserving the archaeological heritage of countries such as Iraq or other post-conflict states. That sort of thing does not get much publicity but it builds trust in these countries as they rebuild themselves, and helps the UK become a partner of choice for those countries.

We have very clear figures on the outputs in terms of tourism. People do not come to this country for the weather; they come for our arts, culture and heritage. We see that specifically in not just increased numbers of visitors but increased visitor spend. In terms of economic growth, that is usually important.

In China last year we had the biggest ever festival of UK culture in China. That built on the experience from the Shanghai Expo, where Thomas Heatherwick's pavilion was voted by the Chinese public as the best national pavilion. He of course went on to create the Cauldron for the Olympics. He and other British architects and designers are winning multimillion pound contracts for major infrastructure projects around the world and we believe that our investment in culture and the creative industries is underpinning those successful bids for those contracts.

A final positive example is the recent joint venture that was announced between Pinewood and Bruno Wu, a major Chinese film producer. We believe that our film tax credits were important in attracting the Chinese to that; not just the Chinese but other Asian producers and Hollywood as well. Again, we are in a competitive position there.

You asked for failures. In terms of our values, we use sport in all sorts of multilateral contexts to tackle things such as racism in sport and anti-doping. That is where there is certainly no room for complacency. There are still examples of racism in sport in this country and we need to ensure that we have our own house in order as we try to encourage the rest of the world to a more enlightened place.

The Chairman: I was very pleased to hear that about Shakespeare's Globe—as a former director of Shakespeare's Globe, I should perhaps have declared my previous interest. It is very interesting and raises all sorts of points that we are going to pursue later about the contact between government and the non-government sector.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Perhaps, Chairman, to save time, it might be easier for the departments to let us have a note along the lines of my question in due course.

Q123 The Chairman: Certainly, we have had a long, long list of very useful items, which in due course we would like to see recorded in notes. Perhaps we can hear from Dr Hendrie as well on outputs.

Barbara Hendrie: Thank you, my Lord Chairman. Of course, we primarily measure our achievements and our outputs in terms of development outcomes. We can give you detail about, for example, the numbers of bed nets, children immunised and people provided with emergency relief assistance globally. We would be very happy to provide that sort of information.

In terms of soft power outcomes, of course this is not an explicit goal for the department; it is more of an indirect effect. But we do think that with the programme that we started in 2010 with countries that we call emerging powers, we are generating real soft power

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benefits for the UK, particularly with countries such as Colombia, Mexico and China becoming interested in the UK model for how to establish a development co-operation organisation. We have had requests for conversations, workshops and sharing of information where countries are looking to the UK example as one possibility of how they might structure such organisations; for example, Mexico is just setting up its own development co-operation organisation. We are in conversation with Mexico at its request.

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean: Sorry to interrupt you, but leaving aside emergency aid and immunisation programmes, you are looking at development aid. Surely in applying development aid, you try to advance the interests of British companies and so on, and have some degree of conditionality?

Barbara Hendrie: Well, of course, UK aid is untied so we cannot give any special consideration to UK companies bidding for procurement contracts, for example. There is nothing to bar British companies from bidding and we do everything we can to make information available when those contracts are tendered, but our aid is untied so we cannot give special dispensation to UK companies.

The Chairman: Perhaps I can just say to colleagues that if anyone wants to come in and make the discussion more flexible, I am very happy for them to do so.

Q124 Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: Following the point that Lord Forsyth was making, the excellent outcomes that departmental representatives are telling us about are fully laudable. However, is it possible that they are a little bit as one would expect you to produce from your departmental responsibilities? Actually, what we are looking for is that extra called soft power, which is something over and above the normal daily routine as one would expect it. In your views, that may not be the case; you may feel that the departmental outcomes are reflected in some way or another in the soft power concept and therefore they qualify as soft power. Over and above that, I would like to know what evaluation mechanisms you are using, individually or together. How do the different departments correlate how soft power is being evaluated, by each department and collectively? Or is that not in fact possible and you merely quantify it as an extra piece of icing on your normal departmental cake? I have not yet been able to analyse that from the nice outcomes that have been presented.

The Chairman: Would anyone like to have a go at that? Mr Elliott again?

Hugh Elliott: I would be happy to kick off. I am sure that colleagues will have views. I think the underlying question is: is there an overarching articulated soft power strategy across Government covering all the potential areas of soft power? The answer is no; that does not exist.

Lord Janvrin: Can I come in with question 7?

The Chairman: We are going to come to co-ordination in more detail in a moment. If anyone has short questions now, that is fine. Sorry, were you in the middle of—

Hugh Elliott: I certainly was, my Lord Chairman, but I am at the Committee's disposal.

The Chairman: Carry on, Mr Elliott, I am so sorry.

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne: My question is on evaluation techniques.

The Chairman: I see: evaluation, not co-ordination.

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Hugh Elliott: A broad, overarching, completely comprehensive strategy touching every issue of soft power does not exist. The Government have decided to focus in on specific areas where there is indeed a great deal of collaboration and co-ordination across soft power, and I suspect that we will come on to some specific examples later around the emerging powers framework. I would also like to suggest that my colleagues talk a little bit about the GREAT campaign, which brings together a number of different elements of the UK's soft power and how it is projected, and has some very hard metrics for how it is actually measured.

I have two observations as to the underlying question. It is absolutely the case that the broad definition of soft power is so loose that it is an area where it can be difficult to apply very specific metrics. That is absolutely a fair comment. But when you focus it in on specific campaigns, it is absolutely possible to apply those metrics. Perhaps Keith would like to say a few words from the GREAT point of view.

Keith Nichol: Thank you. The GREAT campaign is a marketing campaign across Government and a number of external agencies that was set up to coincide with the Olympics. We saw the Olympics as a terrific opportunity to market the UK more strategically. It has had until now three very clear pillars: one is around promoting more trade and inward investment, and there is a particular science and innovation angle to that; the second is around promoting more tourism to the UK; and the third is around promoting higher education. We want more students to come to the UK, not just because that has financial benefits but because it is one of the things that we know build trust in the UK among a generation that may include the future leaders of their countries. We are seeing both short-term outcomes and, I hope, longer-term outcomes from this.

In terms of tourism, there is fairly robust analysis of the VisitBritain figures—which I am sure we can send to the Committee if that would be helpful—that where the GREAT campaign has focused on particular countries, there has been an increase in the number of visitors from those countries above and beyond what we would expect from normal business. The British Council has told us that in terms of international students considering a UK education, the GREAT campaign has helped to stimulate more positive views toward that. Again, because it started only last year, we do not yet have the actual outputs but we feel that we are moving in the right direction. In terms of free advertising for the UK and all its assets, from a £30 million investment in the entire campaign, we appear to have had advertising that would have cost the public purse £85 million had we chosen to commercially seek that visibility. This is all emerging after 12 months. UKTI is putting together clear figures on inward investment and exports. As the campaign continues, we believe that we are going to have some very crunchy evidence to point to.

The Chairman: Several people want to come in this point. Lady Goudie? We will get to you eventually, Lord Hodgson.

Q125 Baroness Goudie: I declare my interests that are on the Register. I am co-chair of the All-Party Group on Global Education for All, which is important to mention, because of the departments and those who are assisting us with that. I have only one short question, and it is to the Foreign Office, on the subject of co-ordination across departments. Was there not a recommendation by Lord Carter of Coles that there should be a soft power board within Government? I looked it up but could not find the membership of it, but it was a clear recommendation. It was quite some time ago but I found that it was still there in the Cabinet Office minutes. That would be rather vital to what we are talking about today, and to the future, because without that type of very senior co-ordination, certain things are going to get lost—not the main policy but a number of issues will get lost.

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The Chairman: Mr Elliott?

Hugh Elliott: Thank you very much, Lady Goudie, my Lord Chairman. Indeed, you are absolutely right, this goes back to the Wilton review back in 2002, which initially set up the Public Diplomacy Strategy Board, which the Carter review then assessed and decided to change its focus a little bit and turn it into the Public Diplomacy Board. This was indeed re-set up in line with the Carter recommendations in 2006. It included several leading external thinkers in the area of soft power, including Simon Anholt, who produces the *Nations Brand Index*. The board served a valuable initial purpose in bringing together and giving direction to cross-Government soft power activities, especially around areas of best practice, but the decision that Ministers took over time was that the most important thing moving into the run-up to the Olympics was to focus on what was going to be a unique event and to focus what are always limited resources on making the very most out of that specific event. My colleague Andrew Mitchell, who was much more involved in the Olympics, might like to say a word or two about that.

Andrew Mitchell: On the specific example of the Olympics, I should say that I was the Foreign Office's Director for the Olympics and Paralympics in the run-up to the Games. The key point here is that this was a collaborative effort, not just across Government but with a variety of external agencies, the Mayor of London and, of course, LOCOG. We were in a position to build a campaign that was effectively an external campaign marketing Britain's strengths in the context of the Olympics. This was led by the Foreign Office but co-ordinated across Government, as I say. That campaign had a variety of features associated with it. At its heart was the desire to demonstrate that Britain is indeed not just a country of strong institutions but a modern, diverse, highly innovative society—one that brings together the best of traditional strengths of institutions with an ability to be relevant in the world today. In the context of that campaign, we had something like 1,500 events that we hosted in various places overseas. We developed a campaign that supported those events. We estimated at the time that something like 2 billion people were touched in some way by that global public diplomacy campaign; 70% of our posts took part in the campaign and we ran a number of global events, such as one in which we did 100 somethings on 100 days to go to the Olympics. This was an enormously successful campaign around the world. It was a relatively permissive environment in which to run a campaign of this kind because of course there was a tremendous amount of attention on the UK, but it was a very strong part of how we co-ordinated our public diplomacy efforts—our soft power efforts—in the run-up to the Olympics.

The Chairman: Lord Janvrin, did you want to come in on this theme?

Q126 Lord Janvrin: Yes, I would, but I had better do my interests. I am deputy chairman of HSBC Private Bank in the UK. I am on the board of trustees of a number of charities in this field, including the Royal Foundation, the Gurkha Welfare Trust, the Entente Cordiale Scholarships Trust, the National Portrait Gallery and Philanthropy Impact. I am on the advisory board of the UK India Business Council, and I am a former and now honorary member of the Queen's Household.

You said that there is no overall strategy but you have strategies in particular areas. I think I am right in saying that a business plan produced by the FCO some years ago talked in terms of producing an overall strategy. Is that now not the case and you are not going to try to draw the threads of soft power together in an overall strategy? If not, why not? The other element that I would like to come on to, but I do not know whether now is the time, is

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learning from other countries. But can I ask the overall strategy one, which is specifically for the FCO?

The Chairman: Yes, let us come on to other countries later. It is Mr Elliott yet again, but if anyone else wishes to come in, please do so. We want to keep this comprehensive.

Hugh Elliott: In the interests of completeness, I will clarify for Baroness Goudie that the Public Diplomacy Board has since lapsed.

The Chairman: Yes, that we understand.

Hugh Elliott: The question about the intention to publish a soft power strategy goes back to my answer to the previous question. A great deal of work went on at official level in 2011 across government departments—this was not just the Foreign Office, although the Foreign Office was leading the work; and it was not just across departments, it was with outside organisations, our arm’s-length bodies, academics, NGOs, business and the voluntary sector—looking at exactly this broad issue of soft power. Ministers having looked at this, the decision was that with the Olympics looming extraordinarily large we should indeed focus very much on the Olympics and getting the most out of the Olympics as the unique opportunity for soft power projection that the United Kingdom had at that point in time. As for the future, I cannot really speculate.

Baroness Prosser: It is a fairly straightforward question, I hope, Lord Chairman. My interests are as recorded in the register of interests, but I should also mention that I am the secretary of the All-Party Group on Ethics and Sustainability in Fashion. My question goes to Mr Nichol. Was the UK’s reputation enhanced or damaged by the recent disaster in Bangladesh, both by the disaster itself and the positive response of some British companies, which has brought about quite a good result for lots of workers in Bangladesh? Not all British companies responded positively but the overall result has been quite helpful. Do you think that it impacted upon the view of the Bangladeshi people of the UK as a trader?

Keith Nichol: It certainly shaped people’s perceptions in this country as well as in Bangladesh and around the world. If such a tragedy serves to bring to light the circumstances in which these textiles are created, that is a positive thing in the sense of learning from such a terrible experience. It illustrates a point that relates to Baroness Nicholson’s question about how we measure the impact of all of this. You are absolutely right. The reaction of UK businesses and companies in the fashion and textiles industry was, if anything, possibly more important than the Government’s response. That role of ethics in business is shaping how the UK is perceived around the world. We have to recognise the limits to the Government’s influence in all this. The Government can act in all sorts of ways to try to promote positive images of the UK but there are many external factors, including the role that business plays, that shape the way we are perceived around the world.

Baroness Prosser: I think the view was that the Government’s response was pretty negligible, really; they hardly said a word, which was a bit of a shame.

The Chairman: That is another question, I feel. Lord Ramsbotham?

Q127 Lord Ramsbotham: Thank you, Lord Chairman. I declare only one interest that is not on the Register, which is that I am a former soldier and I was at one time involved with post-conflict reconstruction operations with and for the UN and the World Bank. Following on from what Lord Janvrin said about co-ordinating a part of the strategy, and also something you said at the beginning, Mr Elliott, about your responsibility for cross-

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government conflict prevention, as I remember from my work at that time, intervention and post-conflict reconstruction somewhere was conflict prevention somewhere else. All the time we have been speaking, Afghanistan has been going through my mind, as indeed Iraq has, because I always felt that with Iraq we never really co-ordinated the soft power and indeed a lot of the other economic development that we could have raised from our intervention and taken advantage of it. We have now got 2014 looming, and if we are not careful we will lose all the advantages that we have as a nation in Afghanistan. Who is actually co-ordinating what is going on? I know that the MoD training is part of the soft power development but who is actually co-ordinating it?

The Chairman: Any offers? Mr Elliott again.

Hugh Elliott: Thank you very much, Lord Chairman, Lord Ramsbotham. The co-ordination is done under the auspices of the National Security Council. It is important to say a few words about that, not just in respect of Afghanistan, where I know a lot of attention is being paid, as one would expect, to 2014 and to the whole range of areas in which the Government and the United Kingdom can effectively project soft power. More broadly than Afghanistan—and perhaps I should have mentioned this in the answer to Lord Janvrin—it is important to note that in terms of strategy around soft power, Ministers decided that rather than taking a completely global approach, the National Security Council would focus on key emerging powers and within that develop a specific strand around soft power. Perhaps my colleague Mr Mitchell would like to say a word or two about that.

The Chairman: We had reports about 18 months ago that our military forces in Afghanistan were becoming more involved in—or Ministers thought that they should become more involved in—civil power, civic operations and social reconstruction. Where would that idea have come from and which department would have overseen any change of emphasis in the military's role?

Hugh Elliott: I imagine that would have been done under the auspices of the National Security Council but I am not an expert on this issue. Perhaps it would be acceptable to write to you and answer that specific question.

The Chairman: Right, thank you. Sorry, you were just suggesting who should answer Lord Ramsbotham's question.

Hugh Elliott: Perhaps Mr Mitchell can talk a little bit about that.

Andrew Mitchell: When we talk about the emerging powers and the work that we do in the Foreign Office, in co-ordination with others, in engaging with the emerging powers, I recognise that that is not the totality of our targets for soft power in the world. It is discrete from the question of how we engage in the context of Afghanistan, but it is worth noting that the National Security Council has indeed decided to form a co-ordinating sub-committee on the emerging powers. This is part of the emerging powers initiative. Again, that broader emerging powers initiative is a response to the shift of power to the south and the east and the recognition that economic opportunity will increasingly come from a shift towards new export markets and new opportunities in those fast growing economies. As a consequence, the Foreign Office has undertaken a process of opening or upgrading 20 new embassies, consulates and trade offices in countries such as India, Brazil, El Salvador and Paraguay. We have upgraded or opened nine new posts, and we are working to upgrade further embassies and consulates in countries such as India, Liberia and Paraguay as part of an attempt to move our resources to those areas of the world where we feel that the

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combination of our ability to influence through soft power and by other means and to support our businesses is highest. There is also a dedicated emerging powers team within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office that supports that work, which is an innovation.

As I mentioned, the work itself is co-ordinated through a sub-committee of the National Security Council that is charged with work on the emerging powers. This focuses on four strands of work: trade and investment; building alliances with the emerging powers to establish the rules-based international economic system that I talked about earlier; security issues; and cultural and people-to-people links. This is an exemplar of a project that the Government have undertaken, that they are co-ordinating across government, using the machinery of the National Security Council to do so.

I will also say a word about how we co-ordinate overseas. Of course, the head of mission in any given country will have a business plan, which will integrate the various measures that are part of the work that the mission undertakes. That is a broad spectrum of activity from trade and investment targets, which will be written into the business plan, through to outcomes associated with, for example, defence diplomacy work or other aspects of the work that we do overseas. That mission will also have a set of communications objectives and a team supporting those communications objectives.

To answer your question, in the context of Afghanistan, the Afghan-facing communications in Kabul are delivered by a cross-departmental British embassy communications team through a range of media. In Afghanistan social media is a particularly effective means of communicating with people: more than 32,000 people, including a high percentage of 18 to 24 year-olds, are following the British embassy in Kabul's Facebook page. The dedicated communications operation within the British embassy in Kabul integrates the various aspects of activity and support from other Government departments in delivering that communication.

The Chairman: Lord Foulkes, you wanted to ask a question on this, and then I would like to bring in Lord Hodgson.

Q128 Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: In answer to Baroness Goudie, you said that the Public Diplomacy Board has lapsed. In answer to Lord Janvrin, you said that the National Security Council has a sub-committee dealing with the emerging powers and co-ordinating that work. But that is not anything to do with the business plan for co-ordinating soft power in every country of the world, which is what was originally proposed in the FCO business plan for 2010-12. What I do not understand is where you all meet together to discuss co-ordinated activity to put our soft power plans into action. Where do your Ministers meet together? Which fora do you meet in?

Hugh Elliott: With regard to the business plan and the soft power strategy, as I indicated, Ministers decided to focus in on the Olympics—

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: But they are past, the Olympics have finished. They have been finished for a long time. That is living in the past.

Hugh Elliott: There is a great deal of work being done to make the most of the Olympic legacy. There is a great deal of business that is being done on the back of the Olympics. We believe that it is very important to make the most of that legacy. There are a number of other sporting opportunities that we can learn from on the back of the Olympics, such as the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, where a great deal of work and collaboration is going on across Government and with the Scottish Government. That is an ongoing area,

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and Lord Coe would certainly take the view that we are only halfway there—10 years in, we have got another 10 years of work to make the very most of the Olympics in London.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: That is sport; that is only one aspect.

Hugh Elliott: That is one area. Another area where the Government get together to discuss and collaborate across government is in the National Security Council with regard to the emerging powers. Another area is around the GREAT campaign in order to project Britain overseas. Another area where Ministers decided that it was important for us to link up more and make the most of what Britain has to offer in order to project our soft power is around the education strand of the industrial strategy, which will be published in the near future. My answer is that there are a number of different areas in which this work is being taken forward in a highly co-ordinated way.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: But nowhere where all of them are being taken forward together.

The Chairman: We are pursuing two strands here and, as Chair, I am trying to think how best to develop them. One is the co-ordination, which is not only transdepartmental but ministerial and indeed the Cabinet and the Cabinet committees are involved here. We will want to pursue that, possibly, and Baroness Prosser may have a question on that in a moment. First, can we pick up Andrew Mitchell's comments earlier about emerging markets? There are reports—and indeed, ministerial utterances—indicating that our performance in emerging markets is not good, that we are behind the others; we have arrived and found the Germans already there, the French already there and so on. Lord Hodgson has great experience in this area and would like to pursue that.

Q129 Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts: Chairman, I have to make the declaration: I have no interests to declare, except those that are in the Register, which I do not think are particularly relevant to our discussions here. In fact, probably the nearest I get to having something to declare is the fact that my wife is a member of the Foreign Secretary's advisory panel on preventing sexual violence in conflict situations. The fact that I do not quite know what the title is shows that I am not absolutely close to it, but I probably should put that on the record.

My question has largely been forked over in the questions we have had already. In particular, it deals with building our commercial economic interests in the light of the new emerging markets: Asia, Africa and Latin America. That is a pretty broad range, and although we have been told that we have a genuine global reach, should we not be finding some focus and some segmentation in order to increase our impact using the resources that we have? It may be that bilateral, non-official things can go on elsewhere but where should the Government be focusing in a slightly narrower way, bearing in mind that, as we have been told, what appeals in Paris appeals in Riyadh? We have also heard about the success the Australians have had in building a relationship with Indonesia with student visas. There is a saying about marketing campaigns: if you throw enough mud against a wall, some of it will stick. One sometimes wonders if we are not just throwing mud at the wall and hoping that some of it will stick.

The Chairman: I think we will ask BIS to start on that but, again, it covers all departments.

Maddalaine Ansell: Yes. We do attempt to prioritise. Again, I will talk most specifically about education and science. In education, we took as our starting point the list of emerging

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powers developed by the National Security Council. Then we did some analysis looking at which of those countries had demographics that suggested that there would be an increasing demand of education and which of them had expressed the desire to increase the number of young people going on to tertiary education. We also thought about which of them indicated a willingness to work with the UK. From that, we developed a list of eight countries and one region—the Gulf—in which we are prioritising our efforts to co-ordinate all the major players that represent the education sector so that we can go together and demonstrate the breadth and depth of the UK education system. Around the edges of that, many universities are pursuing their own niche interests according to their own business plans but we are focusing our co-ordinated government effort on those countries and markets. Most recently, David Willetts led what we call a system-to-system mission to Mexico and Colombia, where he talked about, for example, supporting them in the commercialisation of science, which is a key interest in both those countries; how we could support them to create government-sponsored scholarship programmes; and how we could make it easier for them to send large numbers of their best students to the UK to study.

On the science side, we are still going through the process, working with various learned people from the scientific community—the Royal Society, other learned bodies, the research councils, et cetera—to think about how we should prioritise in our scientific bilateral engagement. Here we are thinking about the importance of maintaining the excellence of the UK research base by working with the best in the world—so we should not forget our traditional partners such as the United States, France, Germany and Japan as we think about the emerging powers—as well as about the kind of engagement that we should have with different emerging powers. There are some, such as China, Brazil and India, that are excellent in many fields of research and we would want to work with them to maintain our own excellence, but there are others that I perhaps will not name here that are not so strong yet in science and research. We have done analysis around what it is about the UK that is attractive to them and what might be a golden key to unlock other kinds of engagement, and there we are thinking more about how we can support capacity-building or other kinds of scientific research collaboration. On the scientific side, it is still somewhat a work in progress but we are making quite good progress with our stakeholders.

The Chairman: Lord Hodgson, do you want to pursue that?

Q130 Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbots: If the other departments think that they have a series of focused programmes, it would be helpful if we could know about them, in so far as we can, because otherwise we are going to be up here at 30,000 feet but what we are trying to do is get down to 500 feet to see some quite precise deliveries and results. If these are on the record it would be helpful for us to see them.

The Chairman: Do you have a comment on that, Mr Mitchell?

Andrew Mitchell: Would it be helpful for us to write or to answer now?

The Chairman: Yes, it would be helpful to write. That is the way to do it, possibly.

Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbots: Yes, it would be very interesting to see whether all departments are concentrating on the same markets.

The Chairman: Baroness Prosser, we have given this co-ordination issue quite a beating. Is there anything you want to add? There are examples of where one department seems to be working against another; for instance, in visas.

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Baroness Prosser: Hopefully rather quickly, Chairman, because we have already had a bit of a run round the bush with this. I got the impression that you were slightly defensive about co-ordination. I hope you are not going to be because it seems to me that unless there is an overarching view in Government as to what each of you is getting up to something is going to fall between the gaps and/or one or t'other of you is going to be doing things that somebody else is doing, because they are all interrelated in very many ways. I was hoping that you were going to be able to tell us that there is some Government structure led by one or other of your departments that makes sure that that does not happen, but it appears that you are not able to say that. Perhaps you can enlighten us.

Andrew Mitchell: I hesitate to refer to the National Security Council again but it is quite important to bear in mind how the National Security Council deals with particular questions, not so much thematically but, for example, looking at a relationship with a country with which we have a long, strong and deep relationship that spans the interests of multiple Government departments. It is in the National Security Council that that variety of interests is brought to bear. The intention that Ministers have in dealing with issues in that way is precisely the one that you identify: namely, to ensure that we are not dealing separately in silos with issues associated with each of those countries but that the relationship as a whole with that country is dealt with in one place by the entire ministerial team. Now, there are certain sub-committees of the National Security Council that take particular issues away and work on them in more detail, but again on the basis of co-ordination between Government departments. As the Foreign Office's director for prosperity and broadly responsible for the global economy, I spend a significant amount of my time in co-ordination with other Government departments. Several of the units that I am responsible for are joint units with other Government departments. Co-ordination across Government is part of everything that I do and I could not do my job were I not co-ordinating with other Government departments. I would not underestimate the impact that the National Security Council has in defining the terms of that co-ordination.

The Chairman: Does the NSC meet regularly?

Andrew Mitchell: The NSC meets on a very regular basis, yes.

The Chairman: What, once a month?

Andrew Mitchell: I am not entirely sure; I would have to check that. But certainly the NSC and the various Cabinet committees and the NSC sub-committees meet on a very regular basis. They determine, for example, the pace and the scheduling of the work that we do on the emerging powers.

The Chairman: Right, I think that we should move on because we have taken a lot of your time and you have been very forthcoming. Thank you very much. Baroness Morris, did you want to add a word?

Q131 Baroness Morris of Bolton: Thank you. First of all, I declare my interests as set out in the Register. With relevance to this Committee, I am the Prime Minister's trade envoy to Kuwait, Jordan and the Palestinian Territories. I am chairman of the Conservative Middle East Council. I travel extensively in the region and declare all my trips in the Register. I am chancellor of the University of Bolton, which confers degrees around the world. I am president of Medical Aid for Palestinians, president of the World Travel Market Advisory Council and, until recently, was a trustee of UNICEF UK.

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The Chairman: Thank you.

Baroness Morris of Bolton: I think that covers it all. I would like to move to a part of the world where I hope we have a head start in soft power, and ask how your departments are taking advantage of the UK's relationship with Commonwealth countries. In relation to a question Lord Hodgson asked, Mr Nichol talked about the GREAT campaign and how it was having an impact on international students. But we know, particularly in India, that there was very much a message going out that the UK was closed for business, that you could not get a visa. The Lord Chairman touched on whether or not one department is sending out one message but a different message is being received from another. Perhaps you could specifically touch on that when you answer, please.

The Chairman: After Mr Nichol, we will ask Dr Hendrie how DfID relates to the Commonwealth in particular, because it is a very important aspect.

Keith Nichol: Thank you, Lord Chairman. In terms of our engagement with the Commonwealth, again working across Government, obviously we very much have one eye on the Commonwealth Games next year in Glasgow. All our sporting activity is very much a part of that. As with the Olympics, there will be a cultural festival around the Commonwealth Games. In that multilateral context, the sectors for which DCMS is responsible are very much joined up.

In terms of individual countries within the Commonwealth—for example, India—it may not have received much attention when the Prime Minister went to India recently but the British Council is initiating a five-year programme of cultural exchanges with India under the title “Reimagine”, and that is very much what we are trying to do now in building on multiyear programmes rather than a single season or year of activity. It allows cultural organisations to plan a bit further ahead; for example, next year has recently been declared the UK-Russia Year of Culture and I am sure that it will be a tremendous success, but it is quite late in the planning cycle for a cultural body to develop a programme of activity for the next 12 months. This “Reimagine” programme with India will cover a five-year period and we think that is a more sustainable way in which to build relationships.

Baroness Morris of Bolton: But can you just touch on the student visas, because it is a terribly important part? Here we are: we are trying to encourage more students to come. I absolutely understand that we have to protect our country and make sure that the people who come are coming here for the right reasons. We had the GREAT campaign yet, very much in India particularly, the message went out to Indian students that the UK was closed for coming, and numbers dropped considerably in nearly all UK universities.

Keith Nichol: I will make one point on that and, if I may, I think my BIS colleague may be able to enhance my answer. This is where it helps sometimes to look through the other end of the telescope. This cross-government co-ordination comes together in every country through our ambassador or high commissioner. In India, it is the high commission that brings together the visa services, the FCO team, the Intellectual Property Office, British Council and UKTI. In that challenge, which I do recognise around visas in India, it is our high commissioner's role to address the perceptions around visas.

Maddalaine Ansell: Yes, we very much recognise the issue of falling applications from Indian students following some of the unhelpful rhetoric. Under the GREAT campaign, the Indian high commission have bid for some funding in order to promote the message that international students are welcome to come to the UK, and that there is no cap on the

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number of legitimate students, and to explain the post-study work rules. We hope that will help to correct some of the amplification in the Indian press of some of the issues.

Additionally with India, we have so far a rolling five-year programme called the UK-India Education and Research Initiative, where we work closely with the Indians to support research collaborations, to work through issues like mutual recognition of qualifications, and also to deal with issues like that. We are about half way through the second five-year programme and just about to go into the evaluation of that to see whether it is something we should continue for a third term, should funding be available.

Q132 The Chairman: Dr Hendrie, would you just like to comment, particularly on the Commonwealth aspect?

Barbara Hendrie: Yes, thank you. We have a particular commitment to expand our support for 13 of the poorest Commonwealth countries, because some of the countries in the Commonwealth do face some of the biggest challenges on various dimensions of poverty. We will be increasing over the period to 2013/14 from £1.5 billion to £2.2 billion spend in Commonwealth countries. We also fund a number of different programmes run by the Commonwealth Secretariat, including core funding for the Commonwealth Secretariat itself. Total funding of Commonwealth programmes is in the order of £35 million. Within that, core support to the secretariat is about £11 million, so we have an expanding programme of inputs and development co-operation with Commonwealth countries and the secretariat.

We are also working very actively to build development partnerships with South Africa and with India, where we are graduating, as you will know, our bilateral aid programmes, but still seeking to develop partnerships with those countries, particularly focused on third countries, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa and south Asia, where we would help provide a platform for India and South Africa to bring their own development expertise to poorer countries. So we are seeking to thicken the relationship there once our bilateral programmes close.

Also, we work with the Commonwealth Secretariat to facilitate their engagement with different multilateral forums—for example, the G20. Alongside the Francophonie, we seek to enable the Commonwealth to engage with the development working group of the G20.

Finally, we have been very active at the UN General Assembly in New York, to help broker a broader conversation—across Commonwealth countries in relation to the negotiations that will happen at the UN around the next development framework, including a common approach informed by our common history and values to development.

Q133 The Chairman: Just to carry on from that, I am going to ask Baroness Goudie to ask another question, but the two are linked. The Commonwealth, after all, has got this working language, which is ours, and that contains its own attitudes and its own DNA, and ought to give this country, as Baroness Morris rightly said, a huge advantage in promoting our soft power relations with what is a third of the entire planet—two and a quarter billion people. At the same time, the connectivity is now absolutely total. It is not just a question of speaking the same language; it is instant and continuous connection at every point, every day, between every level of activity between all these countries. It is a vast new tableau. Are we—this is Baroness Goudie's question; I must not put it for her, but that is where we are going.

Baroness Goudie: I am very concerned. I do not think—I may be wrong—that we are communicating with all the countries that we should be communicating with. Also, thanks to technology now, we should be communicating with all the organisations—you have

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mentioned a few this afternoon; for example, there is the ILO, there are some of the organisations in Geneva, and some of the other organisations around the UN. Not only could we be selling our own ethical policy about how human rights should be run—about how the supply chain through these factories that Baroness Prosser has mentioned—by asking countries and companies to sign up to the Athens agreement which this Government, through the Home Office, has been pushing, but by doing this we would be able to give a better chance for companies from the UK who are international to do trade with those countries. I know that you do not like the pushing of companies, but we have to do this, including when there is a chance to allocate our companies to the new up-and-coming superpowers and the BICS countries.

At the same time, also around ethical matters, you were talking about selling education. It is not just senior education you need to be selling. We need to be selling the point of education of boys and girls, and also around violence. DfID is working with some NGOs, but we need to encourage the rest of the world to work with us through soft power. Australia in particular is doing a huge amount of work down in that part of Asia. We should be picking other parts of the BICS world—these other emerging powers—where we can work and we can then be seen to be offering something, and they will want to trade with us or buy from us in terms of our education, in terms of our law, in terms of how their parliaments should be run and so on.

We have got this opportunity, through the new wave of technology, which is moving very fast. It is moving faster than we can actually keep up with, but we have to do it, because other people are in there already, or pushing themselves in there.

The Chairman: This is a completely new world, is it not?

Baroness Goudie: Absolutely.

The Chairman: I would love to hear just a few comments from our team on that fact. Mr Eric Schmidt of Google told us that there are more mobile telephone subscribers on this planet than there are human beings. Work that one out.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: I have got three.

Q134 The Chairman: This must change all your work in all your departments, and I think that Baroness Goudie has really put her finger on it. Who would like to comment? Mr Elliott again—let us start with the FCO.

Hugh Elliott: I am very happy to kick off, my Lord Chairman. It is a fascinating and very wide-ranging question. I will attempt to give one illustration to talk to the issue of networks, partnerships, breadth of relationships and how we might articulate it and link it up with UK values, with a specific example around the arms trade treaty and how we are involved in that process, which is perhaps illustrative of the sort of way in which we are trying to make the link. Then I will speak briefly about what the Foreign Office is doing to integrate and professionalise ourselves in the use of—

Baroness Goudie: And cluster bombs. You did a lot on cluster bombs. It made a big impact, the work you did on that.

Hugh Elliott: —digital platforms.

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On the arms trade treaty, the campaign that the British Government led is a very good illustration of the power of relationships and networks, because it was an issue that, in a sense, was brought to us by the NGO movement, saying, “Why don’t you do more on this?” It was an issue on which we went abroad and looked at the sort of international partnerships and the sort of partners that we might have in order to help develop this in the international agenda. We ended up with countries such as, from the top of my head, Japan, Argentina and South Africa, countries with very different sorts of interest but a common set of goals on this particular issue, and with whom we decided that it would be important for us to lead.

We collaboratively put together a process, recognising that an issue like this needed a lot of energy and oomph behind it, so it was a process that very much we were absolutely instrumental in leading. All the time, we were building relationships with business, with NGOs, with the voluntary sector a lot, and having a lot of discussions all along the way. And that was not just in the UK, but globally and—to the aspect of your question about United Nations institutions—obviously the United Nations was absolutely crucial to all this.

In the end, cutting a long story short, that very open, collaborative, persistent, determined and focused approach, taking into account all those sorts of networks, did actually deliver a very concrete result in the form of the arms trade treaty, which was a tremendous success for all of those involved. I think that illustrates part of your point.

Obviously the digital area is crucial now for being able to reach all the people who we need to reach, whatever country they are in. I shall just give you a few examples of how we in the Foreign Office are professionalising our implementation of our digital strategy. We have set up a special unit to help us to do this. To take social media as a leading example of how well we are doing this—we are probably doing it just about as well as anybody in the world; perhaps the United States is a little bit ahead, as it has considerable resources to do this—we have 120 official Twitter channels around the world around our network and 120 Facebook pages. All our Ministers are on Twitter. Fifty of our ambassadors, as the face of Britain overseas, are on Twitter in addition to the official embassy accounts, personally being involved and engaged with their constituencies. A particular example I would cite would be Lebanon, where our ambassador, Tom Fletcher, is extremely active in this area and reaching people whom traditionally diplomats might have struggled to reach.

This requires a very considerable investment in upskilling and training. At our recent leadership conference that we hosted for all our ambassadors around the world in London a few weeks ago, we held a special training session for ambassadors, which was massively oversubscribed. There was huge interest in this. There is complete awareness this is just going to be a natural way in which we need to do business. This is all part of the implementation of the Foreign Office’s *Digital Strategy*, which was published at the end of last year in December 2012, which sets out—and we can provide the Committee with this if it would be of interest—a very detailed process of transformation of how we do foreign policy to ensure that we make the very most of social media in the ways that we have to reach different parts of the world.

The Chairman: I think, actually, this Committee should be circulated, if possible, with that document, which is clearly on a central part of our thinking.

Hugh Elliott: Certainly.

Q135 The Chairman: Very well. Are there any other points anyone wants to make? Lord Janvrin, you wanted to come in particularly on the inward-facing aspect of the scene. Or—

Government (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Department for International Development and Foreign and Commonwealth Office) – Oral evidence (QQ I-22)

Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts: Promotion of cultural norms came up as part of your response to Baroness Goudie, and indeed as part of her question. This may sound a trifle uncompromising; it is not meant to be. I was in Rio the day that Jean Charles de Menezes was shot in the Tube here in London, and there was a stupendous amount of press coverage in Brazil. My host, who was an Anglophile Brazilian businessman said, “It is because we are shocked that you haven’t lived up to your past standards, but it will die away because we believe generally in Brazil that British justice will be seen, there will be an investigation and the truth will come out. In any case, by the by, the Rio police shoot 1,000 people a year and nobody turns a hair.” But he went on: “Your reputation has been damaged by a completely different thing.” And I said, “Oh, what is that?” He said, “Your ambassador here is gay, and he has insisted on bringing his partner with him and he is being presented at events.” This is an unfortunate thing to say, but he clearly thought this was very, very serious in a conservative Catholic country. I understand our cultural norm—I am not resiling from it—but we have to think about to what extent we wish to push it on to other people as part of our soft power developments.

The Chairman: Can we generalise that question, rather than be specific?

Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts: Of course. I am not trying to say—

The Chairman: I would prefer it if we generalised. To what extent are we in danger of pushing and imposing our own values, which we adhere to and cling to very strongly, a little too readily on others? Can I put it in more general terms? What do you think? Is that a fair criticism, Mr Elliott?

Hugh Elliott: I think it is very important that we do make the most of our values. We believe that British values are very strong, and we do not believe we should compromise our values in the exercise of our foreign policy. That said, of course we need to be sensitive to how, in seeking to achieve what we are trying to achieve, our actions come across in specific cultural contexts.

Q136 The Chairman: Lord Janvrin, I have one more comment after you, but you ask the penultimate question.

Lord Janvrin: I want to come back to the question of a wider strategy. Forgive me for doing so, but I think it is very important, and I will explain right at the end. I can see that in terms of interdepartmental co-ordination, it works probably extremely well through the National Security Council, et cetera—you have explained that. But you have also said—quite rightly in my view—that soft power is often about what other non-governmental agents do and how they join, if you like, in trying to support and indeed help the government policy, whether it be the arms trade treaty, et cetera. There is therefore in my view a government leadership role for a lot of non-governmental players and agents in this. I wonder whether, to have if you like the best leadership role, we need an overall strategy that people know about. In other words, this is not interdepartmental co-ordination; this is a leadership role. My question to you is: would you find it useful for this Committee to think in terms of an overall soft power strategy?

The Chairman: There is a question. Would anyone like to start on it? Mr Elliott again, or Mr Mitchell, or the cultural side?

Hugh Elliott: I would be happy to—

Government (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Department for International Development and Foreign and Commonwealth Office) – Oral evidence (QQ 1-22)

Lord Janvrin: I would quite like to hear other people's views as well. Poor Mr Elliott has been fielding—

The Chairman: If I could just add: a number of other bodies, not just this Committee, are looking at very much that question as well. I think a report is about to come out from the British Council on these things. The British Academy—or is it the Royal Academy?—is looking at them as well. There is a new sort of seriousness in international cultural relations which I think we have got to somehow reflect more effectively. I think a great deal hangs on your question, but it may not be possible to answer it in the last few minutes.

Maddalaine Ansell: Could I give a short answer? A couple of years ago, the National Security Council Emerging Powers said that it would be very good if there were a sub-committee involving the wider stakeholders around education and research. We set up such a sub-committee and looked at how we could co-ordinate across the piece our activities with those in universities, colleges, research councils, et cetera, and other Government departments. What we found was that the meetings happened, but they were not as focused as people would find most useful. What we ended up doing is splitting it, so we now have one that focuses on international education, and a different one that focuses more on science and research. I suppose for me one of the questions is whether it is actually more useful to take smaller topics rather than a whole piece, so that the stakeholders who turn up are interested in the whole of the meeting and feel that they have something to say, rather than are sitting there kind of silently while we are talking about trade aspects or cultural aspects, when in fact their area of expertise is science or education or arms trading.

The Chairman: Right. Mr Nichol, do you want to add something?

Keith Nichol: I think from a cultural perspective Lord Janvrin's question is very much in sync with my Secretary of State. She has observed that, culturally, we have this fantastic web of activity all over the world. 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. So what we are trying to do now—I hope it is not an heroic exercise—is to start to map that activity and to see where it is possible to align it with wider HMG and UK interests. That is one way of aligning cultural activity among the cultural players with business. If we know that the Royal Ballet is going to be in Brasilia in 2015, it may be that there are ways in which we can align that activity with trade and commercial activity in a way which makes the whole greater than the sum of the parts. In that respect, there is an opportunity to do that but, as I touched on earlier, we also have to respect the arm's-length principle and not prescribe which cultural bodies go to which countries, so there is a balancing act for us there.

Q137 The Chairman: That is a very useful and important answer. I am going to end, because we have had quite a session, with a question which probably lies on the frontiers between ministerial responsibility and official responsibility, and therefore you are perfectly entitled to duck it and say it lies on the other side of the fence. We have talked about all the tremendous efforts we are doing in all these fields—cultural, diplomatic, scientific, medical, educational—and it is very exciting and admirable, but we do also know that we have some pretty sour and difficult relations with some countries. Our Caribbean friends are forever raising the advanced passenger duty issue, and it is very sore and causes many problems. We only have to have a moment's discussion with our Chinese colleagues here in town or anywhere and they will tell us that our links with the Dalai Lama are absolutely weakening and destroying everything. I do not want to go into these questions but just to ask you: is it

Government (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Department for International Development and Foreign and Commonwealth Office) – Oral evidence (QQ 1-22)

the case that some of these hot political issues are making the projection of our soft power much more difficult? If it is, are we satisfied that there is the right feedback inside the Government between those of you who are trying to do this job and the political and diplomatic forces that sometimes seem to be working completely the opposite way? Does it worry you?

Andrew Mitchell: I am not sure which side of the line it really does fall on, but I will venture an answer. In so far as the way that we act in the world is consistent with our values and our principles, in a sense our role is to ensure that the work that we do takes account of the shocks and the various misdemeanours that this occasionally throws up. I would say that we do of course attempt to do that in the Foreign Office, and certainly as a former head of mission myself I certainly saw my role overseas as helping to anticipate the risks associated with that kind of a potential problem, and then to manage those risks once they had transpired. But if I can say that that is in the ordinary course of diplomacy—it has happened for 100 or 200 years and it will continue to happen—I guess it is about being true to your principles, sticking to your plan, and managing the impact that that has.

The Chairman: I think that is a very fair reply to—I agree—a slightly difficult question. Have any of my colleagues got any final point they wanted to put? No? I think in that case I would like to thank all five of you very much indeed. You have been very forthcoming. It has raised perhaps rather more questions than it has all answered, but those are matters for us to pursue in this Committee in future sessions, so thank you all very much indeed. We are most grateful. Could you just leave, because we have got just two or three minutes of private deliberation. Could I ask colleagues to stay for a second? Thank you very much.

Government (Department for International Development) – Supplementary written evidence

In the oral evidence session on June 10 2013, Lord Forsyth of Drumlean, asked under Question 5: “Can you focus on the outputs and tell me specifically what your departments have achieved in enhancing the UK’s attractiveness and influence abroad and in furthering the UK’s priorities, and how you measure that?”. In her answer, Barbara Hendrie said DFID would be able to supply detail of the development outputs it has achieved.

This note provides information on the outputs of DFID’s aid programme. This illustrates DFID’s contribution to supporting the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, a commitment set out in the Coalition Agreement. The information is taken from the DFID Annual Report and Accounts 2012-13 which were published and laid before Parliament on 27 June 2013¹¹¹.

DFID’s impact on the attractiveness and influence of the UK abroad is an area of increasing interest to Ministers. The Department is therefore considering how to measure its contribution to ‘soft power’ in a more systematic way.

DFID’s contribution to development outputs

Chapter Two of the Annual Report presents the results achieved at each level of DFID’s Results Framework. Level two of the Results Framework measures DFID’s contribution to development results. The indicators at this level measure the outputs that can be directly linked to DFID bilateral programmes and projects and to its multilateral portfolio. A list of results at this level is presented in Table 2.1 of the Annual Report.

Examples of DFID’s results up to and including 2012-13 are:

- 30.3 million people with access to financial services, compared with 11.6 million up to 2011-12;
- 19.6 million people with access to a water, sanitation or hygiene intervention, compared to 13.8 million up to 2011-12;
- 12.9 million children under 5 or pregnant women with nutrition programmes, compared to 5.5 million up to 2011-12;
- 1.6 million births delivered with the help of nurses, midwives or doctors, compared to 1.1 million up to 2011-12;
- 22.4 million insecticide-treated bed-nets distributed, compared to 12.6 million up to 2011-12;

¹¹¹ DFID Annual Report and Accounts 2012-13 are available online at the following link. A hard copy has been placed in the House Library. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfid-annual-report-and-accounts-2012-13>

Government (Department for International Development) – Supplementary written evidence

- 22.8 million children immunised against preventable diseases, compared to 12.2 million up to 2011-12;
- 8.7 million people reached with emergency food assistance.

The UK has also made significant progress towards the 2015 targets which DFID set out in March 2011. Highlights include support for:

- 33.4 million people to have choice and control over their own development (2015 target, 40 million);
- 6.1 million people with cash transfer programmes (2015 target, 6 million);
- 5.9 million children in primary education per year (2015 target, 9 million);
- 3.8 million people to improve their rights to land and property (2015 target, 6 million).

DFID has developed and published methodological guidance¹¹² on each indicator to help ensure consistency of measurement across countries and permit meaningful aggregation of results. The indicators included above reflect those outputs where it is possible to aggregate results across different countries. The indicators do not reflect all the results that DFID is delivering, and results that are vital to each country's development may not be covered here simply because they cannot be aggregated across countries. Where multilateral results are included, these capture key outputs as reported by the multilateral organisations themselves.

DFID's operational effectiveness and performance against its Structural Reform Plan

Level three of the Results Framework monitors how well the Department manages the delivery of results and ensures value for money. DFID reports regularly against the following performance areas:

- Pipeline delivery: data on DFID's pipeline of programmes (those programmes either approved or under design) to help assess whether DFID has sufficient good quality plans in place to ensure that it will achieve its results commitments;
- Portfolio quality: a measure of the extent to which DFID's interventions are on track to deliver their expected outputs and outcomes;
- Monitoring and evaluation: data on the extent to which DFID is actively reviewing its programmes and learning lessons for the future;
- Structural Reform Plan: data to assess how well DFID is delivering against its corporate objectives and areas prioritised by the Coalition Government.

¹¹² The methodology notes may be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfid-annual-report-and-accounts-2012-2013-methodology-notes>

Government (Department for International Development) – Supplementary written evidence

DFID's Structural Reform Plan (SRP) is part of its Business Plan for 2012–15 which outlines the Coalition Government's vision for development up to 2015.¹¹³ During 2012–13, DFID performed very strongly in implementing its structural reform priorities: 22 actions across all six Coalition priorities were completed over the course of the year, 20 completed on time and two actions completed in advance of their end dates. Further information on DFID's performance against its SRP may be found on Table 2.3 of the Annual Report which is also attached to this note.

July 2013

¹¹³ The DFID Business Plan may be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-international-development-business-plan-2012-to-2015>

Government (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) – Supplementary written evidence

19 June 2013

[Dear Lord Howell]

Thank you for the opportunity to give evidence to the House of Lords Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence on Monday 10 June. At that session I undertook to write to the Committee in response to Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts' question (Question 15) concerning Departments' focused programmes building our commercial and economic interests in the light of the new emerging markets.

In answer to Question 12 I referred to the Government's emerging powers initiative to strengthen relationships with fast growing economies, coordinated through a sub-committee of the National Security Council, and to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's strengthening of its diplomatic network, deploying more staff to the fastest growing regions, upgrading existing posts and opening new ones. An Emerging Powers Department has been set up in the FCO to support the cross-government initiative. It works with overseas Posts and existing thematic/geographical structures in London to strengthen bilateral relations with the emerging powers. The Department helps to troubleshoot and support Departments across Whitehall to ensure that emerging powers are prioritised for funding, Ministerial visits, and in policy decisions.

The Emerging Powers Department has a Programme Fund of around £500,000 for 2013/14 that will be targeted at improving the UK's bilateral relations with some of the world's fastest growing economies. The fund covers projects that contribute to the four strands of the National Security Council's Emerging Powers strategy: Trade and Investment; Promoting the Rules Based International Economic System; people to people links; and security. The objective of the Emerging Powers Programme Fund is to help to strengthen our overall relationships with the emerging powers by building closer links between the people of the UK and the emerging power nations. In particular, we are looking to deepen and embed the UK's links with current and future policy thinkers, decision-makers, role models and opinion formers – from young entrepreneurs and experts in new technology to influential talk-show hosts, sports stars, bloggers, cultural figures and diaspora leaders.

A new programme set up by the FCO this year which will help strengthen links with the emerging powers is the Future International Leaders Programme. It comprises visits to the UK for talented individuals from around the world, who have been selected for their potential to become internationally influential leaders in politics, civil society, international organisations, global business or the media. The programme is a long-term investment in the UK's relationships with key partners and an opportunity to engage with the leaders of tomorrow. During a group programme of about a week the visitors engage at a senior level with government, Parliament, media, business, education, the arts and civil society.

I hope that this adequately answers the question as far as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is concerned. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Andrew Mitchell
Prosperity Director

21 June 2013

[Dear Lord Howell]

Thank you for the opportunity to give evidence to the House of Lords Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence on Monday 10 June. At that session I undertook to write to the Committee to give further information on three issues.

Firstly, Lord Forsyth of Drumlean asked about policy successes and failures by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and how these were measured. Our recently published Departmental Improvement Plan, a copy of which is included with this letter, assesses our performance against key security, prosperity and consular policy priorities. As I mentioned at the evidence session, our Annual Report and Accounts 2012-2013 will give further details about our performance over the last financial year. You will be sent a copy of this when it is published, before the summer recess.

You asked about the involvement of UK military in Afghanistan in civil power, civic operations and social reconstruction and which department would have overseen this. The UK military would tend to term such activities as stabilisation operations. Such operations, as they exist in Afghanistan, are primarily conducted by the Military Stabilisation Support Group (MSSG) which has supported the UK led Provincial Reconstruction Team's (PRT) efforts in Helmand since 2006.

MSSG is coordinated by the Ministry of Defence and is formed from both regular and reservist forces. It has supported the PRT and the UK Stabilisation Advisors in each district of Helmand Province working with the local Afghan authorities to help develop Afghan capacity to build their own infrastructure, government institutions, public services and economic development. This is an invaluable part of the UK's integrated approach to supporting the long term success of Afghanistan. MSSG's stabilisation support activities have drawn down in line with the change in the role of UK forces from combat to providing training and support for the Afghan National Security Forces as the ANSF have progressively assumed lead responsibility for Afghanistan's security.

Finally, you asked also for a copy of the FCO's Digital Strategy, published in December 2012, which is included with this letter. The strategy sets out how we will expand our use of digital technology both in the delivery of services, particularly consular whilst continuing to provide face to face support to British nationals most in need, and in policy formulation, including delivering more open policy and transparency.

I hope this is of some help to you and the Committee. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or assistance.

I am copying this letter to Susannah Street, Clerk to the Committee, and Úna Ryan, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Select Committee Liaison Officer.

Hugh Elliott
Director
Engagement & Communication

Sir Jeremy Greenstock – Written evidence

Soft Power and the UK's Influence

The first decade of the 21st century has provided plenty of evidence of the importance in politics and geopolitics of the power of persuasion and 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, in the relative helplessness of outside powers trying to address the instability in the Middle East and in the continuing commentary on the declining global impact of the United States and Europe.

The causes that underlie the symptoms reflect shifts in the global distribution of power since the end of the Cold War and the consequences of the spread of freedom and equal opportunity. The ingredients of this remarkable period of change include:

- the moral force of the concept of self-determination and political independence, established by the Charter, declarations and operations of the United Nations and encouraged by American support for democracy and individual freedom;
- the growing power of the people's voice, given strength by the increasing pervasiveness of open communications channels and by the widespread promotion of individual rights;
- the resulting focus in politics and society on ethnic, religious and political identity and 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 rapid expansion of methods of doing business internationally;
- 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.

The accumulated effect of these trends has been to counter the image and actuality of a Western advanced industrial elite and to accelerate the chances for a much wider range of countries of advancing their economic interests. This has generated two principal consequences:

- a) There are far more genuinely independent actors on the global stage, going beyond governments to multinational companies, civil society, small groups whether benign or malign in character, all the way to powerful individuals. While most people are still struggling to comprehend the arrival of multipolarity in geopolitics, the reality is already moving beyond a multipolar stage to one of uncontrollable diversity and localisation.
- b) The main criterion for the strength and impact of a modern state or society has become economic rather than political/military performance. This stems from the unacceptability of the use of political or military weight to impose solutions in a highly competitive world, and

Sir Jeremy Greenstock – Written evidence

the growing respect for those who take responsibility for their own development in a meritocratic and egalitarian environment. Leading by example in the economic sphere works, where attempting to do the same in the military or political sphere does not.

When it comes to the UK, the following points are important:

- economic health, not to say dynamism, through competing in a fair and law-abiding way for globally available opportunities, becomes paramount;
- any reliance on attributes or privileges derived from the past decrease in effect with time;
- our connectedness to most parts of the world, through history, trade, membership of institutions and good diplomacy, remains a strong advantage, as does our familiarity with the increasing complexity, diversity and vulnerability of the digital universe;
- the attractiveness of the UK in cultural or presentational terms is increased by its acceptance of an equal and meritocratic world, by consideration for other cultures and for those in less advanced stages of development and by perceptions of the contributions the UK makes to global problem-solving;
- where the UK is compelled to make choices, for instance in a regional crisis, its adherence to the principles of international behaviour and its ability to win the backing of mainstream international opinion become more important in a world in which legitimacy has a concrete force.

We undoubtedly have a number of things running in our favour. The widespread use of the English language, however much influenced by the cultural power of the United States, gives us a distinct advantage. The example and longevity of our principal institutions, the monarchy, Parliament, the law, the City and the best of our media, exercise an influence well beyond the Commonwealth. Our capacity in international forums to help solve problems, find compromises and negotiate texts is seen as constructive. Our general professional competence is admired, though only against the background of widespread incompetence elsewhere.

We also carry some handicaps. The most significant is our lack of robust economic health and commercial dynamism. We gain surprisingly few image points for innovation and technology, in spite of the reality of considerable capability in these fields. It may be the marketing. We are also seen as relying on privilege, something that stems from our continuing permanent membership of the UN Security Council, our role in NATO and the Commonwealth and perhaps most significantly from our almost obsessive relationship with the US. On this last point, while we should assign high priority to the quality of Anglo-American relations, we should be aware enough of the occasional differences in the mindset and values of our two peoples not to be afraid of taking a distinctive position when it reflects our national interest and character better.

The importance of soft power lies not in its superiority to hard power, as though there was a binary choice, but in its indispensability in 21st century geopolitics as a corollary of hard power. For the reasons given above, relying primarily on hard power reduces the impact and acceptability of a state's policies. But soft power, the capacity to persuade and attract, is insufficient on its own to promote and defend national or group interests. In certain critical

Sir Jeremy Greenstock – Written evidence

circumstances, it can too easily be ignored. The story of the EU in modern times illustrates that.

It is the balanced combination of hard and soft power that is most effective. Speak persuasively, but carry a big stick. The UK has been notable, at least before it began to reduce its armed forces to too low a quantity, for creating as good a balance in that respect for its size of population as any country. Our armed forces and our diplomatic skills are equally professional. Our willingness to choose either dialogue or hard action gains respect, at least when the choice is well judged by international norms. The BBC, the British Council, the British arts world and UK sport, together with other aspects of our culture and presentation, are world class when properly resourced.

I hope that the Committee will, above all, pay attention to the maintenance of this balance and to the need for both sides of it to be adequately cared for.

17 September 2013

Lord Hannay of Chiswick – Written evidence

This evidence is being submitted in a purely personal capacity, drawing principally on the author's experience in the Diplomatic Service (1959-1995); as a member of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (2003-4); and as a member of the House's EU Select Committee and several of its sub-committees since 2001.

Introduction

1. The decision by the House in May 2013 to set up a Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's influence was a welcome one. Although soft power and the international influence it brings with it cannot be calibrated with precision, it is nevertheless real. A country's soft power is a national asset which can either be augmented or reduced by actions taken by the government.

2. The concept of soft power, and indeed its label, is a relatively novel one. It therefore has no place in the historical record. A nation's influence on international developments is a wider concept than that of soft power, encompassing, as it does, the use of both soft power and hard power. The boundary line between the two categories is often blurred and hard to identify.

3. Britain's international influence has fluctuated quite widely in the past hundred years as have the relative contributions to it of Britain's hard and soft power. For example one hundred years ago, just before the outbreak of the First World War, it would have been reasonable to single out the world-wide, hard power influence of the Royal Navy as far and away more significant than any soft power instruments existing at that time, which were in any case relatively few in comparison with the present period. But Britain's international influence was certainly much greater then than it is now. Our influence will, in the future as in the past, consist of a combination of our hard power and our soft power; but the latter cannot simply compensate for a reduction in the former.

4. It would seem to make sense to assume that, in the period ahead, Britain's relative hard power, in a world where a considerable number of countries which are growing economically faster than we are, or are likely to do, and which are devoting substantial resources to increasing their hard power assets, will decline. That points to a greater weight being placed on our soft power if we seek to sustain our international influence. But it is important to recognise that too rapid a reduction in our hard power assets, or in our willingness to make use of them, will undermine any efforts we make to increase our soft power and with it our influence.

The Multilateral Dimension of Britain's Soft Power

5. In the period since the end of the Second World War there has been a massive expansion in multilateral diplomacy and in the activities of the multilateral organisations which have been established to manage, and in some cases to regulate and seek to control, international developments. These multilateral organisations vary widely in their effectiveness and in the ambition of their mandates, varying from genuine elements of rules-based systems such as exist in the World Trade Organisation's trade dispute settlement

provisions or in the complex legal structures of the European Union, to much flimsier and discretionary systems. Successive British governments have tended from the outset to support strongly the establishment of such multilateral international organisations (in some cases such as the UN, the Commonwealth and NATO being among the founding fathers of them), calculating, correctly in the view of this author, that such structures would tend to increase Britain's soft power and help it to secure outcomes which it could not have obtained by acting alone. That calculation remains today as valid as ever. The clear implication is that present and future British governments should be working to support these organisations, to increase their effectiveness and to extend the reach of rules-based international systems where that can be demonstrated to be realistic and desirable, for example in dealing with the challenges of climate change.

6. 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. It is therefore a major national asset. Since that status can only be changed with our own agreement, it is not easy to see how it could become vulnerable (and there is no question of there being any link with our possession of nuclear weapons – four out of the five permanent members of the Security Council did not have such weapons at the time they became permanent members). 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. It is important therefore that, as the strains imposed on our military by operations in Afghanistan abate, we play a more active role in UN peacekeeping, in particular by contributing to the more sophisticated elements now required of modern peacekeeping operations. We should also be doing all we can to strengthen the credibility and the disciplines of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, to support extension of the geographical scope of the jurisdiction and the activities of the International Criminal Court; and to ensure that the newly signed Arms Trade Treaty enters into force without delay and is implemented world-wide.

7. The Commonwealth also is an important potential source of soft power, although often under-utilised. It will be important to rid ourselves of two prevalent misconceptions. The first is that the Commonwealth is an alternative to, or a substitute for, our membership of the European Union; the second is that Britain somehow has a proprietorial role in the way the Commonwealth develops. If we can do that, it should be possible to build up the already substantial network of professional and cultural links which operate under the aegis of the Commonwealth, devoting more resources to the provision of scholarships, and not just to the developing country members of the organisation. It should also 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.

8. Our membership of 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.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick – Written evidence

We have been a leading supporter of successive enlargements of the Union which have helped to build solid foundations for democracy and free market economies in the countries of southern, central and eastern Europe, which were previously subject to totalitarian regimes. There remains a major positive agenda for reform still to be accomplished in all these areas and others. 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.

Britain's main national instruments of soft power

9. The BBC, and in particular its World Service and its foreign language services, are clearly major, and still steadily expanding, instruments of Britain's soft power, although their effectiveness rests on their retaining the highest professional standards and on their being seen to practice that genuine objectivity which is the hallmark of good journalism. In that context the severing of the Government's direct subsidy to the World Service should be helpful. But it will only be so if it is possible to ensure that the World Service is able to respond rapidly and flexibly to changes in demand arising from unexpected international developments and if it is not starved of resources by the demands of the BBC's domestic services. It is far from clear that the arrangements made so far to secure these objectives are yet sufficient.

10. The British Council, along with the BBC, plays a critical role in capitalising on the soft power potential of the English language. It is hard to see English being challenged as the lingua franca of the twenty-first century. It is important therefore to ensure that the British Council is properly equipped and funded to play that role, and to compete with other nations, particularly those for whom English is their native tongue.

11. Britain's higher education establishments have been a significant part of our soft power since the first generation of post-colonial leaders were mainly drawn from those educated at British universities. That soft power role has greatly expanded in recent years as our universities have grown and, by their quality, have attracted increasing numbers of undergraduates, post graduates and researchers from an ever wider range of countries. Britain's higher education sector is now a major and rapidly growing contributor to Britain's invisible exports; and Britain is second in a world market for overseas students which is set to grow in the years ahead. Unfortunately there is a real tension between the impact of the Government's immigration policy, which has already resulted in sharp drops in the number of students coming from a number of our main overseas markets, and the desirable objective of continuing to develop and expand this important source of future soft power. The sooner the Government can make it clear that the public policy implications of its immigration policy will not apply to genuine students, researchers and faculty the better. Otherwise not only will Britain's universities be deprived of much-needed sources of funding but we will be forgoing an important source of soft power.

12. The continuing steady and significant drop in foreign language skills at our schools and universities may be in part a reflection of the global dominance of the English language. But, if not reversed, it will over time diminish our soft power right across the board, including in areas affecting trade and investment.

13. The commitment by the coalition government to bringing Britain's Official Development Aid up to 0.7% of our Gross National Income has made both an indirect and a

Lord Hannay of Chiswick – Written evidence

direct contribution to Britain's soft power. The indirect role has been reflected in the chairing by the Prime Minister of the UN panel set up to plot the way ahead on the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals; and by the contrast with a number of other developed countries who have fallen behind on their commitment to the 0.7% target. More directly our ODA remains needed and appreciated in a wide range of developing countries whose future prosperity will contribute to our own. But 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.

Conclusion

14. This evidence has avoided covering areas in the Call for Evidence where the author has had no direct professional experience. That is not therefore a comment on the relative importance of those areas which are omitted. One general comment would be that the Call for Evidence rather underplays the contribution to Britain's soft power made by its membership of and influence in the main international multilateral organisations.

September 2013

Humanitarian Intervention Centre (HIC) – Written evidence

Submission from the Humanitarian Intervention Centre (HIC)

Julie Lenarz – Executive Director

Simon Schofield – Senior Fellow

Daniel Wand – Junior Fellow

Philip Cane – Research Assistant

Tom Dunn – Research Assistant

- I.1** The Humanitarian Intervention Centre is a not-for-profit, independent foreign policy think tank based in London, which works with politicians, policy-makers, journalists and human rights activists to promote and engage in a debate about the consequences of action and inaction in war and conflict zones.

Foreword

- I.2** The United Kingdom (UK) has long excelled in soft power, being, *inter alia*, one of the primary international actors responsible for promoting democracy, human rights and the rule of law; the originator of many of the world's best-loved sports; and a film, music and theatre hub that the entire world flocks to. Our historical, political and cultural legacies have allowed us to establish a well-known brand as the UK.
- I.3** Our country's soft power is one of its strongest comparative advantages. It is a force multiplier which enables us to consistently punch well above our weight on the international stage. It is of uttermost importance for the UK to maintain this capacity, particularly in light of the emphasis China is placing on projecting soft power globally.
- I.4** The academic concept of soft power is well documented. Rather than regurgitate much of previous theories, the Humanitarian Intervention Centre (HIC) has endeavoured to look at more original angles, which may not have been addressed and covered as extensively as the obvious.
- I.5** Below follows our understanding of what constitutes soft power, its interactions with hard power and *vice versa*, and an examination of the role played by the UK in the field of international law.

Understanding the concept of soft power

- I.6** The HIC believes that it is difficult to isolate the concept of soft power from the contrasting concept of hard power. The Centre largely accepts Joseph Nye's definition of soft power, which holds that it is the ability to use attraction and persuasion to convince others to act in a way desirable to oneself. It is the use of attraction rather than coercion – shaping the preferences of others, instead of using the carrot and stick¹¹⁴. In contrast to hard power, which uses economic or military threats or sanctions to influence others to act in a desirable way, soft power indirectly leads others to want what you want. In essence, soft power is a government's ability to persuade other governments to agree with its position by using its culture, political values and foreign

¹¹⁴ Nye, Joseph (1990) 'Soft Power', *Foreign Policy*, 80: pp.153-171

policies¹¹⁵. The global appeal of British cultural institutions, universities, the BBC, British sport, diplomacy and parliamentary democracy have led many to place the United Kingdom at the top of the global table of ‘soft power’¹¹⁶. The changing nature of global affairs and the instant dissemination of information due to the emergence of new technologies have led to soft power becoming increasingly important in recent years.

2.1 As opposed to hard power, soft power is difficult to manipulate, due to it being slower moving and less affected by policy changes. Many of the instruments of soft power are outside of the control of government. Contrary to foreign exchange reserves or military capabilities, soft power cannot be stockpiled and deployed at will in order to achieve desired goals. By its very nature, soft power involves the opinions and observations of the global public and influences of non-state actors. Governments, therefore, can only affect soft power through their values, institutions and culture.

2.2 Whilst this is true, soft power should not be so simply separated from hard power and it is vital for the UK to acknowledge the limitations of it, especially in comparison to organisations such as the EU, which, arguably, have an excessive normative-oriented policy approach to war and conflict zones. Often, military and economic methods are the most appropriate means of exercising power. But it can be the case that instruments usually associated with soft power can be used in hard power ways, and those associated with hard power used in soft power ways. Liberal intervention, military power and humanitarian relief can be used as soft power instruments to increase the UK’s legitimacy at home and abroad. On the other hand, the UK’s soft power appeal can be utilised by institutions of hard power to encourage states to act or not act in whatever way is desirable. From this approach, the distinction set by many between hard and soft power becomes blurred.

How do deployments of soft power inter-relate with harder and more physical exercises of the nation’s power?

2.3 Whilst military power is often associated as a core tenet of hard power, HM Armed Forces are also an integral part of the UK’s soft power strategy, but are currently under-utilised in this role. The Coalition has promoted Defence Engagement, stating that the strategy is underpinned by rewarding such a commitment with increasing British influence in the respective nations¹¹⁷. The policy would favour key allies and countries that provide the UK access, basing and over-flight privileges. Yet, despite this, the idea of hard power having a soft power legacy is very much under-emphasised. The Centre wishes to promote this debate further by arguing that liberal interventionism and humanitarian relief can and should play a vital part in the UK’s soft power projection.

¹¹⁵ Monocle (2012) ‘Soft Power Survey’, <http://monocle.com/film/affairs/soft-power-survey-2012/>, (date accessed 20/09/2013)

¹¹⁶ British Council (2013) ‘Influence and Attraction: Culture and race for soft power in the 21st century’, <http://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/documents/influence-and-attraction-report.pdf>, (date accessed 22/09/2013)

¹¹⁷ Ministry of Defence (2013) ‘International Defence Engagement Strategy’, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/73171/defence_engagement_strategy.pdf, (date accessed 29/02/2013)

3.1 Sierra Leone is one of Britain's most successful hard power interventions, where British and supporting Nigerian-led ECOMOG forces concluded a bitter eleven year civil war and brought about the destruction of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Yet, in the wake of hard power, soft power has cemented the UK as Freetown's 'most important bilateral partner'¹¹⁸. The British Armed Forces and diplomatic personnel have transformed the heavily armed factionalised country into one of Africa's most peaceful stable countries in just thirteen years, despite 60% of the Sierra Leonean population living in absolute poverty¹¹⁹. The International Mentoring Assistance Training Team (IMATT) and British Short Term Training teams have successfully supervised the foundation of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF), which has the trust of the local population¹²⁰ and has successfully deployed to Somalia and Sudan to aid peace enforcement missions with the African Union¹²¹. Furthermore RSLAF has become one of Africa's most progressive military forces, with 10% of trainee officers and 26% of the recruits being female¹²². Females now account for 4% of the RSLAF in total, just less than half that of Britain¹²³. These successes have led to enduring relations with RSLAF and the Sierra Leonean government, which in turn has translated into significant influence. As such, when Freetown assumed complete control of training of the RSLAF in 2011, the culture of discipline and military prowess which British soft power had created became 'a culture that's now self-sustaining' being passed from each generation¹²⁴. The BBC's Allan Little has reported that Sierra Leone wishes Britain to take an 'even bigger role' in the country's internal affairs and that British government officials sit in the main offices of state, monitoring and supervising the country's transition¹²⁵. As demonstrated in Sierra Leone a small detachment of just twenty five tri-service personnel¹²⁶, supported by IMATT, have embedded British influence through soft power whilst also contributing greatly to the joint FCO and MOD conflict prevention and stability strategy¹²⁷.

3.2 However, Sierra Leone is not an isolated example. Many will remember the jubilant celebrations that greeted President Sarkozy and the Prime Minister during their 2011 visit to Benghazi in the aftermath of NATO's intervention. Since then the Foreign Secretary William Hague announced that the UK will train 2,000 members of the Libyan Armed Forces in the Basingbourn Barracks¹²⁸, in line with the trajectory of Sierra Leone exiting a civil war, it can be hoped that soft power influence will also be cemented in Libya.

¹¹⁸ Conteh, Paolo, Minister of Defence (2013) 'UK - Sierra Leone relations marked at HM The Queen's birthday celebration', <https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/uk-sierra-leone-relations-marked-at-hm-the-queens-birthday-celebration>, (date accessed 21/09/2013)

¹¹⁹ Department of International Development (2013) 'Summary of DFID's work in Sierra Leone 2011-2015', https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/209868/Sierra-Leone-summary1.pdf, (date accessed 20/09/2013)

¹²⁰ Gibson, Ali (26/06/2012) 'Sierra Leone Armed Forces make progress', *British Forces News*

¹²¹ Gibson, Ali (25/06/2012) 'Troops prepare to deploy to Somalia', *British Forces News*

¹²² Gibson, Ali (29/06/2012), 'Making a difference in Sierra Leone', *British Forces News*

¹²³ In 2009 women made up 9.5% of the British Armed Forces. Ministry of Defence (2013) 'Recruitment Figures', <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence/about/recruitment> (date accessed 22/09/2013)

¹²⁴ Little, Allan (19/08/2010) 'Can Britain lift Sierra Leone out of Poverty?' *BBC Newsnight*

¹²⁵ Little, Allan (13/08/2010) 'Our World: Returning to Sierra Leone', *BBC News*

¹²⁶ Gibson, Ali (30/08/2012) 'Making a difference in Sierra Leone', *British Forces News*

¹²⁷ Foreign & Commonwealth Office and Ministry of Defence (2011) 'Building Stability Overseas Strategy', https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67475/Building-stability-overseas-strategy.pdf, (date accessed 28/09/2013)

¹²⁸ Foreign & Commonwealth Office and Ministry of Defence (2013) 'Libyan Armed Forces to be trained in UK', <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/libyan-armed-forces-to-be-trained-in-uk> (date accessed 22/09/2013)

- 4.1** Beyond this, it is important to note the impression that can be made on rising powers such as the BRIC countries. Most of them have relatively young populations, who, as a result of globalised culture and media, are more exposed to Western values than older generations¹²⁹. A robust foreign policy that promotes liberal ideals and human rights abroad could have strong appeal and even plant the seeds of soft power in the years to come.
- 4.2** As such, the HIC believes adamantly that the UK should recognise that international and unilateral intervention can bring the UK a soft power legacy within affected countries in a similar fashion to that brought by humanitarian and disaster relief. The Centre also strongly believes that the Ministry of Defence can play a key part in the promotion of soft power abroad and that international training programmes are a relatively inexpensive method of directly influencing the key decision-making actors in developing states."

How are UK institutions and values perceived abroad?

- 4.3** The soft power of a country is to a large extent derived from its foreign policies, and particularly where those policies reflect the perceived legitimacy of the state and are a manifestation of its moral authority. This is undoubtedly true of the UK. 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.
- 4.4** It is the HIC's view that these qualities emanate in part from the operation of a highly sophisticated and developed legal system which is respected around the world and is supported by the great volume of world leading legal thought and practice that comes out of the country. Furthermore, such 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 encourage cooperation and to build consensus.
- 4.5** The protection of human rights is seen as one of the fundamental hallmarks of a moral and civilised society. The UK has a highly developed human rights framework backed by legislation¹³⁰ and the rights of individuals are rigorously enforced by the courts and other organisations.¹³¹ The UK also projects this on the international stage. It is a signatory to all of the major human rights treaties¹³², the International Criminal Court¹³³, the Council of Europe¹³⁴ and advocates for

¹²⁹ Reynolds, James (2009) 'Today's Generation of Young People', http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/thereporters/jamesreynolds/2009/06/todays_generation_of_young_peo.html (date accessed 29/09/2013)

¹³⁰ The Human Rights Act 1988 which implements the European Convention on Human Rights affords individuals the opportunity to have their cases heard by the European Court of Human Rights when they have exhausted all domestic legal remedies.

¹³¹ The Equality and Human Rights Commission has a statutory remit promote and protect human rights in the United Kingdom, see EHRC (2013) <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/> (date accessed 26 September 2013)

¹³² International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (signed 16 September 1968 and ratified 20 May 1976), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (signed 16 September 1968 and ratified on 20 May 1976) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (10 December 1948)

¹³³ Signed on 30 November 1988 and ratified on 04 October 2001

¹³⁴ Signed on 04 November 1950 and ratified on 08 March 1951

the protection of human rights in Europe and across the world. This is most recently exemplified by its fierce condemnation of the atrocities committed in Syria and the work that it has undertaken in developing the “Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict”.

- 5.1** Our country is actively engaged in and contributes to the work of numerous international organisations and plays a leading role in international legal diplomacy, assisting with the development and implementation of international law. The UK is proactive in the United Nations Security Council and is also actively engaged with numerous other projects which seek to enforce international legal norms, maintain international peace and security, support capacity building and promote democracy and good governance around the globe.
- 5.2** The UK also continues to play a key role in the negotiation of international treaties, most recently leading the way in securing final approval of the UN Arms Trade Treaty by working to build a broad coalition of support¹³⁵, something which it would not have been able to do without its moral and legal standing. Furthermore, the relentless and thorough commentary of and action on international legal issues by both the executive and domestic academic institutions makes a significant contribution to the development of international jurisprudence and customary international law and reflects the UK’s commitment to its role as an international power and facilitator of change.
- 5.3** It is the HIC’s view that the dissemination of the UK’s values through its involvement with, and contribution to, both the domestic and international legal realm makes a real addition to the country’s soft power and allows it to build consensus and gather support for its position on divisive international issues.

Conclusions

- The UK’s historical, political and cultural legacies have established a well-known, global soft power brand
- The strength of British soft power is far greater than its population and size would otherwise suggest and is a force multiplier on the international stage
- Hard power and soft power are difficult to isolate from one another and are often mutually reinforcing
- A strong hard power capability can add to a nation’s soft power appeal and hard power applications (e.g. humanitarian intervention) can lead to soft power gains and legacies
- Government is only partly able to control its nation’s soft power – non-state actors play a large role
- HM Armed Forces can be used for soft power projection through training and other engagement programmes abroad
- The UK’s active involvement with and contribution to both the domestic and international legal realm makes a real contribution to the country’s soft power.

30 September 2013

¹³⁵ Duncan, John (2013) ‘The UK’s Role in the UN Arms Trade Treaty’, <https://quarterly.blog.gov.uk/2013/07/12/the-uks-role-in-the-un-arms-trade-treaty-2/> (date accessed 27 September 2013)

ICAEW – Written evidence

Introduction

1. Thank you for the opportunity a written submission in response to the call for evidence by the House of Lords committee on soft power and the UK's influence. ICAEW would be happy to provide oral evidence on any aspect of this submission.

Executive Summary

2. **ICAEW international capacity** building projects drive economic development and inward investment. At critical stages of a nation's development, the UK is a partner in prosperity and part of the solution to challenges including business support, corporate governance and tax.
3. **Professional partnerships** and mutual recognition between international bodies strengthens the UK's soft power through locally owned qualifications, training and standards; in addition to the benefits for international business in recognised qualifications and standards.
4. **ICAEW Chartered Accountants** are often found as Chief Executives or Finance Directors of global businesses or as Senior Partners of international accountancy practices. Whether fully qualified or still in training, members and students are a major asset to UK commercial and cultural relationships wherever they work.

ICAEW and its members

5. ICAEW is a world leading professional accountancy body that promotes, develops and supports over 140,000 chartered accountants worldwide. We provide qualifications and professional development, share our knowledge, insight and technical expertise, and protect the quality and integrity of the accountancy and finance profession.

Soft power in people – ICAEW members

6. ICAEW Chartered Accountants are CEO's and COO's of global firms and Managing Partners of accountancy practices. 80% of UK FTSE 100 companies have one of our members on their board and over 54% of FTSE 350 companies have an ICAEW chartered accountant as their CFO, CEO or Chair. ICAEW members hold similarly influential positions in international business, government and regulators.
7. Of our members working in markets outside of the UK there are approximately 23 per cent in Europe, 17 per cent in the United States and 15 per cent in Greater China. To support our global membership we have offices around the world usually in major international financial centres. Over a quarter of ICAEW students are now living and working outside of the UK.

The soft power of professions overseas

8. In 1992, Lord Benson listed the criteria for a profession. These included:

- a governing body with an overarching public interest;
 - educational standards for entry - with ongoing training;
 - ethical rules beyond the requirements of the law;
 - application of rules for the protection and benefit of the public, not member benefit;
 - disciplinary action for unprofessional behaviour;
 - providing wider leadership within their discipline;
9. These criteria form part of a long tradition of professionalism in British public life and beyond. They have informed Britain's historic footprint in commonwealth nations and continue to be a key element within UK exports and relationships.

Soft power in structures - international capacity building work:

10. For almost 10 years ICAEW supported international capacity building projects to develop local expressions of professional bodies and related institutions. Such projects help secure the infrastructure that promotes inward investment and builds business confidence.
11. In all these projects ICAEW works in partnership with stakeholders, including professional accountancy bodies, financial regulators, ministries of finance and others such as the Auditor General and Accountant General. These relationships help strengthen counterpart organisations and regulators, but also provide opportunities for influence. ICAEW believes robust national accountancy institutes play a key role in wider business development and economic growth – thus enabling nations to fully engage in the global community.
12. To date, almost 20 capacity building projects have been completed or are in progress for the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, USAID, FCO and others in Africa and Asia. One example – assisting SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission) Nigeria to transition to IFRS (International Financial Reporting Standards) and to strengthen its regulatory procedures – has been funded by DfID and is managed by the World Bank.
13. Another example is a recently signed agreement in the Middle East to assist in the development of an Audit Quality Monitoring Programme to give advice on the creation of a Gulf Monitoring Unit. This agreement with the Gulf Co-operation Council Accounting and Auditing Organization - which oversees all accounting and auditing matters in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and UAE - is the first pan-national project of its kind.
14. ICAEW capacity building projects include:

ICAEW Project Highlights

1	Bangladesh Strengthen the accountancy body, reform the qualification and introduce audit quality monitoring*.	Aug 2007 to Jan 2010
2	Botswana Establish a professional accountancy qualification and strengthen the national professional body.	Oct 2009 to Oct 2011
3	Croatia Assist the Ministry of Finance to establish an audit	Jan 2010 to Aug 2010

	quality monitoring function compliant with the EU Statutory Audit Directive.	
4	Ghana Reform the professional qualification, create an audit regulation unit and train the profession in IFRS*.	Apr 2011 to Jan 2013
5	Malawi Establish a professional accountancy qualification and strengthen the quality and regulation of audit.	Jul 2011 to Apr 2014
6	Myanmar (Burma) Develop a roadmap for strengthening the accountancy profession and run training in IFRS and audit quality.	Soon to begin
7	Nigeria Strengthen the capacity of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria.	Sep 2012 to Nov 2014
8	Nigeria Train 300 staff at SEC Nigeria in IFRS and guide the SEC in the procedures for regulating under IFRS.	Sep 2012 to Dec 2013
9	Philippines Design and deliver training in compare-and-contrast US-GAAP and IFRS to Asian Development Bank staff.	Jul 2011 to Jul 2012
10	Serbia Prepare a roadmap for the Ministry of Finance and World Bank, on a reform agenda for the accounting and auditing profession.	Oct 2010 to May 2011
11	Sri Lanka Establish an audit quality monitoring unit and run training programmes to support a transition in Sri Lanka to IFRS*.	Jan 2013 to Dec 2013
12	Tanzania Establish an audit monitoring unit, reform the professional qualification and run train-the-trainer in IPSAS/IFRS/ISAs.	Apr 2011 to Oct 2013
13	Thailand Train and mentor SEC in regulatory procedures and processes.	Apr 2011 to Jan 2012
14	United Arab Emirates Conduct audit quality monitoring of audit firms and mentor Dubai Financial Services Authority in how to do so.	Nov 2009 & On-going

* Denotes two or more projects.

Soft power in partnership - Reciprocal relationships and partnerships with local professions

15. Professional partnerships and mutual recognition between international bodies strengthens the UK's soft power and influence through locally owned qualifications, training and standards.
16. ICAEW has a range of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with professional bodies, regulators and Higher Education Institutes in a number of countries in Asia and Africa. MoUs reflect a commitment to work together to support the development of the accountancy profession in a country. In this way MoUs can be a first step to full contractual relationships.
17. ICAEW has reciprocal membership agreements with seven Global Accountancy Associations. This provides a degree of alignment between the ACA qualification and other leading international accountancy qualifications based on a shared platform of standards, quality and reputation. They allow ICAEW members working in key

international markets to join the local body without having to complete further examinations and allow high quality accountants from other leading bodies to join ICAEW, typically when working in the UK.

Soft power in learning - examples of qualifications partnerships

18. Commercial opportunities can sometimes emerge from these international relationships while at the same time maintaining professional values and standards. Some examples of these include the following:
19. In March 2013, ICAEW signed an MoU with TalentCorp Malaysia, the government department responsible for ensuring Malaysia has the necessary skilled workforce to meet its economic aims. Sunway-TES, a leading university and a number of Authorised Training Employers set up a Centre for Accountancy Training Excellence in Malaysia. This is the first such private-public partnership of its kind and aims to establish Malaysia as a training hub for the whole ASEAN region. This will also form a key part of Malaysia's more immediate aim of delivering 5500 qualified accountants by 2020.
20. In July 2013 ICAEW launched a foundation programme that will allow graduates from non-accountancy disciplines to transition onto the Singapore Qualification Programme and to qualify as Chartered Accountants of Singapore. Hitherto, the Singapore QP was only open to candidates with an accredited accountancy degree. The Foundation Programme, based on ICAEW's Certificate of Finance Accounting and Business (CFAB) will also credit students with nine of the fifteen papers necessary to qualify as an ICAEW Chartered Accountant.
21. Finally, ICAEW has run an Emirati Scholarship Scheme in the UAE since 2010, which encourages Emirati nationals with strong academic backgrounds to train and qualify as Chartered Accountants. The scheme, which is endorsed by HH Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak al Nahyan (Minister for Culture, Youth and Social Development) helps the UAE in its aim to encourage more Emirati nationals into the private sector, ultimately part of the drive to diversify the economy away from oil revenues.

Conclusion - soft power in action.

22. Partnership is central to the way we do business and our model is to work and support local accountancy and business bodies. This model results in long term sustainable relationships which are good not just for the accountancy profession but the UK economy as a whole.

October 2013

Independent Schools Council – Written evidence

The Independent Schools Council is a politically independent, not-for profit organisation representing the eight leading professional associations of independent schools and their Heads, whose members comprise more than 1,200 schools of which more than 1,000 are charities.

“International education helps to strengthen overseas business, research, social and cultural links. People in emerging economies that have learnt English or studied for UK qualifications are more interested in working with, and doing business in, the UK than those who have not. The experience of students in UK education helps to create good relations that will enable successful engagement with the next generation of global leaders. More directly, delivering accredited courses abroad is likely to create additional demand for UK qualifications and/or educational equipment produced in the UK...”

“[S]chool-level education help[s] to provide a pipeline of prospective students who will study in the UK. **A survey by the Independent Schools Council (ISC) found that 77% of international pupils at ISC schools go on to universities in the UK. This equates to 8,000 entrants per annum from ISC schools.** Figures from the Council of British International Schools (COBIS) indicate that 39% of pupils that left COBIS schools in 2012 went on to study at a UK higher education institution.”

*International Education:
Global Growth and Prosperity*
HM Government
July 2013

Executive summary

The Independent Schools Council welcomes the call for evidence on soft power and the UK’s influence.

British independent schools are recognised as amongst the best in the world. Schools here continue to welcome overseas pupils, providing them with not only an excellent education but also an introduction, during formative years, to British culture, values and humour. British schools, both at home and abroad, are a significant pathway for overseas pupils embarking on higher education in the UK.

Links between leading international families and British public schools sometimes go back many generations and are an essential ingredient of the friendly relationship we enjoy with these countries; for example while I was the Headmaster of Harrow School I was able to see first-hand the historical links between Harrow and the Jordanian royal family. It was also notable that the business elite of Hong Kong often sent their children to British independent schools in great numbers, thereby strengthening our friendship with China. In 2012 Harrow International School Hong Kong (the third in the Harrow family of schools set up in the Asia region) was set up in a partnership with the Hong Kong government.

In these and many other ways the significance of British schools establishing links that can last a lifetime can be seen. We hope therefore that the Committee's report on soft power reflects the huge benefit of British independent schools to the UK's standing in the world.

Barnaby Lenon
Chairman, ISC

1. Independent schools educate and attract a significant number of overseas pupils

In ISC schools, there are currently 25,912 non-British pupils whose parents live overseas, meaning that overseas pupils make up around 5% of all pupils at ISC schools.¹³⁶ This highlights the attraction of an education at a UK independent school to the global market and reflects the PISA findings from the OECD which rank UK independent schools as among the best in the world. This not only enhances the UK's reputation for education, but also improves the international communities' view of the UK and consequently UK educated graduates will often be sought after. As HM Government's recent Industrial Strategy publication notes, "*Our independent school sector has been attracting students from all over the world for decades ... Our schools are recognised globally for their excellence ... Our schools have a long history of excellence and innovation, and a global reputation for quality and rigour.*"¹³⁷

2. Independent schools allow British school pupils to forge relationships and links with international students for the future

British pupils are more likely to have a better sense of other cultures and develop an international outlook and relationships when exposed to the international community at a young age. These links are likely to continue throughout their education and professional careers.

3. Independent schools are often the first links overseas pupils form with the UK

The majority of overseas pupils studying at UK independent schools are boarders. They are therefore likely to become accustomed to the UK way of life and as stated in a recent research paper produced by the Department for Business Innovation & Skills, form "*a positive understanding of the UK's culture and values...[and] become informal ambassadors for the UK*".¹³⁸ This new generation of students, from various countries (including dominant international powers) will develop links to the UK resulting in a global influence over future professionals, business leaders and political leaders. Independent schools are therefore indirectly promoting the UK to pupils who may return to their home countries and end up in positions of influence taking with them relationships and business connections for the future and trust in the UK. For example, the Emir of Qatar (who came into power in June this year) was educated at two leading independent schools in the UK, Sherborne and Harrow.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ [http://www.isc.co.uk/research/Publications/annual-census_\(2013_Census\)](http://www.isc.co.uk/research/Publications/annual-census_(2013_Census))

¹³⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-education-strategy-global-growth-and-prosperity>

¹³⁸ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/238822/13-1172-wider-benefits-of-international-higher-education-in-the-uk.pdf

¹³⁹ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/sheikh-tamim-bin-hamad-althani-the-emir-from-sandhurst-whos-been-given-the-keys-to-the-kingdom-8673761.html>

4. Independent schools lead overseas students into higher education in the UK

Approximately four out of every five overseas pupils at UK independent schools will progress to higher education in the UK.¹⁴⁰ This makes independent schools an important pathway provider for our excellent universities seeking to attract the brightest and the best.

5. An international student base at independent schools can broaden the minds of British pupils to international education

54% of ISC schools with pupils going on to higher education reported pupils going to non-UK higher education institutions. The USA was the most popular destination attracting 44% of ISC pupils going to overseas universities.¹⁴¹ Recent research commissioned by Maastricht University and based on a sample of members of the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference, which represents around 250 of Britain's leading independent schools, reported that 91 per cent of heads said sixth-formers had become more interested in applying to universities overseas this year compared with 2011. Chris Ramsey, head of King's School, Chester, and chairman of HMC's universities committee, says: "Thinking about higher education is more imaginative than it used to be. Young people are not taking for granted that they have to go to university in the UK."

6. Our competitor economies are tapping into this market/power

Other countries are aware of the benefits that student migration can bring and as a result they are relaxing their immigration laws to encourage this type of migration. The UK may therefore be hindering this type of growth by stringent immigration laws making the UK seem like an unwelcoming country to overseas students. Australia has recently reduced regulation for certain countries¹⁴² and Canada is also actively targeting international university applicants¹⁴³. If independent schools can continue bringing students in at school level then those students are very likely to continue onto higher education in the UK.

7. UK independent schools are operating overseas

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 (Tianjin, Shanghai). Mainland China leads the league table for most British campuses, and the number of pupils educated on ISC campuses overseas is reaching parity with the number of overseas pupils travelling to the UK for education.

¹⁴⁰http://www.isc.co.uk/Resources/Independent%20Schools%20Council/Research%20Archive/Bulletin%20Articles/2011_06_Bulletin_OverseasPupilsInISCschools_KD.pdf

¹⁴¹ [http://www.isc.co.uk/research/Publications/annual-census_\(2013_Census\)](http://www.isc.co.uk/research/Publications/annual-census_(2013_Census))

¹⁴² <http://www.studiesinaustralia.com/studying-in-australia/student-visas/whats-new-in-australian-student-visas>

¹⁴³ <http://www.universityaffairs.ca/canada-threatens-uk-international-student-dominance.aspx>

Beyond ISC schools, there are a vast number of British-style schools. The recent HM Government Industrial Strategy estimates 3.1 million pupils studying at over 6,300 English-medium schools worldwide in 2012. Of these, 1.4 million pupils were studying at nearly 3,000 British Schools Overseas (BSOs), where at least 50% of the curriculum is British. Student numbers at BSOs are forecast to grow to nearly 2 million in 2017 and 2.75 million in 2022, with fee income forecast to rise to £12.9bn and £17.2bn in 2017 and 2022, respectively.¹⁴⁴

8. Independent schools not only bring in school fees but also contribute to the wider UK economy

Overseas pupils contribute to the UK economy in a number of ways, including paying school fees – estimated to be £750m each year¹⁴⁵ - consumer spending and expenditure by visiting family. There are also “[d]istinct trade benefits to the UK arising from alumni as purchasers or consumers of UK products”.¹⁴⁶

9. Power can be strengthened without threatening UK immigration control

More than one half of all ISC schools hold a ‘Highly Trusted’ Tier 4 licence. The UKBA and the Home Office acknowledge that the independent school sector is considered a low risk area in immigration terms. There have been no findings of non-compliance in relation to independent school sponsors¹⁴⁷ and welcome, albeit limited, concessions have been granted to independent schools “in view of their lower risk and proven track record of compliance”.¹⁴⁸

18 September 2013

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-education-strategy-global-growth-and-prosperity>

¹⁴⁵ Derived from total number of overseas pupils and average sixth form boarding fee

¹⁴⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/238822/13-1172-wider-benefits-of-international-higher-education-in-the-uk.pdf

¹⁴⁷ <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/reports/pbs-tier-4/overseas-students-report.pdf?view=Binary>

¹⁴⁸ <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/news/sop4.pdf>

Ingenious Media – Written evidence

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In Joseph Nye's classic account 'soft power' is the ability in international politics to attract, influence and co-opt rather than coerce, and to promote the national interest through cultural means broadly defined. This concept is a little fuzzy around the edges but has nonetheless been widely accepted as an increasingly important dimension of global politics. One highly visible form of soft power is cultural diplomacy. The practice of cultural diplomacy is linked, though in complex non-linear ways, to the global market for cultural goods and services. This market is growing fast according to UNCTAD – possibly by as much as eight per cent annually.¹⁴⁹

1.2 Global cultural markets (live and recorded music, publishing, film, TV, advertising, handicrafts, cultural tourism and so on) are sometimes referred to collectively as the global creative economy. The UK is a major player in most of them, especially in media and creative content markets (music, film, TV, publishing and games). Ingenious is the largest independent investor in these markets in the UK.

1.3 By way of further introduction Ingenious is an investment and advisory firm based in London. We have some 5,000 investors including institutions, corporates and high net worth individuals from whom we have raised more than £8 billion to invest in creative assets since 1998. We recently extended the scope of our investment activities into leisure, sport and clean energy.

1.4 To date our partnerships have financed over 100 feature films, including such successful commercial films as *Avatar*, *127 Hours*, *Australia*, *Hotel Rwanda*, *Notes on a Scandal*, *Water For Elephants*, *X-Men: First Class*, *The Best Exotic Hotel Marigold*, *The Descendants*, *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, *Hairspray*, *Hot Fuzz*, *Night at the Museum*, *Shaun of the Dead*, *Stardust*, *Streetdance 3D*, *Vera Drake*, *Rise of Planet of the Apes* and *Trance*. Some of these films are culturally 'British' within the meaning of legislation, some not.

1.5 In television we have worked with all the major broadcasters and produced more than 600 hours of prime-time TV drama, including shows such as *Foyle's War*, *Rev*, *Kingdom*, *Scott & Bailey*, *The Reckoning*, *Law and Order: UK*, *Monroe*, *Doc Martin*, *Primeval*, *Case Histories*, *Injustice*, *The Suspicions of Mr Whicher*, *Man to Manta*, *Zen*, *Neverland* and *Young Leonardo*. Most of these programmes have been sold internationally.

1.6 Our experience of producing children's animation includes *Fleabag Monkeyface* and *Pajanimals*. Through Ingenious Games we have invested both in consol based video games (for example *Colin Macrae: DiRT and Fuel*) and mobile games (like *My Puzzler*). We have previously invested in recorded music, including albums by Peter Gabriel and The Prodigy (a number one hit album), but now focus on music festivals and other live events.

1.7 We invest in early to mid-stage content businesses through our quoted vehicle Ingenious Media Active Capital (IMAC), a Media Opportunities Fund and a new fund for

¹⁴⁹ See *Creative Economy Report 2010*, UNCTAD/UNDP, Geneva, 2010.

creative start-ups. Previous investments include 19 Management (creator of *Pop Idol*), and Cream (operator of the Creamfields Festival), both businesses which have been licensed to travel the world.

1.8 Amongst other questions the Committee asks:

- What are the important soft power assets that the UK has? How can we make the most of these? What is the role for non-state actors?
- What parts do sport and culture play in the UK's influence and soft power?

In this submission we try to answer these questions by reflecting on the role of the cultural and creative industries in transmitting soft power to the rest of the world and on the need for the UK to remain competitive in the fast-growing global creative economy if this power is to be maintained. We do not discuss sport *per se*, although the global market for sports rights is essentially media business.

2. CULTURE, SOFT POWER AND THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

2.1 On 16th November 1923 the then Prince of Wales, presiding at a lunch given by the British National Films League, remarked that it was well worth Britain's while to take the film industry seriously, and to develop it "to the utmost". He emphasised the value of cinema in advancing British imperial interests, observing that "trade follows the film". He might have added that in using this phrase he was quoting word for word from an earlier speech delivered by US President Woodrow Wilson in 1918. The doctrine that "trade follows the film" has been pursued ceaselessly by US governments ever since: Hollywood is the greatest example of cultural soft power the world has ever seen, although it may now have peaked.

2.2 The way a country is perceived beyond its shores is influenced by many factors – some political, some economic and some 'cultural' in the narrower sense of the term. For centuries the power of the Venetian Republic was communicated to the courts of Europe and the Levant as effectively by painters, poets, architects and musicians as by its fleets and armies. In decline, the delights of Venice as an eighteenth century art market and tourist destination for the aristocratic rich were assiduously promoted by the British Consul there, Joseph Smith, courtesy of Canaletto and other Venetian *vedutisti*. This was a perfect marriage of art and commerce wrapped in the mantle of what we now call cultural diplomacy.

2.3 On a more philosophical and controversial plane, British and French impressions of Germany as the rising European power in the 1890s were significantly shaped in ruling circles by disputes about what it meant to be a 'Wagnerite'. Like Goethe before him Richard Wagner became for a time a colossus of German soft power, achieved through the media of the printing press, the opera house and the literary salon. Soft power at this time was still primarily the power of ideas and ideals, although trade had followed art, and *vice versa*, long before the invention of film.

2.4 The development of the cultural and creative *industries* in the twentieth century harnessed the power of ideas and ideals to that of business on an altogether different scale: it transformed the capacity of governments to promote their values indirectly by means

other than politics or war. The first half of the century witnessed the huge growth of the film, music, radio and television industries boosting global trade in cultural goods and services exponentially, and especially the export of US movies. The spread of American values through mass media was mirrored in the Soviet Union by the diffusion of an entirely opposed world view, though largely through non-market mechanisms. At the height of the Cold War the two competing global powers used soft power so aggressively within and beyond their respective spheres of political influence that it was frequently indistinguishable from pure propaganda, occasionally humiliating great artists and for a time diminishing the effectiveness of simple cultural exchange in breaking down barriers.

2.5 In the early twenty first century the digital revolution has driven an even more bewilderingly huge step-change in the global distribution of ideas, media content and creative goods and services – and especially of intangible goods like music and games. Based on its radically different economics, the internet, which by its nature is transnational, has a transformational impact on creative businesses and the diffusion of soft power alike: in the analogue world the marginal cost of the reproduction of a song or book or film reflected the need for companies to operate warehouses and fleets of trucks and hold stock; in the digital world the equivalent cost is virtually zero.

2.6 The value chain of ‘old media’ business is disintegrating with value passing from analogue era ‘gatekeepers’, like record companies and publishers, to consumers and content ‘aggregators’ like Google and Facebook, most of whom outside China are big US technology companies. It can be argued that soft power in the digital age is becoming *more* concentrated in the hands of US gatekeepers and distributors – tech companies and media conglomerates who in their home market jostle with each other for commercial supremacy.

2.7 The digital shift has enormous consequences for rights holders, consumers and content producers – and for governments who, as in the case of China, Iran and Belarus, attempt to counter the exercise of internet-enabled soft power by attempting to control and/or censor the distribution of foreign material. The biggest impact is on consumers and is effected through social media and peer-to-peer communication. Peer-to-peer and similar technologies enable consumers to share their music, videos and web-links with each other across national boundaries – whether by legal or illegal means. These technologies and associated changes in consumer behaviour place great strains on intellectual property regimes worldwide: they have enormous implications for the future of copyright and copyright enforcement, and thus of creative economy trade flows and revenue streams.

2.8 The effectiveness of creative industry soft power is determined more by content, and especially high quality content, than by technology *per se*: creativity is the key. The UK has generally punched above its weight in creative markets. The 1967 television adaption of John Galsworthy’s *The Forsyte Saga*, for example, achieved a global audience of approximately 180 million. (It was also the first BBC TV series to be sold to the Soviet Union: this led a generation of Russian children to imagine that England was still stuck in the Edwardian age until disabused by the import of Beatlemania).

2.9 Forty years later British television enjoyed a global triumph on an even bigger scale when *Pop Idol*, with which Ingenious was closely associated, became the biggest UK TV export of all time having been sold to more than 100 countries. However the relationship between culture, commerce and soft power in these two examples was quite different: like most TV formats *Pop Idol* was completely reproduced for local markets (as *American Idol*,

Afghan Idol, *Russian Idol* and so on) whereas *The Forsyte Saga*, as with innumerable other TV dramas subsequently, was adapted for international markets only by being dubbed or subtitled. *Inspector Morse* has presented to the world an image of Britishness that no winner of any British-derived *Idol* show ever could (or would wish to).

2.10 For reasons no-one can quite explain creativity and innovation are peculiarly British attributes. From Shakespeare to Pinter, Turner to Hockney, Wren to Rogers and Purcell to Birtwhistle, not to mention Andrew Lloyd Webber, Damien Hirst, Vivienne Westwood and countless icons of rock and pop, this is something we're rather good at. That is what we tell ourselves - not without a hint of smugness, and to the understandable annoyance of some of our European friends – but the proposition is supported by relevant trade figures. In 2011, for example, the UK's trade surplus in film was £1 billion.¹⁵⁰ The precise relationship between creativity, talent, cultural exchange, business and investment reflected in this statistic is exceptionally difficult to disentangle, but the scale of the impact on many levels, including creative industries' employment in the UK, cannot be disputed.

2.11 The UK thus enjoys a comparatively advantageous position in the global soft power stakes. As the *Observer* put it in a leading article in July 2008:

“The truth is that we are a very old country with a stellar arsenal of fine art, ancient artefacts, literary genius, civic institutions and curatorial skill, all now bolstered by world-class industries from music to fashion. And rather than be ashamed by this cultural inheritance, we now at last have the confidence and economic resources to celebrate it as a national asset.”

That confidence may have taken a knock since the banking collapse, but the UK's creative sector remains remarkably buoyant, boosted in part by the growth of the international middle class in countries like China and India – a class with discretionary spending power and an appetite for all forms of media and cultural content. The fact that 360 million people around the world speak English as their first language and that another 1.1 billion people speak it as a second language is a great bonus for UK cultural producers.

2.12 The English language is not always helpful in audio-visual markets in which niche British content competes with mass-market American content, but the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) is itself a substantial international business: the British Council has become a significant global brand in part due to its extensive TEFL activity in more than 100 countries.

2.13 In addition to its traditional cultural exchange programmes and language teaching business, the British Council has been able to build in recent years on the UK's international reputation for innovation in creative industries' policy-making. There is a high demand for British academics and industry commentators to speak on cultural and creative economy topics around the world, and a high demand to participate in associated activities like its Young Creative Entrepreneur programme. This work is carried out by the Council's small Creative Economy Unit: this team appears to be under-resourced by comparison with the funding of more traditional arts based activities.

2.14 This is disappointing. It is also puzzling given that a recent Council report, *Culture Means Business*, based on opinion research in Pakistan, Spain, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Russia,

¹⁵⁰ BFI, *BFI Statistical Yearbook 2013*, London, 2013.

Brazil, China, Thailand, Poland and India, explores the relationship between young people's involvement in UK-linked cultural activity and their interest in doing business with us concluding that there is indeed a significant positive correlation between perceptions of UK artistic and creative output and of opportunities for trading and doing business.¹⁵¹

2.15 This finding is hardly revelatory, but does explain why the USA, France, Germany and Italy have poured so much taxpayers' money into universities, language and cultural institutes around the world over the last 70 years or so, and why China is now trying so hard to catch up by funding Confucius Institutes in as many countries as will take them: "trade follows the film"! Given that the Creative Economy Unit lies at the heart of the Council's work on the cultural and creative industries one wonders why this activity does not have a higher priority in the Council's funding priorities.

3. INVESTMENT, CUTS AND COMPETITIVENESS

3.1 So, the UK is a great feeding ground for creativity of all kinds. The combination of a distinctive cultural heritage, the capacity to produce great content and the universality of the English language gives us a clear marketing edge in global creative markets. These are the foundations of British soft power in the contemporary world: they were brilliantly displayed by Danny Boyle in his opening ceremony for the 2012 London Olympic games. The risk is that we take these advantages for granted, cease sufficiently to invest in their continued vitality, and ignore the determination of others to contest them. Competitiveness is an issue in cultural and creative markets as in other global markets.

3.2 Creativity as a national attribute has developed serendipitously out of a long tradition of political tolerance, religious and ethnic diversity, public subsidy of universities, museums, galleries, art and drama schools, the BBC, libraries and the performing arts, all alloyed at different times and in many configurations with various forms of philanthropy, private investment, commercial sponsorship and fiscal incentives. The distinctive character of British culture reflects our particular history of public money working alongside private money in a mixed ecology of funding.

3.3 The economics of creativity and creative enterprise is not a sexy subject amongst economists, but is vitally important both to the future performance of the UK's creative industries and by extension to the future of British soft power. The role of the private sector in much of the creative economy (referring here to the production of *content*, not the supply of services) is to back successful creative risk-taking. Many creative ideas are initially developed in work-shops financed through subsidy or otherwise by public funds. This is demonstrated in the film industry where the role played by the BFI, BBC Films, Film 4 and Creative England is central to early stage project development. The pattern is broadly similar in dance, the visual arts, classical music (but generally not musicals) and theatre, where the 'R&D' function which gave us a production like *War Horse* at the National Theatre is almost entirely funded through subsidy.

3.4 The informal relationship between public risk capital and commercial investment is crucial in the arts, culture and entertainment sectors which are all subject to the vagaries of unpredictable demand and shifts in public taste. We are in the 'hits' and 'misses' business,

¹⁵¹ British Council, *Culture Means Business*, 2013, p. 17.

and the hits have to pay for the misses. Against this background it is imperative to understand that we work within a delicately balanced financing ecology in which public and private funding combine to deliver high quality work, critical and commercial success and tax revenues. Making further cuts to the total level of public investment in the country's creative infrastructure – cuts additional to those announced in 2010 and in subsequent spending reviews - could easily destroy this fragile balance.

3.5 There is a serious risk that the funding cuts already being implemented will result in less R&D, less creative risk-taking and fewer hits being created leading, in turn, to the attraction of lower levels of private investment and thus a fracturing of the mixed arts funding model developed since 1946, as well, quite possibly, as a downwards spiral in total UK creative capacity, though this would be exceptionally difficult to calibrate. If this were to be the outcome, however, it would likely be to the long term detriment of our international competitiveness in creative markets.

3.6 Amidst much talk about the need to 'rebalance' the UK economy, it would seem irresponsible not to take steps to ensure that we do remain competitive. To repeat, the global market for cultural goods and services is growing. However, as the CBI has pointed out, "international competitors are chasing our success".¹⁵² We would be foolish to rely on our natural advantages in the face of determined attempts by our competitors to increase market share by means of heavy public and private investment. Cultural producers, policy analysts and investors must all be concerned with the issue of competitiveness. Competitiveness matters to the arts and culture sector not because it is a virtue in itself – in creative terms it clearly isn't - but because it is the key to attracting investment.

3.7 The forces of competition reveal themselves unmistakably to artists and producers: the demand for talent is intense and talent is highly mobile. We have a particular reason to know this in the UK: an astonishing 80,000 Brits live and work within a 50 mile radius of Hollywood – more than twice the number employed in the UK film industry. Our games and animation sectors have in recent years suffered a steady outflow of talent to Canada, France, Ireland and elsewhere due to a combination of factors including tax competition, attractive incoming employment packages and our own structural weaknesses. Talent goes where the work is, and some markets are intensely competitive.

3.8 We have lost many of the positions of global leadership we held in the 1950s and 1960s when the UK could boast two world class media and entertainment companies in EMI and the Rank Organisation. The reasons for this decline are not clear, but fifty years later we cannot boast a single player to rival Disney, Bertelsmann or Vivendi in global audio-visual markets. There are a few British success stories on the corporate front, but not many. Double Negative, Europe's largest provider of special effects for the film industry (*Inception*, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2*), is a rare current example of globally competitive business scale in the UK's creative economy.

3.9 BBC Worldwide is another relative success story, though as a business the BBC is of course uniquely privileged through the licence fee. We also remain very strong in services like advertising, design, fashion and architecture. In general however, due to the decline or even disappearance of world-class companies like the Rank Organisation the UK is less

¹⁵² CBI Creative Blueprint Project: presentation to the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW's) Entertainment and Media Conference, 3rd July 2012.

commercially strong in global *content* markets than it was. Just as creatively we punch well above our international weight so, arguably, and notwithstanding our deep reserves of creativity and talent, commercially we punch below it. This is a subject that goes well beyond the Committee's current remit but is ultimately linked to it in complex ways.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Although the relationship between soft power, trade flows and economic performance, including the performance of our cultural and creative industries, is a complex one, and should not be construed in crude linear terms, that such a relationship exists and bring benefits to the UK is not seriously disputed. Against that background the rapid growth of the global market for cultural goods and services should represent an opportunity for the UK given our historic strengths and 'natural' advantages, including our soft power pre-eminence in many parts of the world. The risk to the UK is that through a combination of higher public and private investment or, in the case of the USA, by virtue of the dominant position of its technology companies and the financial strength of its entertainment industry 'majors', other countries with a superior capacity for thinking long term and a greater appetite for increasing market share will progressively erode our competitive advantages.

4.2 In order to remain competitive, the UK needs an industrial strategy for its cultural and creative industries – one that is linked to, reflects and draws upon our existing soft power strengths.

Dr Martin Smith

Special Adviser

August 2013

Institute of Export – Written evidence

The Institute of Export & International Trade is a professional body representing international traders and providing education programmes from the age of 16 to a foundation degree with a BA and MA launching 2014. It was established in 1935 to offer British businesses an opportunity to build competence and skills when trading internationally. Its membership represents over 2000 companies with £306,830 million turnover in total. We have 500 + students studying full academic qualifications including staff from the major UK banks and many more taking advantage of short courses to introduce them to specific areas of international trade. Representing the Institute is new board Director and Trustee, David Maisey who is managing director and CEO of **ICC Solutions**.

ICC Solutions develops and supplies highly efficient test tools for Chip & PIN certifications with the payment associations, such as Visa and MasterCard. Between 2005 and 2010, the Company annual turnover increased by 80% and annual turnover attributable to international trade increased by 116%. In 2012, the Company exported to 63 countries with a team of 18 people. On average 75% of the Company business is overseas, with the dominant markets being US, Canada and China.

Positioning on Soft Power and the UK's Influence

Soft Power is an advantage that should be used as part of a toolkit of British Business but it cannot replace sound research and a developed market entry plan.

UK business community should be engaging in a better and more effective way and researching new markets in the process to ensure that they have a full understanding of how to approach new markets and do it well.

Our work builds competence and additional skills in international trade that allows businesses to trade internationally by providing and maintaining professional education qualifications under OfQual accreditation standard as an awarding body.

We are not seeing a joined up approach from the Government. It appears to start with great ambitions and then runs out of time which leads to a compromise.

The Bribery law has created issues for all companies. When dealing in international markets the view is that the west engages in a lot of hypocrisy. What is bribery? If you want to do business in a local market then you should not 'preach' to the locals and try to impose some kind of cultural imperialism on them. If we want to pursue this policy for our own companies and in western markets that is fine but you cannot 'force' this on markets where this has not been the way of doing business for centuries. The definition in our culture of bribery may not be the same in other countries and vice versa.

The Commonwealth as potential trading partners needs to be explored and promoted more than it is, however are we spending too much time looking at past glories while we should be working on putting together the best business proposition and pricing model?

July 2013

Institute of Export, National Asian Business Association and Leicestershire Business Association and Commonwealth Business Council – Oral evidence (QQ 93-115)

Institute of Export, National Asian Business Association and Leicestershire Business Association and Commonwealth Business Council – Oral evidence (QQ 93-115)

[Transcript to be found under Commonwealth Business Council](#)

International Alert, Transparency International UK, Ian Birrell, Columnist and Foreign Correspondent and Jonathan Glennie, Overseas Development Institute – Oral evidence (QQ 126-151)

International Alert, Transparency International UK, Ian Birrell, Columnist and Foreign Correspondent and Jonathan Glennie, Overseas Development Institute – Oral evidence (QQ 126-151)

[Transcript to be found under Ian Birrell, Columnist and Foreign Correspondent](#)

International Alert – Supplementary written evidence

Written evidence submitted to the House of Lords Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence

By Phil Vernon, Director of Programmes, International Alert

9th August, 2013

Acting as a witness to the Committee on 29th July informed my own thinking on the topic under discussion, leading me to submit this short formal note to the inquiry on behalf of International Alert.

1. Soft power is Joseph Nye's rather precise definition of how to achieve one's objectives through attraction and co-option, alongside or instead of other means such as coercion and purchase. For Nye, foreign aid is purchase power, and as such not strictly a soft power tool. Was he right?
2. It's rather hard to examine power in the abstract, as it can only really be measured in relation to a specific policy goal or objective. The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) is mandated to reduce poverty overseas – a difficult but relatively narrow purpose. But if you look at the actual policies and work of DFID, other UK government departments, the EU of which the UK is a leading member state, other international organisations of which it is a member, and other UK-based entities including NGOs and businesses, it is not a great stretch to argue that one of the UK's international actual policy goals is ***an increasingly and sustainably prosperous, peaceful and liberal world***. If such an unwritten goal does exist for the UK – and I believe it does – then it would ultimately be good for UK business, good for reduced UK defence spending, good for the achievement of globally shared public goods such as atmospheric carbon reduction, and good from a moral perspective as well.
3. So the debate about whether aid is an effective soft power instrument comes down ultimately to a debate about whether aid can legitimately be seen as soft power (rather than “purchasing” power as Nye would have it), and whether it actually does help create a better world.
4. Several conclusions emerged from the discussion which took place during the Committee's public session on 29th July, informed by questions and comments from the Committee and fellow witnesses, as follows.
5. If the currency of soft power is values, institutions, culture and policy as Nye says, then soft power is exercised through the choices the UK makes and the actions it takes, and not only by what it says. While words are important means of communicating values, institutions, culture and policy, their impact is fatally undermined when they are inconsistent with actions.

6. Churchill is said to have called the Marshall Plan “unselfish and unsordid”. No doubt some aid is motivated by selfish concerns, and some may even have a sordid side. There are always tensions and trade-offs, as well as overlaps, between different policy goals. But he was right that aid is fundamentally an unselfish act. By allocating a chunk of the government budget to overseas aid – along with substantial amounts of private giving by UK citizens – we are sending a message of international solidarity that must increase the UK’s international stock, and thus its soft power to influence the directions and nature of progress in specific places and more broadly. For example, the main reason the UK was asked to co-chair and thus help frame the outcomes of the UN High Level Panel on Post-2015, was because of our prominent role in aid and our commitment to spend 0.7% of GNI as aid.
7. As a relatively prosperous, liberal, democratic and peaceful nation, the UK has much to offer a world wishing to evolve in those directions. It offers models from which others can draw ideas for their own political and economic evolution, while avoiding some of our errors. There is every reason to believe that those seeking to take the Arab Spring in these directions will be attracted to and reach out to the UK.
8. Incremental improvements towards peace, prosperity and liberal democracy are non-linear and as such cannot be “bought” or coerced. So if aid is an instrument of power and influence it must at least partly be a soft power instrument. But we should avoid focusing the discussion only on “aid” as money, and rather think about how the UK’s *engagement* taken as a whole, helps to create a more peaceful, prosperous and democratic world, including, e.g.:
 - Eliminating the money laundering and other nefarious financial practices which are still done in the UK
 - Contributing to improving international frameworks and systems for supra-national governance and mutual support among nations
 - Improve the regulation of UK-listed businesses operating in developing contexts, so their behaviours contribute to the right kind of progress there
 - Working in partnerships with those in developing countries – governments, businesses, civil society – as well as other outsiders who have the capacity to influence outcomes there such as international donors and multilateral organisations.
9. Rather than limiting the discussion to the “UK’s soft power”, we should see it as an issue of “using soft power as part of an international approach to progress”, i.e. not to *improve the UK’s standing*, as some of the Committee members put it, but rather to *use the UK’s standing* in collaboration with others, to contribute to progress in the wider world.
10. In other words, the UK’s co-chairmanship of the High Level Panel on post-2015 development should be seen both as an achievement, thanks to UK aid policy, and as a means to a bigger end. This is itself served not only by the UK’s aid policy, but also by other governments’ aid, and not only by aid but also by a range of other policy instruments, choices and actions.

11. Progress towards a more democratic, peaceful and sustainably prosperous world is non-linear, and is by no means assured or even probable. It benefits from a long and sustained process employing diverse and complementary approaches whose effectiveness remains an article of faith to some extent: we do not (yet) have a well-founded set of metrics. This is because the non-linear nature of progress means we cannot be certain that seemingly promising changes are sustainable, or that apparent set-backs are not in fact opportunities. To illustrate using an obvious example: an apparently democratic election may or may not be a sign that democratic values are becoming embedded in society. We won't be able to judge success for some years yet.
12. The UK's sustained support of Rwanda's government and people is a case in point. To some, 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. 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 UK's engagement the while.
13. 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. Diligence and care are not best served by understaffed 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.
14. Finally, if I am right in elucidating from its various postures and actions that the UK has an unwritten goal of contributing to an increasingly and sustainable prosperous, peaceful and democratic world, then perhaps the government should make that a more explicit policy goal against which it can test its policies, and for which it can be held to account. This would have the added benefit of forcing the UK to evaluate its contribution to the global common weal – and thus its long-term interests – alongside its promotion of the UK's narrower and shorter-term interests such as trade.

August 2013

International Alert – Further supplementary written evidence

Introduction

1. International Alert welcomes this inquiry, which comes in the wake of fundamental changes by Her Majesty's Government (HMG) since 2010 to the means and ends to which it exerts influence in pursuit of building stability overseas. These priorities are defined by the Building Stability Overseas Strategy (BSOS) which is now a central tenet of UK development and foreign policy and enjoys cross party support.
2. This submission concentrates exclusively on the most effective ways in which the UK could or should exercise soft power in pursuit of that policy agenda. There is no single accepted definition of but these offerings by Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane (2004) would command general agreement. For them, soft power is the ability:
 - *“to get desired outcomes because others want what you want”;*
 - *“to achieve goals through attraction rather than coercion”;*
 - *“convincing others to follow or getting them to agree to norms or institutions that produce the desired behaviour.”*

It tends to rest on

- *“the appeal of one's ideas or culture or the ability to set the agenda through standards and institutions that shape the preferences of others”;*
- *“the persuasiveness of the free information that an actor seeks to transmit.”*

For Nye and Keohane, scholars in the realist tradition of international relations, the fundamental argument for soft power is that it works and therefore obviates the need to resort to costly military and economic instruments to achieve policy goals.

3. This submission looks at three instruments of soft power available to the UK which draw on the legitimacy of power, free information and international institutions. They are: intergovernmental leadership, a free and independent media and credibility by example. It applies them to the Government's policy priorities for conflict affected and fragile states and suggests a recommendation for the Committee at the end of each.
4. BSOS accepts that the poorest and most vulnerable people in the World are those living in conflict affected and fragile states (CAFS). These states have made least progress since the Millennium Declaration of 2000 and are widely predicted to continue on this path should there be no significant change in the global approach to international development (Kaplan, 2012). This is not only a failure of development with dire human consequences for those concerned but also represents a clear security concern to the UK and other countries across the world, of which the attack on the Nairobi Westgate Centre was the most recent example.

International Alert – Further supplementary written evidence

5. The World Development Report of 2011 (WDR2011) found that some 1.5 billion people live in countries affected by repeated cycles of political and criminal violence – causing human misery and disrupting development to the extent that almost no MDGs have been met in any fragile state. It argues that to break these cycles, it is crucial to strengthen legitimate national institutions and governance in order to provide citizen security, justice and jobs – as well as alleviating the international stresses that increase the risks of violent conflict.
6. To address this, the UK needs to contribute to normative change at global and local level. Specifically, it needs to address the social and political factors that drive violent conflict, perpetuate widespread abuses and prevent the poorest countries from achieving sustainable growth. These are underpinned by a range of social and normative barriers preventing citizens from engaging and participating meaningfully with the governance of their countries.
7. By definition, addressing these issues requires the exercise of soft, rather than hard, power.
8. As the Committee recognises in its framing questions to this Inquiry, the UK cannot project norms independently, or exclusively with its traditional allies, without being vulnerable to charges of neo-colonialism from governments and others whose current policies and practices are challenged. It must thus work in partnership, in many cases new partnerships, with actors from a range of governments, civil society coalitions and multilateral institutions

Instruments of soft power

9. The UK can draw on at least three sources of influence in pursuit of the need for change outlined above. They are inter-governmental leadership; culture and media; and long term demonstrative leadership.

Inter-governmental leadership

10. The UK has demonstrably engaged in inter-governmental leadership to significant effect in the past. Examples include the Gleneagles Summit of 2005 in which UK leadership resulted in substantial agreements on climate change (associating leaders from Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa) and reducing poverty in Africa (with seven African presidents taking part). Without sustained British perseverance and exercise of soft power these outcomes would have been highly unlikely (Bayne, 2005).
11. The current Foreign Secretary is himself currently pursuing an amendment to the Geneva Convention with the addition of a protocol explicitly classifying sexual violence as a “grave violation” of the convention, with 134 UN states currently confirmed to be attending a conference to adopt a declaration to this end¹⁵³. That is two thirds of all UN States and as such illustrates the significance and capacity of UK intergovernmental leadership.

¹⁵³ Speech by Foreign Secretary William Hague at the War Child 20th Anniversary Policy Forum in London on 23 October 2013 (accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/protecting-children-in-conflict>)

12. More quietly, in the G8 context, the UK has joined with Germany in leading a shift of emphasis into recognising the linkages between the pressures of climate change, security risk and poverty and beginning to develop the first elements of an internationally coordinated response to these dangerous connections (Harris 2012).
13. There are other inter-governmental partnerships in which the UK is a leading player, such as the Open Government Partnership (OGP), which consists of 60 States and which met recently in London. The OGP agenda outlined by the Prime Minister, if enacted fully on the ground, would radically transform the barriers detailed above. They are¹⁵⁴:

Open Data: *Radically opening up government data for greater accountability, public service improvement and economic growth;*

Government Integrity: *fighting corruption and strengthening democracy through transparent government;*

Fiscal Transparency: *helping citizens to follow the money;*

Empowering Citizens: *transforming the relationship between citizens and governments, and;*

Natural Resource Transparency: *ensuring natural resources and extractive revenues are used for public benefit*

14. HMG should continue on this path by scaling up its investment in exercising soft power in support of redefining international normative and legal frameworks in support of building stability overseas.

Culture and media

15. The UK is a consolidated and well established democracy which enjoys widespread respect for its democratic institutions. It also benefits from the English language and mass appeal of the British media, particularly the BBC World Service in the context of developing nations. The BBC World Service and BBC more generally, is therefore a key basis of soft power.
16. Critically, however, this effect does not arise because the Service is a mouthpiece for British policy; in fact, it arises precisely because it is not. It is a critical and independent source of credible information accessed by populations who do not have alternative sources of independent information. It is thus an asymmetrical source of soft power. Returning to Nye & Keohane, on the importance of free information in building credibility through free information as a basis for soft power:

“...credibility is the crucial resource, and asymmetrical credibility is a key source of power. Establishing credibility means developing a reputation for providing correct information, even when it may reflect badly on the information provider’s own country. The BBC, for example, has earned a reputation for credibility, while state-controlled radio stations in Baghdad, Beijing and Havana have not.” (Nye, Keohane, 2004)

¹⁵⁴ Speech by the Prime Minister David Cameron at the OGP London Summit, 31 October 2013
<http://www.opengovpartnership.org/get-involved/london-summit-2013>

17. British soft power, paradoxically, is therefore gained by a unique source of news from a British perspective that is frequently critical of the UK.
18. It is thus disturbing that the Government has significantly cut the BBC World Service since 2010, already resulting in a loss of audience of around 14 million and the cancellation of five language services. There have been four funding cuts in four years, with each presented as a “one off” cut by Government, with the latest involving a reduction of £2.22 million in 2013¹⁵⁵.
19. Applying Nye & Keohane’s analysis of the centrality of free and credible information to generating soft power, therefore, International Alert believes these cuts to be misguided and recommends that the Committee challenges the Government to justify its recent and future strategy towards the BBC World Service.

Credibility by example

20. The UK has gained significant credibility by being among the first to reach internationally defined targets for international development, such as the commitment to spend 0.7% GDP on Overseas Development Assistance (ODA). It has hosted initiatives such as the Open Government Partnership. It is supporting new and equitable partnerships with governments in conflict affected situations, such as the New Deal for Engagement with Fragile States (New Deal), and is one of the leading financial and practical supporters of the UN Peacebuilding Fund. As a result the UK is able to utilise its soft power in pursuit of the foreign policy agenda represented by BSOS. One consequence of this and a way of judging its success can be seen in the choice of UK Prime Minister to co-chair the recent High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post 2015 Development Agenda, alongside the leaders of Indonesia and Liberia.
21. The UK has also demonstrably led the world in the provision of Open Government Data (OGD), increasing transparency and by so doing enabling active citizens and civil society to hold decision makers to account. OGD aims, by the provision of usable data, to achieve impact on government efficiency, transparency, accountability, environmental sustainability, inclusion of marginalised groups, economic growth and supporting entrepreneurs. This is a practical agenda which builds on the insight of WDR II. The UK came top of 77 nations currently committed to pursuing OGD programmes in the latest Open Data Barometer index¹⁵⁶.
22. This arguably results in the UK gaining more influence through soft power means than any deployment or the threat of deployment of hard power. Soft power is entirely separate and not dependent on hard power, as some political scientists have claimed. Nye & Keohane make the same observation in relation to other states who have engaged in similar leadership and thus gained credibility and soft power which bears little relation to their capacity to project hard power:

“Canada, Sweden and the Netherlands have more influence than some other states with equivalent economic or military capabilities.” (Nye, Keohane, 2004)

¹⁵⁵ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-22853598>

¹⁵⁶ <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/pub?key=0ApqzJROt-jZ0dGxJa3g2Slg0MEhiQUiINkhOZyIGeWc&output=html>

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23. The Government should utilise the political capital it has generated to challenge other governments to follow suit. For example while the US comes second after the UK in the Open Data Barometer overall, it scores poorly in the provision of company and land registration. Encouraging governments of wealthy countries towards greater transparency could be an important step towards reducing global tax evasion, another important HMG priority. To the same end, the Government should also prioritise supporting local civil society in being able to effectively use such data to hold those in power to account.

Conclusion

24. The UK Government is well placed to exercise significant soft power, relative to its peers. It has already demonstrated this, notably on changing norms and practices on good governance, sexual violence and open data. It benefits both from its active leadership on such agendas, in addition to the wider influence of the BBC World Service and historic links across the globe.

25. It has not yet, however, realised the full potential of this power and does not appear to take a systematic approach to doing so, as can be seen by short termism in cutting the reach of the BBC World Service.

26. The Government must therefore marshal its influence through the use of its intergovernmental leadership, the BBC World Service and credibility by example, and in so doing realise the combined potential of the soft power the government enjoys but whose value it is not yet fully utilising.

Written by Chris Underwood

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October 2013

Dr Daniel Arthur, International Policy Dynamics – Written evidence

Dear Sirs

Herewith I submit my evidence to the Select Committee, acting on an individual basis.

My perspectives are based on 25 years' experience in international trade, commodities and in academia and in the private sector business and technology consultancy sectors. I have also worked for the Government Operational Research Service and have carried out consultancy studies for BIS, DCMS, European Commission and contributed to the UK Trade White Paper (Feb 2011).

I provide answers to selected questions in the Call for Evidence below but I make a general suggestion to the Committee that it should consider building a model of the soft power concept and how the UK's soft power is perceived to have changed over time, and the way it is desired to change relative to other countries. Initially this would be a qualitative model but it may prove to be beneficial to quantify it. This can be done using the methods of soft Operational Research, systems thinking and formal modelling. A model would help to:

1. provide structure to the concept of soft power and indicate the drivers of change over time
2. provide a framework for aggregating the various intangible resources that together comprise the soft power concept and their inter-related, systemic nature;
3. locate the drivers and information flows in the UK's soft power resources and the levers of influence;
4. build consensus on the concepts and practical actions through facilitated modelling sessions;
5. develop an overall strategy.

Multiple comments given in the oral evidence sessions give a rationale for this suggestion, eg:

1. A need to quantify / evaluate soft power. Lack of an overarching soft power strategy (Evidence Session No 1, Q9)
2. References to a lack of 'joined-up' government in Evidence Session No. 5 (Q98, Q104). Need for centralised, co-ordinated information.
3. A need to 'restructure and recalibrate' soft power (Evidence Session No. 5, Q98, Q104)
4. Soft power was emphasised as a structural concept (Professor Cox, Evidence Session No 2, Q25)

Yours faithfully

Dr Daniel Arthur
International Policy Dynamics
President, UK Chapter, International System Dynamics Society

Responses to the questions

1. The meaning and importance of soft power

- 1.1. Rather than using the Joseph Nye definition, I would re-word it to read soft power is 'the ability to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes through attraction rather than coercion or payments' in order to emphasise the two-sided and transactional nature of soft power.
- 1.2. Regarding soft power deployments, in some circumstances, soft power acts as an overlay on hard power but in many respects has a substantive existence – i.e. the underlying hard power is notional or not immediately relevant. An example is the attraction to the UK for international students. A precise definition of the functional relationship could be explored in the modelling work recommended: either soft / hard power can be treated as independent variables or soft power could be explored as an intensifier or multiplier of hard power.
- 1.3. A digitally connected world makes soft power more important due to speed and extent of reach of communications. Digital / mobile / tablet communications, social media etc are a democratising force and make actions using soft power resources much more readily apparent. The rise of cyber crime and exploitation represent both threats but also opportunities for bodies such as the International Cyber Policy Unit (Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

2. The extent and use of the UK's soft power resources

- 2.1. The most important soft power assets have all been covered in the Committee's oral evidence sessions: language, legal and democracy systems, the Commonwealth, cultural/media/sporting activities and heritage, history of international trade, academic and professional institutions, broadcasting, tradition of transparency and justice etc. It would be possible to put an index value on these intangible resources that together comprise soft power. This would allow it to be tracked as a variable which changes through time, which is a primary concern of the committee: is the UK's soft power growing /declining, how might it change or be influence in the future? Doing so would be challenging because such soft variables have no fixed form and thus it would take some experimentation and consensus-building to validate any model. However, the discipline of constructing a model (initially qualitative and perhaps, subsequently, quantitative) and validating it amongst modelling participants would require precise definitions that would clarify the concepts and their inter-relationships.
- 2.2. Many soft power resources lie outside the ambit of UK Government. However, the Government has a co-ordinating and information-providing role to play as has been discussed in the oral evidence sessions (Evidence Session 5). Non-state actors can be encouraged to develop soft power by adhering to trade regulations and by involvement in their development where there are clear mutual benefits for other countries.

Bringing the soft power concept to the surface for non-state actors would help to sustain it.

- 2.3. Information on soft power could be part of the information briefing role of UKTI trade advisors. Government can help to generate return on investment in soft power by developing a strategy for soft power and then exploring ways to communicate it through the British Council, British Expertise, UKTI and the like.

3. Soft power and diplomacy

- 3.1. To respond to the more prominent role in international affairs played by non-state actors and emerging powers, the Select Committee should use the findings from this series of consultations (and any overarching strategy that is developed) on soft power to provide a briefing pack for these actors. In general, the landscape can be shaped by greater awareness of the components of soft power and how organisations, institutions and individuals have a part to play in its perception abroad.
- 3.2. UK institutions and values and commitments to the rule of law, human rights and freedom of speech are generally perceived positively. Where mistakes have been made in the past, the UK does well to be proactive in seeking redress and making formal apologies. A hindrance is the extent to which these values are taken for granted and therefore greater self-awareness of cultural and international political and institutional factors would be beneficial. The way in which institutions, history and values come together to form an overall soft power concept comes across in visits to the major museums in London or at the Olympics, for example, but it would help for the concept to be more widely articulated.
- 3.3. Where commitments to values have appeared to be unduly self-interested and not recognise equality and fairness, this undermines the UK's influence. A drawback of the use of the English language is that familiarity with other cultural factors is lost when local language is neglected. Generally however, UK diplomatic services are highly capable and well-briefed.

4. Aspects of soft power

- 4.1. UK universities and research institutions play a significant role in contributing to the UK's soft power – not least because those educated here develop an awareness and respect for UK culture, governance, institutions and history. They then go on to influential posts in government and industry in their own countries. The UK faces a significant threat from the US because it is seen by many as having a more entrepreneurial business culture and large fraction of the world's top business and technology universities are in the US.
- 4.2. The UK does have a role in setting regulations, norms and standards for international trade. The UK is respected for its administrative capabilities, rule of law and respect for human rights and justice issues. This is an area in which the UK can demonstrate

leadership and influence greater than its economic or military scale. This can be done by being in the forefront of open access to information and responsiveness to charities and NGOs – of which the UK has a vibrant network. The Government Digital Service has a role to play via its Open Public Services agenda.

- 4.3. Reduced funding of the BBC World Service is detrimental to the sustenance of the UK's good perceptions abroad.
- 4.4. The UK has multiple narratives that underlie its soft power and devolved administrations should tailor these narratives to the character of each region. A unifying theme could be its focus on adherence to international law, peace, democracy, human rights, trade justice and sustainable development.

September 2013

Professor Mary Kaldor, London School of Economics (LSE) – Written evidence

Professor of Global Governance, London School of Economics and Political Science

1. This brief note mainly addresses two questions raised by the Inquiry; these relate to the understanding of soft power and the relationship between hard and soft power. In particular it makes the argument that a shift from national security to human security could increase the UK's standing in the world.

What is Soft Power?

2. There are two aspects to Joseph Nye's original definition of soft power. On the one hand, he refers to the tools of power – communicative and cultural tools as opposed to money or weapons. On the other hand, he refers to the substance of power – power based on consent or attraction or legitimacy – what he called co-optive power- as opposed to power based on coercion and violence.
3. These two aspects are not the same. Military force is also a form of communication and can shape legitimacy. 'Is not war merely another kind of writing and language for political thoughts?' wrote the strategist Carl von Clausewitz, 'In one word, the art of war, in its highest point of view is policy, but no doubt a policy which fights battles instead of writing notes.'¹⁵⁷ But by the same token communication can impose a dominant way of thinking that constitutes a form of coercion. As the French philosopher Michel Foucault explained: '[O]ne's point of reference should not be to the great model of language (langue) and signs but to that of war and battle. The history which bears and determines us has the form of a war rather than that of a language: relations of power not relations of meaning...'¹⁵⁸
4. It is true that in the twenty first century there has been a profoundly significant shift from the use of military force to the use of communicative tools as instruments of power. This can be explained in a variety of ways: the declining legitimacy of military force as a consequence of the post-1945 strengthening of norms against war and aggression; the ineffectiveness and risks of using force because increased lethality and accuracy of all weapons has made symmetric war too dangerous and asymmetric war too unpredictable; and finally the technological revolution in travel and communication allows us to see the consequences of violence in different parts of the world and to empathise with distant others.
5. But the point is rather that what matters is the substance of power rather than the tools of power. What ideas and practices constitute power? The tools are relevant but they depend of what power is conveying. If the aim is to enhance the UK's soft power in the sense of legitimacy as opposed to tools, then it is important to analyse the content of communication. There may well continue to be a role for the use of force along with other instruments but conceived in terms of the overall message being conveyed.

National Security versus Human Security

¹⁵⁷Carl von Clausewitz (1997) *On War* English edition published by Wordsworth and based on the translation by J. J. Graham, revised by P. N. Maude, p 358

¹⁵⁸ Michel Foucault (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. C. Gordon, L. Marshall, J. Mepham, and K. Soper, trans. New York: Pantheon, p114-5

6. National security is about the defence of the UK from external threats and risks. Although the National Security Strategy conveys a wide range of possible risks, the tools are still focussed on conventional military forces designed to meet the threat of an attack by a foreign state. 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). Human security is what we enjoy in a rights-based law-governed society like the UK where emergency services such as police, ambulances or fire fighters are available to deal with extreme risks. Whereas a national security strategy focusses on international intervention to protect UK territory, a human security strategy would be about helping to extend the kind of human security we enjoy in the UK to other parts of the world.
7. A human security approach would require an array of instruments available to contribute to multilateral efforts (the UN, the EU, or the AU etc.) in order to enhance human security. These include development aid, policing, disaster assistance, healthcare support, and support for justice as well as military force. But military force would be used in quite different ways for international law enforcement rather than war fighting. This means the focus is the protection of civilians, the arrest of war criminals and the minimising of all casualties rather than the defeat of enemies.
8. Human security is often said to be a soft power option as opposed to national security. And yet conventional military forces nowadays are largely maintained for 'soft' purposes if by soft we mean communication: to enhance diplomacy; to retain a place at the top table; or to deter threats. In contrast an effective human security approach does require the use of force in robust ways for rights-based international law enforcement.
9. The UK has a comparative advantage in the type of instruments needed for human security. In particular, 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. Unfortunately 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.

Conclusion

10. Increasing soft power is not just about tools it is about how the UK is perceived and how it contributes to global norms and rules. A shift to human security could greatly enhance the UK's role in this respect especially as it would build on the UK's comparative advantages in aid, policing and robust human security interventions.
11. Other evidence to this Inquiry has stressed the importance of cultural institutions such as the British Council, the BBC World Service and British universities. I wholeheartedly endorse this view. Quite apart from the fact that these cultural industries are likely to become more economically important in a world of scarce material resources, their significance is precisely that they are global institutions rather than British institutions. Hence they contribute to global debates about the construction of rules and norms rather than conveying an insular national message.

17 September 2013

Professor John Krige, Georgia Institute of Technology – Written evidence

1. I am a British citizen who has lived in the U.S. since the year 2000 where I teach in a leading public university. I publish extensively on American foreign policy, including Nye's concept of 'soft power'.
2. It is imperative to understand that soft power is a form of *power*, where power may be defined as the capacity to get other to do what one wants. This element is underplayed in Nye's definition of soft power used in the briefing document, viz. 'the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment' (so-called hard forms of power). It is not just a question of 'getting what you want': that is far too vague. It is rather a question of "getting *others to want the outcomes that you want*" (Nye, *Soft Power*, p. 5).
3. The successful exercise of soft power thus *presupposes a clear idea of what outcome one seeks and a knowledge of the attractive instruments that one could lever to actually change others' behaviour in substantial ways*. After all it is an alternative to hard power, and has similar objectives.
4. Britain has many cultural assets that 'attract' others: a standard list includes the the Royal family, the Royal Shakespeare Company, Harry Potter, Mr. Bean, David Beckham and its pop music scene. The onus is on those who celebrate the cultural pulling power of these assets to prove that they are sufficiently 'influential' to change others people's behaviour vis-à-vis Britain. It means establishing what durable change in behaviour will ensue upon, say, watching the Changing of the Guards or attending a performance of Hamlet by the RSC. That is a matter for careful research, not optimistic speculation.
5. In this regard Nye has come up with some very significant data. He uses Pew Global Attitudes findings in 2002 to show that, averaged over 43 countries, the U.S. is admired by 80% of those polled for its *scientific and technological advances* (*Soft Power*, p. 36). This far outstrips those who admire the U.S. for its culture, which vary from 30% – 60% depending on which aspect of culture is measured. The same trend is found in the Islamic world where no less than 70% of those polled admired the U.S. for its science and technology (compared to 40% that were attracted by its culture -- *Soft Power*, p. 42).
6. It is imperative that similar data be acquired for the U.K. if any realistic assessment of the use our soft power is to be made. Absent that some useful steps are still possible.
7. Elites who do not have the advanced science and technology found in western societies admire us for it and seek every opportunity to acquire it. They appreciate the fundamental importance of an advanced understanding of science and technology to the capacity to participate in the global marketplace. This suggests that Britain should actively promote its leading research universities and institutes on the world stage. They have something that we have and that others want.
8. The results of extended graduate training in advanced science and technology in the U.K., the 'outcomes' that one can reasonably seek include — in no particular order — (a) the acquisition of a critical attitude to argument and debate that is characteristic of scientific practice and an open society; (b) respect for the norms and customs of British society (notably its tolerance), and an antagonism towards those who abuse them or who seek to destroy them; (c) the building of strong

interpersonal ties with British researchers that will persist when the visitor returns to her/his home country; (d) familiarity with British research equipment and British research and management practices that will facilitate collaboration with British firms in the visitor's home country; (e) enhanced ability to understand and speak English, with the personal, cultural and professional benefits that brings to both parties.

9. In sum, advanced training in science and technology in the U.K. is an invaluable form of soft power. It will educate an elite who, on returning to their home countries can serve as vectors of British values abroad, including in some of the most volatile regions of the globe. To be effective we must combine strong marketing of U.K. advanced education abroad with substantial financial support from government, philanthropies and private sources for hundreds of worthy candidates. These candidates should be selected from those regions of the globe where British influence is both essential and currently weak. By leveraging our scientific and technological assets we can mould the behaviour of others in line with our interests: by giving them what they want we can get them to do what we want. It is an exercise of 'soft power' not to be overlooked.

9 September 2013

Levant Education Consulting – Written evidence

How a UK government agency uses the umbrella of ‘soft power’ to compete for business unfairly against UK private enterprise

The UK government is permitting a public sector commercial enterprise, trading under the good name of the FCO, to stifle competition from UK private businesses. There is a clear conflict between its public service role and commercial activity that is often damaging to private sector specialists.

Summary:

- As the UK government out of necessity reduces funding for the British Council, the Council has been encouraged to ‘stand on its own two feet’. It is therefore increasingly seeking to exploit its position as a government agency with global reach to boost revenue-generating businesses such as language training and testing, consultancy, and international education marketing services. These sectors offer many opportunities for specialist UK companies, whose services contribute greatly to the estimated £400 million revenue generated for UK universities and over £16 billion to the wider economy. The presence of a UK government agency that is part FCO, part commercial entity, represents unfair competition for contracts to commercial service providers who may provide excellent services or products, but often lose out to the brand and government status of what is actually an aggressive commercial player, usually operating in the name of ‘soft power’.

- Soft power is effective when not associated with government policy or seen to be an alternative to military power. 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. The power is ‘soft’ precisely because of its independence from government policy.

- Countries looking to developed economies for models of private enterprise free of government interference will see in the UK that free enterprise is encouraged, but business opportunities occurring from the brand names of government agencies (such as the British Council and the FCO) are to be exploited in competition with (and at the expense of) private companies. This actually goes against the British tradition of supporting entrepreneurial business enterprise.

1. Levant Education Consulting has been providing schools and universities with international marketing consulting since 2009. We seek to help any education institution to maximize opportunities in the markets where we operate – Turkey, Iraq and Azerbaijan. The company was incorporated in the UK by David Mitchell, after 10 years experience in international education marketing, having worked in Taiwan, Korea, the UK, USA and Turkey.

2. Levant Education established the *UK Education Tour* in 2010 as a marketing and recruitment platform for UK universities and schools recruiting students from Turkey, the first such event since terrorist attacks in Istanbul in 2004. In 2011 we added Kurdish Iraq to the itinerary, establishing the first UK-focussed education exhibition in post-war Iraq (probably the first in Iraq ever).

3. In May 2012 we proposed cooperation with the British Council, rather than competition, in a report sent to David Willetts MP, Dr Jo Beall of the British Council, and Helen Silvestor, from the British Council (SEE APPENDIX 1) [Not reproduced here].

Education Exhibitions in Azerbaijan

4. In April 2012 Levant Education conducted a fact-finding trip to Baku, during which it consulted with the British Council and UKTI as well as local authorities and contacts. The British Council staff confirmed that, although they were only a small team concerned mainly with teaching English, they would like to work with us. UKTI provided an expensive, but effective, OMIS (market entry) service. The British Council, in response to our proposal that we engage cooperatively to avoid cannibalising the market, declined to do so but stated that it had no plans to develop 'face-to-face' exhibitions (the precision being made as it was planning to run online 'exhibitions') (SEE APPENDIX 3) [Not reproduced here].

5. After this research trip, we decided to go ahead with organising the first UK-only education exhibition, and successfully organised the event on November 24th 2012 with a dozen UK universities.

6. While only having a small presence in the market, we believed the British Council to be a potential ally in the market, as an arm of the FCO, and so we provided a free stand at our Baku exhibition. When it came to the event, a member of the British Council staff entered the hall, without introducing herself to us, the organisers, and approached the universities present about the possibility of a rival British Council-run UK education fair in 2013. The Council had never previously organised such a fair in Azerbaijan (SEE APPENDIX 5) [Not reproduced here].

7. The British Council's *Education UK* fair was duly announced for November 2013, a decision taken, according to Helen Silvestor, British Council Regional Director for Turkey and Azerbaijan, in February 2013. We have written testimony from UK universities that a British Council employee approached them as mentioned above, at our event in November 2012. Therefore it appears that our event was used purely as research for launching a rival event in a market that does not need two UK education exhibitions.

8. The British Council's charter allows for promoting "a wider knowledge of the English language" and "the advancement of education". These are subject, however, to the overarching condition that the Council shall advance "any purpose which is exclusively charitable". Promoting UK universities that charge market rates to international students does not seem to constitute charity. Universities run large International Offices, and contract agencies from Beijing to Baku, to support that activity.

9. We feel that the actions of the British Council's employees in Baku abused our trust and actually contravene their own published 'core values', which include 'integrity', 'mutuality' and 'professionalism'. We believe they also contravene the letter of their own charitable charter, as well as the spirit of ethical business practices, and the principal of private enterprise free of government interference/competition.

10. The British Council has, in the past, provided support for British arts, culture and

identity. But is it right to exploit that good name commercially, at the expense of British enterprise (providers of language course / English test / marketing services) purely because the Council needs to raise more money?

11. Our excellent record and feedback would usually be rewarded with repeat business in Baku. Instead, we are faced with competition from a government agency that has been told to act more 'entrepreneurially', in a market where we took the business risk, a groundbreaking British private company that paid another UK government agency (UKTI) for market entry only a year previously. We can compete on service and results, however government status and cache is harder to deal with.

Business consultancy for UK Language Training Centres

12. In July 2012 Levant Education Consulting was commissioned to write a report for the UK language training sector about the Turkish market. In the report we included a section about political issues in Turkey, issues about the rule of law, and the potential for political upheaval in Turkey. These issues affect any UK company working in Turkey, especially when these companies frequently send staff into the market and sometimes get into financial / legal disputes.

13. The British Council *redacted* that section prior to publishing in September 2013, citing its diplomatic role and need to avoid upsetting the Turkish government. This is understandable, but it also shows that **the British Council cannot pretend to offer independent, accurate business advice to the education / training sector while also playing a role in UK diplomacy** (SEE APPENDIX 6) [Not reproduced here].

Attracting Scholarship Students from Azerbaijan

14. Since establishing the *UK Education Tour* exhibition in November 2012, we have provided additional services to the Azeri Ministry of Education, State Oil Fund of Azerbaijan (SOFAZ), and British universities.

15. In March 2013 we arranged a London workshop for Azeri Ministry, SOFAZ staff and UK university International Officers to improve awareness of both the State scholarship programme and UK Higher Education. Nearly 40 universities attended, and the feedback was excellent.

16. In a surprise move, however, the Office of the Azerbaijan President reduced the number of UK universities approved to receive sponsored students to 27, from 40. Excellent UK universities were removed from the list, in a seemingly random fashion (actually motivated by the President's desire to improve links with Turkey and Russia).

17. Levant Education advised the universities concerned that this was a matter for the British Embassy in Baku: the Ambassador should make direct appeals on behalf of the affected British universities.

18. However, as is typical for UK Embassies, UKTI and UK institutions promoting British business interests around the world, the Ambassador referred the matter to the British Council. Not only do we feel that this would be less effective in addressing the issue in hand, this highlights how the British Council is seen as a department of the Foreign Office; however that same office is competing on the playing field as commercial service providers,

making it an uneven one for UK companies that cannot so easily be part of diplomatic processes (SEE APPENDIX 4) [Not reproduced here].

The Role of UK Trade & Investment

19. The education marketing services sector consists of many specialist UK companies. Like any UK company, we can benefit from UK Trade & Investment's (UKTI) global network and mission to support UK companies doing business abroad.

20. UKTI has been running a nice campaign called the 'GREAT' campaign, for example events and materials featuring Richard Branson promoting 'Entrepreneurs are GREAT'. However around the world business enquiries and opportunities in the international education sector are routinely passed to the British Council. As mentioned above, Ambassadors and Consul Generals also refer education-related matters to the British Council. No other industry would accept this state of affairs – a government agency being fed myriad business opportunities and treated with preferred status. There is a common reaction one faces when speaking to UKTI or Diplomatic civil servants about education marketing: 'That's one for the British Council'.

21. What is the point in paying UKTI for market entry services (OMIS), when its sister agency the British Council will directly benefit from the results and compete with the company that commissioned the OMIS service?

22. Speaking as an entrepreneur, I feel that there is a serious conflict between the various roles of the British Council, an agency operating under the premise of supporting the UK's 'soft power'. Promotion of UK identity, arts and culture is a laudable mission (although these days UK arts and culture are certainly strong enough commercially to support themselves). That a government-funded agency is actively exploiting confusion that exists about its public role, and is raising funds that the taxpayer cannot provide by competing unfairly in the private sector (while seeking to avoid paying any tax at all) is hardly a great advertisement for UK democracy or UK government support for the role of enterprise and commerce free of government interference.

18 September 2013

Sir Peter Marshall – Written evidence

The Concept of “Soft Power” and UK Influence

Abstract

There is everything to be said for adopting an *inductive* approach to the examination of the nature of "soft power", starting from the thought-provoking definitions employed by Professor Joseph Nye, and seeing where rigorous discussion fruitfully leads. A useful complementarity can be achieved by the adoption of *deductive* analysis, based on the experience of the vast expansion which has occurred in the notion of diplomacy. This suggests that in the twenty-first century almost any aspect of the national life can be relevant to the notion of soft power and to the enhancement of influence abroad. Especially is this the case with a country such as Britain, with its immensely wide and deep international involvement.

The best point of departure for an examination of “soft power” is an up-to-date definition provided by Professor Joseph Nye, the distinguished American academic and public servant who coined the concept some twenty years ago:

“fully defined, soft power is the ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes”
(The Future of Power, p 21)

Such an absorbing definition does not beg a number of important questions so much as subsume them. That is not surprising. We are concerned with action, rather than contemplation, in a field of inquiry where the search for answers is almost essential to identifying the questions.

Nonetheless a supporting analytical framework has its uses. A rigorous description of *what* we do, and have done, in the management of our common affairs inevitably draws in its train questions of *how* we do it, and *why* we do it. *How* and *why* in turn feed back into *what*.

Like so many other issues in the public domain, “soft power”, however recent its seeming arrival on the international scene, has a long history. This memorandum surveys - in the bullet-point form which brevity demands -

- (i) the widening over the years of the horizons of “diplomacy”;
- (ii) the transformation *pari passu* of the nature of diplomatic business;
- (iii) the broadly corresponding, yet much more rapid, evolution in the concept of “soft power” itself;
- (iv) the scope for mobilising UK soft power to enhance UK influence overseas; and
- (v) the positive-sum perspective on soft power

I The widening of the concept of “diplomacy”.

The concept of diplomacy has developed spectacularly in the last hundred years in particular. It will continue to evolve in response to rapidly changing conditions:

- as originally conceived in the European nation state system which emanated from the end of the Thirty Years’ War, diplomacy was thought of as the *art* or the *skill* of those elite few who conducted, far from the public eye (and, in the public imagination, with a heady mixture of glamour and subterfuge), the occasional and very largely “political” business of one sovereign with another;
- since it is essentially a collective effort and not a matter of lone operators, the concept can easily be enlarged to refer to diplomats collectively, rather than to them individually, and hence to *diplomatic apparatus* and the *diplomatic ambiance*;
- it is equally natural to extend the definition to the *manner* in which the business is conducted: a classic definition of diplomacy is “the application of intelligence and tact to official relations between governments of independent states”;
- it is a further natural progression to a definition in terms of the conduct of business by *negotiation* (rather than by war, or shouting match, or by private or public posturing);
- it is a short step thereafter to the *management* of international relations, a more comprehensive notion which makes no distinction as to the manner in which, or to the method by which, the business is conducted;
- this can easily be thought of in the same context as the conduct of *foreign policy*;
- most comprehensively of all, diplomacy is often expanded to include the *content of foreign affairs* as a whole. In an interdependent world that is a vast subject.

Each of these definitions serves its purpose. All are in widespread current use, even if it is only from a study of the context that it becomes clear which of them is at issue..

II Successive transformations in the character of diplomatic business

There have been similar developments in the *substance* of diplomatic business, as well as in the *process* by which it is handled. The two are, of course, inextricably mixed:

- an immense increase in *the volume of business*, as a reflection in particular of growing government management of the economy and world interdependence;
- a similar rise in *non-governmental and public interest and involvement*, as traditional society makes way, under the pressure of the information revolution, for modern times, and world interdependence is succeeded by the phenomenon of the global village;
- a basic change in the *content* of the business: *values*, as well as *interests*, are now at its core. *Democracy* and *human rights* have become central to international affairs;
- the consequent shift in the *focus* of international dealings from *sovereigns* to *people*, and from state sovereignty to the concept of the *international responsibility to protect*;
- the bitter experience of *two World Wars*, a mere generation apart, which has bred an *overriding commitment to co-operate*, and a *commitment to avoid recourse to force*. Both are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
- recognition of increasing *difficulty* in any case the *deployment of hard power*, which has to be distinguished from its significance as a *credible threat*.

To understand their significance for the management of international affairs today, these transformations need to be examined not only from the standpoint of their individual content, but also from that of their mutual relationship and their collective coverage.

III There has been a broadly corresponding evolution in the concept of soft power

Formulation of the concept of soft power has opened up something of s Pandora's box. It most usefully encourages the study of links between phenomena previously regarded as unconnected:

- the concept could be said to have originated as an *option* for use instead of recourse to hard (military and economic) power;
- it naturally came to be used as describing the *strategy* involved in exercising that option;
- this inevitably encompasses examination of the *wherewithal* to *implement* the strategy, and the *conditions* in which implementation is most likely to be successful;
 - this examination inevitably extends to the *resources* necessary to the successful implementation of the strategy, ie the *ingredients of soft power*;
 - listing these ingredients has both *objective* and *subjective* elements:
 - objectively* it is necessary to be as clear as possible about what it is that others find attractive. This can be literally almost anything: animal, vegetable, mineral or abstract – the people and their disposition; their habitat and environment; their industrial and technological potential; and their ideas, creativity, culture, hospitality, language, institutions, history, tradition, humour, cohesiveness, dependability, steadfastness, and by no means least, their moral compass and the fundamental issue of faith;
 - *subjectively*, the task may be to get others to take you at your own valuation of yourself, rather than at theirs. Those employing soft power need to be clear, moreover about the message they wish to convey, about how they can hope to gain the attention of the intended recipients, and about how far acceptance of the message may require of them a change of heart or opinion;
 - drawing up a list of soft power ingredients which is anywhere near exhaustive is tantamount to *writing a comprehensive guide book to the country as a whole*. Virtually nothing can be dismissed as of no relevance, actual or potential, to the country's soft power. Soft power in the international context comprises the total impact made on others. It is *the country's living international presence*, of which official diplomatic representation is only a part, albeit an important one;
 - soft power is thus everything except hard power when the latter is in use. It can, in effect, be described as "*everything you are, except when you are attacking, threatening or bribing others*".

Emphasis on the comprehensive end of the spectrum of definitions of soft power outlined above in no way undermines the validity of the definitions at the narrower, more specific, end. They all peacefully, and usefully, co-exist.

IV Harnessing our soft power to increase our influence

It follows inevitably from the characteristics of soft power, as explored in this memorandum, that one needs to approach with an open mind the question of how to harness it to the national interest.

- every country has a distinctive soft power profile.
- the basic ingredient in profile, as suggested above, is *presence*, the automatic product of international involvement. *In the case of the UK, continued extensive and intensive international involvement* are essential to our chosen life style and way of earning a living. The more that involvement is seen by others to be *constructive*, the greater the influence its *presence* will automatically bring us;
 - this automatic advantage is greatly strengthened by the adoption of regular official “programme” measures to increase our influence abroad, such as support of the *British Council* and the *BBC Overseas Service*;
 - our influence is given coherence by firm statement of forward looking and outward looking *statement of national purpose*. The Coalition Government has been noteworthy for the clarity and comprehensiveness of its statements in this regard. *Mr Cameron’s speech on June 10 at the London Gateway*, under the title “Plan for Britain’s success is unquestionably one of the greatest Prime Ministerial utterances of recent years;
 - government activity in promoting national influence overseas, whether by “programme” or by “project”, can usefully be *disaggregated by sphere* (United States, EU, Middle East, Commonwealth, United Nations system) or by *sector* (security, environment, human rights, development);
 - a striking example of a “project” is the GREAT campaign launched by the Prime Minister in speech in New York on September 21, 2011, to promote Britain in the context of the Olympic and Paralympics Games. Our attractions, as listed in alphabetical order by the GREAT campaign, are countryside, creativity, entrepreneurs, “green”, heritage, innovation, knowledge, music, shopping, sport and technology. Creativity was judged to be *primus inter pares*.

The whole is greater than the sum of the parts. What we are, when we are at our un-self-conscious best, is our best advertisement: Shakespeare’s “happy breed”, the people of whom Goethe said that they had the courage to be what nature made them; the country of the Jubilympics, inspired and drawn together by a matchless Monarchy.¹⁵⁹

V A positive sum perspective on soft power

The temptation to make comparisons, on competitive and rivalry grounds, may be strong. However the soft power profile of each country is so individual that to contrast one with another has little practical value. Nonetheless it may have the indirect advantage of reminding us that the concept of soft power, in common with diplomacy, has its roots in a nation state system which pessimistically assumed a zero-sum relation between one country and another: one could only gain at the expense of another. It was thus a world for the pre-emptive strike, or for getting your retaliation in first. Soft power could be thought of as the fellow, rather than the antithesis, of hard power.

¹⁵⁹ “Britain after the Jubilympics”, *The Round Table*, the Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs (October 2013, Vol 102, no 5, pp 147-429)

The zero-sum approach was most clearly to be seen in the economic field. The doctrine of Mercantilism prevailed until the likes of Adam Smith and Ricardo showed that there was a better way of managing affairs, namely – by emphasising common interest and prompting enterprise and free trade. But they did not equate this with an uninhibited free-for-all. In 1759, seventeen years before “Wealth of Nations”, on the title page of which he is described as “formerly Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow”, Adam Smith published “The Theory of Moral Sentiments”. His fundamental doctrine was that all our moral sentiments arise from “sympathy”, which “leads us to enter into the situations of other men and to partake with them in the passions which those situations have a tendency to excite”.

Diplomacy did not really catch up with this enlightenment until the world had suffered two catastrophic World Wars, a mere twenty years apart. The centenary of the outbreak of the Great War is already pressing on us a poignant awareness of the ultimate futility of unconstrained hard power. The positive-sum international community came into existence under the United Nations Charter. With all its present problems and faults, it is a change very much for the better. We have learned the advantages of confronting our problems rather than one another.

It follows that we should be ready to think in terms of the deployment of soft power not simply *against* others, but also *with* them and *for* them. This opens up a fresh world of possibilities, in particular for the UK, with its immensely wide and deep international involvement.. It highlights the importance of integrity, of dependability, of trust, of talking to, not at or past, one another.. It reminds us that democracy is a system for counting heads rather than breaking them.

W S Gilbert, a shrewd observer of the British scene concludes his eccentric review of the Parliamentary system in *Iolanthe* by proclaiming that “it’s love that makes the world go round”.

October 2013

Jonathan McClory – Written evidence

Summary

This submission to the House of Lords Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence, while submitted on behalf of the author alone, draws on research from the Institute for Government's series of reports, *The New Persuaders*, which established the first methodology for measuring the soft power resources of countries through a composite index. This document provides evidence on the meaning of soft power, the UK's soft power resources, target audiences, and the importance of networks in leveraging soft power.

Meaning and Importance of Soft Power

In international relations, power has traditionally been treated as a predominantly realist concept.¹⁶⁰ Consequently, power tends to be framed in Dahlian terms: one actor using its material resources to compel another actor to do something it would otherwise not have done.¹⁶¹ But as International Relations studies evolved and expanded through the 20th century, competing schools of thought challenged the realist perspective and its rigid interpretation of power. This expansion, and the subsequent development of a diverse set of theoretical approaches, has led to an extremely competitive environment. Indeed, the study of International Relations can be viewed as a constant struggle between realism, liberalism and a host of other critical theories.¹⁶² Without wading too far into theoretical debate, it is important to note that no single definition of power will suit all purposes.¹⁶³

Accepting some level of ambiguity on the definition of power, it is important to establish a broader, more inclusive definition: power can be understood as influence over – as well as with – others. In terms of projection, we can divide power into two categories: hard and soft.

Hard power is the exercise of influence through coercion, relying on strategies like military intervention, coercive diplomacy, and economic sanctions.¹⁶⁴ Soft power, on the other hand, is the “ability to affect others to obtain preferred outcomes by the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuasion and positive attraction”.¹⁶⁵ Soft power strategies eschew the traditional foreign policy implements of carrot and stick, working instead to affect the preferences of other actors 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. “Hard power is push; soft power is pull”.¹⁶⁶ Ultimately, soft power is getting others to want what you want, and behaving accordingly.

Why is Soft Power Important?

¹⁶⁰ Barnett, M. and Duvall, R. (2005) “Power in International Politics”, *International Organization*, 59, winter, pp. 39-75.

¹⁶¹ Dahl, R. (1957) “The concept of power”, *Behavioural Science*, 2, pp. 210-15.

¹⁶² Walt, S. M. (1998) “International Relations: One world, many theories”, *Foreign Policy*, No. 110, Spring, pp. 29-46

¹⁶³ Nye, J. (2011) “Power and foreign policy”, *Journal of Political Power*, 4 (1) April, pp. 9-24.

¹⁶⁴ Wilson, E. “Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power”, *The Annals of The American Academy of Political Science*, 616, March, p. 114.

¹⁶⁵ Nye, J. (2011) “Power and foreign policy”, *Journal of Political Power*, 4 (1) April, p. 19.

¹⁶⁶ Nye, J. (2011) “Power and foreign policy”, *Journal of Political Power*, 4 (1) April, p. 19.

International politics are in the process of a fundamental transformation, throwing up a host of new challenges for policy makers and diplomats. The global transition currently underway is being driven by five primary factors.

The first is the diffusion of power, which is happening on two fronts. Power is moving between states, meaning the global centre of power is drifting from West to East. At the same time, power is shifting away from states altogether, as non-state actors play more significant roles and wield greater influence in world affairs.¹⁶⁷

The second factor affecting international politics is the communications and IT revolution. The speed with which information is disseminated throughout the globe and the subsequent democratisation of access to that information creates a more informed – and increasingly activist – global public. The effects of this shift are demonstrated in the Arab Spring, the rise of Wikileaks, and the border-spanning #Occupy movement. The rapid movement of information across networks has made individuals more powerful than they have been at any point in history.¹⁶⁸

The third factor is the rising influence and prevalence of international networks. International networks may comprise a diverse set of actors including states, civil society groups, NGOs, multilateral organisations and even individuals. They may form to tackle complex, trans-national collective action problems like Climate Change, or take up single issues like banning landmines.

The fourth factor has been difficult for many foreign ministries to accept: propaganda as we know it is dead. Governments no longer have the luxury of offering domestic audiences one message whilst feeding another to the international community. With information speeding across borders, the inconsistencies between a state's policy and messaging are more conspicuous. In today's networked world of instant information, global publics are smarter, more engaged and likely to dismiss propaganda when they see it.¹⁶⁹

The final factor is the mass urbanisation of the world's population. For the first time in human history the majority of people around the world live in cities. This trend will continue, and the proportion of people living in cities will march on. The process of global urbanisation has implications for how information is shared, the diffusion of technology, cross-pollination of ideas, innovation, and the development of political movements.

For HM Government, the above challenges are compounded by significant cuts in funding for virtually all of the public institutions that play a role in generating and projecting the UK's soft power. This is worrying as the above trends will make the tools and approaches of soft power more, not less, important to achieving foreign policy objectives, from security to prosperity.

The UK's Soft Power Resources

¹⁶⁷ Nye, J. (2011) *The Future of Power*, New York: Public Affairs.

¹⁶⁸ Cull, N. (2011) "Wikileaks, public diplomacy 2.0 and the state of digital public diplomacy", *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 7 (1), pp. 1-8.

¹⁶⁹ Van Staden, A. (2005) "Power and legitimacy: The quest for order in a unipolar world", *Clingendael Diplomacy Papers*, April

The IfG Soft Power Index sets out a useful framework for understanding the resources that contribute to a state's soft power¹⁷⁰. The framework groups these resources into five main categories:

- Political Values and Quality of Government
- Cultural Production
- Diplomacy
- Education
- Business Attractiveness and Innovation

The IfG framework captures the objective side of soft power resources, measuring things as diverse as the number of international students studying in a country to the number of multi-lateral organisations to which a country is a member.

The sources of soft power are still subject to academic debate, and will continue to be for the foreseeable future. However, what is most important when considering the factors that contribute to the soft power of the UK (or any country) is the extent to which they elicit a positive attraction.

Soft power resources are either inherently attractive in and of themselves, or serve to draw the positive attention of international audiences to a given country. With this in mind, the most important soft power resources at the disposal of the UK can be split into four groups according to their sources of funding, and (at least partially) the level of state control. Publicly funded and state controlled resources include major institutions like the BBC World Service, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Department for International Development.

Private sector resources include all those contributing factors existing outside of the state, which are far too numerous to list exhaustively. However, important examples include Britain's creative industries, from art, film, and music, to architecture, design, and fashion. Major sporting institutions like the Premier League, as well as highly respected business brands like Rolls Royce.

Civil society organisations comprise the third group actors contributing to British soft power. Like the private sector group, civil society is extremely diverse, including a range of organisations from charities, NGOs, the religious community, through to cultural institutions and even trade unions. Some are obviously more international facing than others, but the whole of civil society is crucial source of soft power. As a point of comparison, China's lack of a free and dynamic civil society is a soft power weak point juxtaposed with the UK. The final group is an almost uniquely Western group of mixed-funded bodies. The British Council in some ways could be included, or the Arts Council. Even the UK's esteemed universities could be included in this group. These are the bodies that benefit from some government funding but cannot rely exclusively on public funds, and enjoy some level of autonomy from government.

Fortunately for HM Government, the UK is amongst an elite group of states that manages to boast an impressive array of resources across these three groups, and across all five categories of the soft power framework set out above. The latest version of the IfG Soft Power Index scored the UK top overall, but it also placed in the top ten in four of the five sub-indices as shown in Table I.

¹⁷⁰ McClory, J. (2013) *The New Persuaders III*, Institute for Government

Table 1

Rank	Government	Culture	Diplomacy	Education	Business/Innovation
1	Norway	USA	France	USA	Finland
2	Switzerland	UK	UK	UK	Switzerland
3	Sweden	France	Germany	Australia	Singapore
4	Denmark	Australia	USA	Germany	Sweden
5	Netherlands	Germany	Sweden	China	Denmark
6	Finland	China	Netherlands	Japan	Netherlands
7	New Zealand	Italy	Norway	France	Japan
8	Canada	Canada	Italy	Canada	Germany
9	Australia	Spain	Belgium	Korea	Norway
10	Austria	Korea	Canada	Netherlands	UK

Perhaps the UK's greatest soft power strength is having achieved a balance of assets across all of the key contributing factors to soft power – whether they are derived from large, publicly funded institutions, or organisations that exist entirely outside of the government's control.

Involving Non-State Actors in Soft Power

As outlined above and in the *New Persuaders* series, non-state actors have a significant role to play in the generation and leveraging of the UK's soft power. For HM Government to maximise the potential non-state actors have to build Britain's soft power, the most important thing they can do is to build a coalition that allows for meaningful communication and coordination. In doing so, listening to non-state actors is as important as instructing. The FCO have gone some way in doing this already. In 2011, the FCO formed an external panel under the Diplomatic Excellence programme, which is comprised of business leaders, other departments, universities, and NGOs. Such a structure provides a useful blueprint for how HM Government could build a meaningful coalition of non-state actors. In a country as large and complex as the UK, forming a coherent group of non-state actors for the purposes of generating and leveraging soft power is difficult, but it should be done in a structured, as well as adaptive, way.

Generating Soft Power Resources

In terms of generating – or consolidating – the UK's soft power resources, the challenge is threefold. First, HM Government needs to think seriously about the implications of spending decisions on major soft power institutions and programmes. This includes things as diverse as funding for the BBC, which reaches an international audience of over 200 million people (unrivalled by any other state-funded broadcaster), through to Chevening Scholarships which bring future leaders to the UK to study.

This issue is not simply a question of Foreign Office budgeting, but a question of HM Government's overarching priorities. It is an issue that can only be addressed through the comprehensive spending review process, and should involve a full appraisal of the UK's international strategic objectives over the long term. While all areas of government are facing a challenging fiscal context, the reduction of budgets in the key publicly funded soft power institutions of the UK should be cause for serious concern. Soft power is far easier

lost than it is gained. In most cases chipping away at the key pillars of British soft power to derive short-term savings will likely prove a false economy in the long run.

While the first issue is a question of straightforward funding, the second challenge is building the best possible eco-system in which the non-state actors that contribute greatly to British soft power can thrive. This is a complex issue. It means looking carefully at a range of organisations and the challenges they face in meeting their objectives and reaching, attracting, and influencing international audience. It requires thinking about major cultural institutions, creative industries, universities, businesses, and NGOs in a comprehensive way. Dealing with this challenge alone could warrant its own separate line of enquiry.

The third challenge, political messaging and communication, is an area where HM Government have been disappointingly ineffective and often contradictory. As the IfG Soft Power Index reports, the UK has a wealth of soft power resources at its disposal, but these resources do not exist in a vacuum. HM Government have given strangely conflicting messages around Britain being ‘open for business’ to the world, whilst at the same time delivering very heavy anti-immigration rhetoric. Moreover, the discouraging of international students could create long-term problems for the UK’s soft power – let alone the economic impact of fewer international students attending UK universities.

The complexity of these three challenges, and their importance to the UK’s future international influence – and by extension its security and prosperity – warrant a review similar in scope to the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review, but focused on diplomacy and soft power.

Target Audiences and Using Soft Power

The question, ‘who are the target audiences for the use of the UK’s soft power?’ depends on the objective at hand. The first step in the process of leveraging a state’s soft power is to ask, ‘what is the objective?’ Only with an answer to this first question, can a state begin to think about who the target audience should be.

There are some foreign policy objectives that lend themselves to a soft power approach and those that do not. Objectives where soft power is a viable approach tend to be large-scale, multilateral challenges. Examples include, dealing with climate change, non-proliferation efforts, trans-national health issues, etc. Moreover, issues that require setting new international norms, rules, or even creating new multi-lateral oversight bodies are especially amenable to the use of soft power. However, goals that tend to be self-motivated or involve direct conflict are often not going to be achievable through soft power.

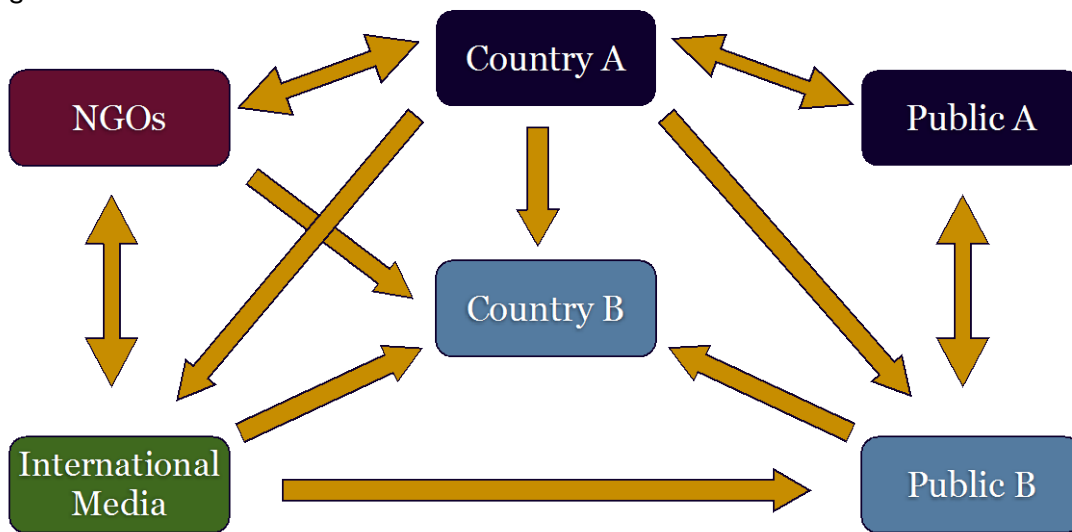
If a given objective seems within reach through a soft power approach, then the question of what audiences should be targeted is likely to have several dimensions. The first is geographic. Depending on the target state, different soft power resources will create different reactions. The second is state vs. non-state. In some instances HM Government should directly target the government or elite decision makers, whereas other situations will require engaging more with non-state actors. The final dimension that bears consideration is temporal. Is the audience today’s decision makers, or future leaders?

Figure 1 below gives a simplified illustration of how soft power might be used to influence a state, and the audiences involved in leveraging that power. Again, depending on the given

objective, the audience will differ, but a non-exhaustive list of potential audiences could include:

- Governments
- Multi-lateral organisations
- NGOs/Civil society groups
- Media
- International publics
- Business community
- Educational institutions
- Thought leaders/Opinion formers
- Think tanks

Figure 1



Leveraging

Leveraging soft power effectively is far more difficult than deploying hard power tactics. For governments to effectively leverage their soft power assets, they need first understand what exactly those assets are, whether they can be mobilised by the state, and – if so – where they might be deployed. Too often there is a rush to answer the question ‘how can we use our soft power?’ before understanding ‘what soft power do we actually have?’ I would argue that HM Government and the FCO have not yet gone through the process of understanding exactly what resources the UK has, where they are likely to be most effective, and how these resources can be matched up with the FCO’s objectives.

Soft Power and Diplomacy

The future of international influence rests in transnational networks. 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. Being a central actor across multiple networks allows the UK to shape the preferences, debate, procedures, rules, and ultimately outcomes of decisions that can only be taken multi-laterally.

Fortunately for HM Government, the UK is a very well networked state. Only France and the United States are members of more international organisations than the UK. Moreover, the Foreign Office's diplomatic service is admired around the world, which is crucial to putting those networks to good use. Of the eighty multilateral organisations in which the UK is a participant, the EU is among, 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.

The EU is a readymade network of like-minded countries that share the same values and often preferences, which means the UK is well placed to marshal EU states when required. The EU also serves as one of the best example of leveraging soft power over the long term. With the collapse of the iron curtain, the EU's eastward expansion has been an incredible soft power victory, bringing the whole of Europe in line with a system of values, principles, and norms that uphold free markets, democracy, and individual liberty. Despite the Euro-crisis the EU still holds considerable power of attraction. The recent EU-Ukraine negotiations to establish an association agreement and free trade deal attest to the resilience of the EU's soft power. That Ukraine has defied very stern warnings from Russia and looked to build better ties with Europe is a considerable victory for the EU, and by extension, the UK.

Another major multilateral organisation in the UK's considerable cache of networks is the Commonwealth. Owing to its relatively low visibility, the Commonwealth is often overlooked and underestimated, but it is an important organisation and should be given higher priority by HM Government. While the Commonwealth holds a great deal of potential, it would be wrong to think of it as a potential replacement for Britain's EU membership. Unlike the EU, Commonwealth members are an extremely diverse set of states, having achieved varying levels of development. Many subscribe to different values, priorities, and ambitions.

While HM Government should look to develop and better leverage its position in the Commonwealth, doing so is not a straightforward task. First and foremost, the Commonwealth needs to serve a greater purpose for its members. The Commonwealth can only be an effective body for influence if all members feel that it is a worthwhile forum with something positive to offer each state. As the natural – though unofficial – leader of the Commonwealth, the UK should devote more time and effort to establishing greater clarity of purpose to the Commonwealth. While the EU is one of the primary forums for developed economies, the Commonwealth could be used to help HM Government build better links and opportunities with emerging powers.

Britain's status as an UNSC permanent member is indeed important, but as recent diplomatic failures over the Syrian civil war have shown, the diversity of countries and their subsequent interests make the UN a difficult forum to achieve foreign policy objectives. This is not to say it is impossible to achieve objectives in the UN, as the Arms Trade Treaty has shown.

Learning from Others

The exercise of soft power is often characterised by enthusiasm for the concept outpacing understanding of how to deploy it. This is true the world over. However, there are some examples of either generating or using soft power that serve as helpful case studies. While Switzerland has generally benefited from a positive international image, the country experienced a wave of negative sentiment in the late 1990s. Questions around Switzerland's financial services industry with respect to transparency, assets held by dictators, and even questions over practices dating back to World War II led to a fall in the Alpine nation's global image.

Switzerland's response was the establishment of a programme called 'Presence Switzerland' in 2000, responsible for managing the Swiss image abroad. In response to the challenge faced, Switzerland did not opt for a short-term "fire-fighting" approach to crisis management public relations. On the contrary, Presence Switzerland was the implementation of enduring image cultivation over the longer term. The focus was directed towards the general dissemination of knowledge about Switzerland as well as the establishment and cultivation of relationship networks.¹⁷¹ Core to the programme was a process of 'listening' to international publics. Presence Switzerland made use of public polling to test their messaging and progress over the years, adjusting their approach in key countries as required.

China's investment's recent investment in public diplomacy and soft power has received a great deal of attention. China has established over 300 cultural institutes around the world in less than ten years. At the same time, China's state-owned broadcaster, CCTV is launching an ambitious push into English-language markets, building new studios in Washington DC, Nairobi, and Europe.¹⁷² This investment has come off the back of a \$9 billion injection of funds into public diplomacy projects in 2010. Recognising the need to counter the growing concerns around its meteoric economic rise, China is building the capability to project the best possible image to the world. While British soft power far outstrips Chinese, HM Government should take note of China's investment in public diplomacy and image projection capacity.

Branding Emerging Powers

There has been growing interest in 'nation branding' in recent years amongst governments, researchers, and professionals. Increasingly, emerging powers are trying to shape a single narrative about their country. Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore all provide examples of trying to shape a single narrative and image for international audiences. For emerging powers, this is a viable option to boost soft power, but is usually pursued to increase foreign direct investment and tourism – rather than achieving specific foreign policy goals. Because there is often an information deficit about them, emerging powers are able to launch new campaigns aimed at raising awareness and cultivating a specific image.

For developed powers, however, this is much more difficult. International publics often have pre-conceived notions of major powers like the UK, and shifting those perceptions can be difficult. While it is important for the UK's international communications to be coherent and consistent across departments and agencies, the benefits of a 'branding campaign' for Britain

¹⁷¹ Matyassy, J. and Flury, S. (2011) *Challenges for Switzerland's Public Diplomacy: Referendum on Banning Minarets*, Los Angeles: Figueroa Press

¹⁷² Garrahan, M. and Hille, K. (2011) "China to Expand English Language TV Service", *Financial Times*, 7 November, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/28a4ccec-0965-11e1-a2bb-00144feabdc0.html?ftcamp=rss#axzz1e3fkSgnU>

Jonathan McClory – Written evidence

should be viewed with some level of caution. For a nation with an already high visibility, actions will speak much louder than advertisements.

September 2013

John Micklethwait, The Economist, Lord Williams of Baglan, Chatham House and Professor Michael Cox, London School of Economics (LSE) – Oral evidence (QQ 23-41)

**John Micklethwait, The Economist, Lord Williams of Baglan,
Chatham House and Professor Michael Cox, London School of
Economics (LSE) – Oral evidence (QQ 23-41)**

[Transcript to be found under Professor Michael Cox, London School of Economics \(LSE\)](#)

National Asian Business Association – Written evidence

- 1.0** This submission is on behalf of the NABA, an umbrella body representing the following British Asian business organisations:
- LABA – Leicestershire Asian Business Association
 - ABDN- Asian Business Development Network (Yorkshire)
 - IAB – Institute of Asian Businesses – Birmingham
 - HABA- Hertfordshire Asian Business Association
 - BABA – Bedfordshire Asian Business Association
 - BACBA- Black Country Asian Business Association – Dudley
 - NeABA- Newcastle Asian Business Association
 - ABA – Asian Business Association – London
 - YABA – Yorkshire Asian Business Association (Leeds)
- 1.2** NABA welcomes the House of Lords Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK’s Influence review. The British Asian communities have a significant business, cultural and educational traction with the Indian subcontinent, East and Central Africa, the Middle East and the United States. In times of austerity and a multimedia driven globalised world the British Asian communities are keen to be active citizens in leveraging soft power advantage for the United Kingdom.
- 2.0 The caveats**
- 2.1** The Paradigm shift:
- 2.2** British Asian communities are fully integrated British Citizens, whose loyalty and commitment to a prosperous and dynamic United Kingdom remains steadfast.
- 2.3** Recent Economic challenges have changed the nature and scope of UK’s soft power engagement. Rebuilding and re-calibration of this will require a wider involvement of diverse British citizens.
- 2.4** The British Asian communities have a pool of leaders who are already leveraging comparative soft advantage for the UK. Most of them operate in isolation or with tokenistic recognition by government departments, the corporate world and institutions.
- 2.5** Whilst the representation of British Asian communities at Westminster has been progressive in both Houses; this is still in its infancy. This needs to be improved by encouraging leadership in public appointments based on merit.
- 2.6** Overseas visits by Ministers, Peers and Members of Parliament to enhance trade, inward investment and research links are useful and important. However, legacy based follow up after the visit, or maintaining a long term relationship, cannot be sustained by the government apparatus alone. It needs a wider shared ownership, and the opportunity to further enhance the relationship.

2.7 The openness and inclusion of British society presents us all in a beneficial light. But British nature being what it is – modest to the point of self-deprecation- is challenged by over-burdened orthodox diplomacy. This is coupled with a very real perception by many British Asians that upper echelons of diplomacy, trade and inward investment promotion are in narrow established hands, for whom diversity in Britain has only comparatively recently been accepted as relevant. This notion needs to be resolved as the centre of economic gravity moves from the West to the East.

3.0 The Key issues:

<p>How does a nation’s soft power relate to how it trades?</p> <p>Given the UK’s soft power resources, should UK companies be doing better at engaging with new markets?</p>	<p>In a world of choice, 24/7 multimedia, niche based communication platforms a nation is judged and valued in <i>real-time values (RTV)</i>. RTV’s bear no context to historic values. Entrepreneurs should heed this cogent argument. Respect is earned and lost on our actual and perceived values.</p> <p>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 UK will have a powerful comparative advantage.</p>
<p>What is the advantage of being a British company, if there is one?</p> <p>Why do companies from other countries want to invest in the UK?</p>	<p>The main advantage of any British company is that it is run under an open and transparent regulatory frame-work with world class checks and balances. Whilst over regulation is a burden, Better Regulation is United Kingdom’s real Unique Selling Proposition (USP). That is the reason why British products and services are valued overseas. This USP has to be maintained and exploited; as it will be subject to competition like any other commodity.</p> <p>NABA’s core mission remains to promote United Kingdom as the best place in the world to do business with and invest in. The reasons the world wants to invest in the UK are because they share or would like to share our democracy, language, sense of humour, sports, culture, values, courtesy, integrity, charity and consideration for the needs of others. Overseas companies having social, academic and cultural links to the UK will naturally feel comfortable in investing in the UK. The challenge that faces UK is whether we have the prerequisite soft power to remain in the first league for inward investment.</p>
<p>Do British laws, standards and values help or hinder companies working abroad, or inward investment?</p>	<p>Better Regulation is and will remain the United Kingdom’s real Value Proposition. This USP needs to evolve in the context of a competitive world. Britain has historically led in Law-making, standards and values. However these attributes need re-burnishing, especially in a global and competitive market. Consolidating our previous USP with World Class models and frameworks will once again give United Kingdom soft power lead in academia, training, governance, professional networks and engagement with new and emerging markets. This will also add real soft power values leading to inward investment.</p>

<p>Are the Government doing everything they could to make it an advantage to be a British company, and to make investing in the UK attractive?</p> <p>When the Government do things that make it less of an advantage to be a British company, or less attractive to invest in the UK, do they give due consideration to those consequences?</p> <p>Are other countries doing this better?</p>	<p>Whilst significant progress has been made in the UK and at British Missions abroad for supporting British companies to export; NABA’s advocacy to all the political parties still remains – that the support for export and international trade and inward investment ought to be a legacy based core government function and not outsourced.</p> <p>The BBC, the British Council, BIS, FCO and UKTI still lack any Non-Executives or senior policy input from the British Asian communities. NABA’s recommendation to the House of Lords Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK’s Influence is that this challenge needs to be rectified.</p> <p>NABA is relatively new to engaging with government and with select committees at Westminster, and welcomes a two way dialogue with the government, the opposition and the senior civil servants rolling out policies and programmes on international trade and inward investment.</p> <p>The US Department of Commerce and in particular, its agency for minority businesses MBDA (www.mbda.gov) has several decades of experience of best practice in involving policy level engagement with the Minority business communities in the US. NABA has a long-standing links with MBDA and would welcome UK government support to disseminate relevant MBDA best practices in the UK.</p>
<p>How can the UK mobilise its soft power resources to boost trade with other countries and foreign direct investment in the UK?</p>	<p>The key recommendation of the NABA in this submission is to engage British Asian businesses at a senior level in government and institutional organisations.</p>
<p>How could the UK use its soft power to increase its influence over trade architecture?</p>	<p>The Media is key to utilising soft power and can boost trade links between the UK and abroad. This is also reinforced by previous comments of the lack of real racial diversity in our boardrooms.</p> <p>The media industry is the most vivid and prescient way of illustrating the concept of “soft power”, especially in this digital age.</p> <p>A Holy Grail for many broadcasters is racial diversity. The Creative Industries in this country have been wrestling with the paradox for generations: why is it that when one in eight Britons is non-white,</p>

<p>Could soft power resources and relationships be used to influence key participants in the negotiation and rule-making of the international trade order?</p>	<p>only one Fleet Street editor Amol Rajan, is of colour and not one real decision maker in broadcasting is of Black Minority Ethnic origin?</p> <p>The question arises: should the BBC, paid for by the public, lead the way? And if we accept this premise, then why is it failing so badly in our opinion?</p> <p>Using the Freedom of Information Act, a recent study at the University of Lincoln discovered that:</p> <p>i) Over a decade from 2000, when the then Director-General Greg Dyke admitted his organisation was “hideously white”, to 2010 the total proportion of BMEs in BBC News rose from 8.2% to 9.7%. That’s 1.5% in ten years.</p> <p>ii) Over that same period, BBC News promoted just three people of colour to Senior Management positions out of ninety posts. The BBC argues that this is because it is in a period of retrenchment. Even so, in our view it shows how little the BBC is willing to share its power and with whom.</p> <p>The BBC’s own figures show that there is no real critical mass to get BMEs to positions of real influence: an examination of the grades below Senior Management level shows that as of the 31st of December 2010, only 30 out of 500 staff had any chance of becoming people of influence according to our assessment.</p> <p>NABA’s investigation shows that in the Asian Network, as an example, there is not one single Asian in its senior management team. Little wonder then that it often misses the mark when covering South Asian stories and producing content which have a wider appeal to its market. The message that the BBC sends, we feel, is that it does not have any Asians worthy of leading a station short listed this year for the Radio Academy Awards as station of the Year.</p> <p>The BBC will point to Mishul Husain, George Alagiah, Clive Myrie, Matthew Amroliwala and other front line staff. To us this seems like window dressing. Unlike America, presenters do not make editorial decisions and have no power, soft or hard.</p>
<p>How are UK values (democracy, rule of law, ‘fairness’) embedded in trade rules?</p> <p>Could these values be promoted in a way that could influence</p>	<p>The need for a natural link between our national values and trade has been made throughout this submission.</p> <p>The challenge, which is attainable, needs diversity in its formulation, promotion and roll-out.</p>

National Asian Business Association – Written evidence

the formation of trade rules and architecture?	
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July 2013

National Asian Business Association and Leicestershire Business Association,
Commonwealth Business Council and Institute of Export – Oral evidence (QQ 93-115)

**National Asian Business Association and Leicestershire Business
Association, Commonwealth Business Council and Institute of
Export – Oral evidence (QQ 93-115)**

[Transcript to be found under Commonwealth Business Council](#)

National Museum Directors' Council – Written evidence

This submission is made by the National Museum Directors' Council (NMDC). The NMDC represents the Directors of the UK's national and leading regional museums and collections. For a full list of NMDC's members, please see www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/members.

I Summary

NMDC welcomes the House of Lords review of soft power and the UK's influence overseas, and is keen to take the opportunity of the Committee's Call for Evidence to provide Lords with information about the contribution made by the UK's national and larger regional museums.

The international work of the UK's national and leading regional museums and collections contributes to the UK's soft power ability and influence overseas. It creates channels of communication, a positive impression and the conveying of different perspectives which may not be achieved through more conventional forms of diplomacy. The position of UK museums as working at arms-length from the Government allows them to create mutually beneficial relationships and build trust based on commonalities between institutions rather than them being viewed as a centrally-controlled arm of Government.

International activity can take many forms, and many of the UK's larger museums have long-held international links derived from the focus of their collections, their expertise, their audience or location. Loans, academic study, acquisitions, peer support, special exhibitions, research, staff exchanges and maintenance of the permanent galleries all provide the means by which international links develop. Although there will be periods when the partnerships focus on high profile projects, the relationships are sustained by ongoing less publicly visible activity.

However, museums find it challenging to embark on this sort of valuable work without seed funding, and the impact of recent public funding cuts mean that there are both fewer sources of external funding and less core funding which can be used for this purpose. The Government should consider building on the excellent work of the World Collections Programme and Stories of the World by making funding available to broker the international work of national and leading regional museums in support of the GREAT campaign. Furthermore, the visa regime can sometimes prove restrictive as museums seek to invite leading artists, curators, research and administrators to visit and work with their institutions.

2 Soft Power

Soft power is the influence achieved through activities which are not formally organized by Government. These activities are those where there are likely to be more immediate purposes, such as the organisation and delivery of a major sporting or cultural event. Exercising soft power is to work with a larger audience and seek attitudinal change over a longer period of time. Genuinely collaborative and independent cultural activity makes a significant contribution to a nation's soft power, as does tourism and science. Soft power is also the result of long-term sustained engagement, although relationships may include periods of very high profile activity.

The healthy and vibrant relationship between UK museums and their Russian counterparts demonstrates the ability of museums to be able to good working relationships when more formal channels of communication face greater challenges. There is a long-standing relationship between Russian museums and their UK counterparts and the basis of this is derived from the similarities between collections. 2014 will see the UK/Russia Year of Culture, which is being organized by the British Council. The highlight of this will be the major *Cosmonauts* exhibition at the Science Museum, which is only possible because of the large number of partnerships the museum has been able to develop with Russian organisations including the Museum of Cosmonautics (Moscow), Polytechnic Museum (Moscow), Moscow Aviation Institute, Roscosmos, Russian Ministry of Culture, British Embassy and British Council Russia.

Cosmonauts is just one of a number of reciprocal exhibitions that have entertained and informed audiences in the UK and Russia recently. Royal Museums Greenwich also worked with British Council Russia and Roscosmos to relocate the statue of Yuri Gagarin to the Royal Observatory; the National Portrait Gallery's *Man Ray* exhibition (which also featured works from the National Galleries of Scotland collection) will tour to the Pushkin Museum in 2013; Tate's touring exhibition *Pre-Raphaelites*, including loans from Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery (9 artworks), Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums and Manchester City Gallery, also toured to the State Pushkin Museum, Moscow; the National Museums Scotland exhibition *Arctic Convoys* at the National War Museum included a number of loans from Russian collections; and the Museum of London has an MoU with the Moscow City Museum. The V&A's partnership with the Kremlin Museums has seen *The Magnificence of the Tsars* and *Treasures of the Royal Courts* come to London, and the 2010 exhibition *Diaghilev: The Golden Age of the Ballet Russes* led to a new relationship with the Ekaterina Foundation. To illustrate the reciprocal nature of cultural agreements, the V&A toured two exhibitions to Moscow in 2008 and 2011 respectively: *Two Centuries of British Fashion* and *Decode*.

The V&A has long-standing relationships with academics, curators, museums, art galleries and heritage bodies across China. These relationships have developed from work on their Asian collections and have been sustained by academic collaboration and staff exchange. This basis of trust and understanding has formed the bedrock from which higher profile projects have then developed. These have included the 2008 *China Now* exhibition at the V&A, several touring exhibitions (such as *Olympic Posters*) to venues in China, a joint British Museum/V&A/National Museum of China porcelain exhibition in Beijing in 2012 as part of the UK Now season and, most recently, the V&A *Splendours* exhibition at the Palace Museum. This latter exhibition demonstrated the value of the V&A's long-term engagement in China (and similarly India) when it provided the opportunity to bring together Chinese officials and the Indian and UK Ambassadors to China. Furthermore, the level of trust and recognition of the V&A in China is now such that it was able to host the People-to-People dialogue in 2012 and they are now regularly approached by Chinese museum developer for advice, guidance and consultancy services (which are offered on a commercial basis).

Science is an important part of soft power. The Natural History Museum employs 300 scientists and is one of the world's leading research institutions. Their collection, including the vast reference collection, enables them to develop relationships with universities, research institutions, museums and government bodies across the world as they work on research which allows for better understanding of the natural world and human interaction with it. Examples include the study of biodiversity in Borneo pests and insect-borne diseases

using specimens of the Brazilian blood-sucking blackfly. Similarly, National Museum Wales has led the study of Molluscan Biodiversity in East Africa, whilst the Wallace Collection has been part of an international research project studying the metallurgy of steel using their Asian arms collection.

3 International Development

There is a role for culture, and museums in particular, in international development. Although the recognition of the role of culture in the development of major bilateral partnerships with rapidly growing economies and new tourism markets has been recognized by the UK Government and reflected in their political and diplomatic support for specific activities and the inclusion of museum directors in ministerial delegations, the role of culture in international development is not acknowledged to the same extent. Nevertheless, the impact of such activity is remarkable as it is another method of demonstrating soft power.

One area of UK Government which has supported international development via museum activity is the Scottish Executive via their provision of funding for collaborative activity between National Museums Scotland and the National Museum of Malawi. Malawi is the Scottish Government's priority country for international development and consequently supports a wide range of collaborative activity. The museums programme, called *Museums As Agents of Change*, initially focused on bicentenary of the birth of David Livingstone and developed from National Museums Scotland's desire to mark this with an exhibition, *David Livingstone, I presume?* However, the project developed into something much wider and mutually beneficial than a loan agreement to borrow objects from Malawi and now includes ongoing staff exchange, a reciprocal exhibition about David Livingstone in Malawi, research by National Museums Scotland with source communities and the provision of museums skills training for staff in Malawi (including of scarce skills such as taxidermy). Museums are consequently a central part of the international development work of the Scottish Executive, and could provide a model for DFID to consider in England.

Some national museums have undertaken work which should be considered as international development, although this becomes increasingly difficult with cuts to core funding which may have previously covered some of the initial costs. Where third parties have helped broker this work museums have been able to play a significant role. The V&A worked in partnership with British Council Libya to mount the first exhibition in Benghazi since the revolution in April 2012. The exhibition, *Street Art from the V&A and Libya* featured works by Libyan street artists as well as works from the V&A collection by internationally re-known street artists such as Banksy. Exploring the visual language and techniques of street art, the exhibition also examined the social and political significance that the work holds. As a vibrant visual expression and democratic language, street art in Libya has flourished since the Arab Spring and revolution in 2011. The spontaneity and immediacy of street art has allowed artists to articulate opinions outside the conventional channels of political debate.

Similarly, both the British Museum and British Library used their long-held academic relationships with colleagues in Iraq to maintain contact and support throughout the period of British Army deployment in the country. Very small amounts of funding from DCMS allowed both institutions to provide support in the form of training, advice and equipment. The British Museum continued to develop relationships with archaeologists and museum directors in Iraq and, from 2008 worked closely with the British Army stationed in Basra to

conduct archaeological site evaluations and work on the long-term re-development of a museum in Basra as part of the post-conflict regeneration.

4 Impact of digital technology and rapid global change

Soft power is more important in an increasingly digitally connected world. Mass communication is quicker and less centrally controlled than ever before. The proliferation of smartphone technology and social media, and the vast increase in digital content have fundamentally changed the way in which people find out about the world. Museums have embraced this and they now welcome far more visitors online each year than they could ever accommodate if they came over the museum threshold. Major museums' websites provide layers of interpretation for the collection and ways in which the online visitor can engage independently or as a group. The entire National Gallery collection is available to [view online](#), as is a [360 degree tour](#) of 18 of their galleries. Both the V&A and Tate operate their own online channels through their websites, with constantly updated digital output about special exhibitions and the permanent collections. Imperial War Museums (IWM) has recently launched [Lives of the First World War](#), which is an interactive digital platform to bring together material from museums, libraries, archives and family collections from across the world together in one place to build a permanent digital memorial to those who served in uniform and worked on the home front during the First World War and a means to explore their stories.

Museums have embraced social media and taken this beyond utilizing it for just domestic marketing. The IWM and Royal Museums Greenwich Twitter feeds both have “on this day” features which link to historic stories with a connection to their collections. Museums across the world, including a large number from the UK, sign up to #askacurator day where Twitter users are able to ask questions of curators from over 300 museums in 32 countries.

The way people engage with cultural activity has changed markedly, and so has exposure to different forms of cultural exchange. Audiences are not passive recipients of museum activity, and experiencing the cultural output of another country or culture is no longer the preserve of an elite few. Fuelled by social media, the internet, smartphone technology, rolling news and more accessible international travel, cultural exchange is more immediate than ever before. Areas of the world with rapid economic, social and political change are now familiar and visible to a UK audience, making the UK public more curious about their culture, history and heritage. The reverse is also true – in countries where UK museums have not historically had an audience, UK museums are building partnerships with organisations.

A number of UK museums are developing partnerships with Brazilian organisations and focusing some of their programming on the culture and history of Brazil. In the presence of the Brazilian President, the Science Museum Group signed an agreement to work with the Ministry of Culture in Brazil to provide advice and content for a network of Science Museums in Brazil. Tate has a long-standing partnership with Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo which informs their acquisition of Latin American art, prompts staff exchanges and reciprocal loans including for the forthcoming *Mira Schendel* exhibition at Tate Modern. In 2013, the Horniman Museum in South London hosted a season of Brazilian films and an

exhibition, *Amazon Adventure*, about the natural environment of the River Amazon, and the Natural History Museum held a large retrospective of the work of Brazilian landscape. UK museum professionals will travel to Brazil in the Autumn with the British Council as part of a large programme of activity designed to encourage greater collaboration and cultural exchange between Brazil and the UK.

5 The unique position of UK museums: collections and expertise

The objects in museums' collections tell stories about people, places, nature and thought. The stories told by these objects, brought to life by their study and display, help more easily explore common themes and threads through history and relate these to the present day. Some of the most comprehensive and internationally significant collections of natural history, ethnography, social history, technology, art, literature and design are held by UK museums. The stories these museums tell are world stories. Consequently, to maintain their international pre-eminence, national and major regional museums have to maintain high standards of scholarship, collections care, visitor experience and engagement, and display. To do this, these larger museums have to work with their international counterparts.

The recent success of projects such as the Fitzwilliam Museum exhibition *Search for Immortality: Treasures of Han Tombs* (the largest loan of treasures from the Han tombs to a Western institution), Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums' partnership with the Nelson Mandela Bay Museums, and the *We Face Forward* festival of West African art and music at the Whitworth Gallery and Manchester Museum demonstrates that this sort of international activity is now part of the business of leading regional museums as well as very large nationals. Museums loan and borrow thousands of objects every year from institutions overseas. In 2011-12, Tate lent 516 works to 132 venues in 25 countries.

The collections provide the reason to build international networks. Piri Reis University, Istanbul have set up an international association for maritime studies – with 20 founding members from different countries and an agreed constitution. The National Maritime Museum is one of the founding members. Organisers will hold a biennial congress, publish research about Mediterranean history and set up an online network. Beamish is a member of a European network of open air museum and a number of large national museums are members of the international Bizot Group of major international museums.

Conservation of objects and the sharing of expertise is the life-blood of long-term partnerships between UK museums and institutions with like interests across the world, and because of the diversity and quality of museums' collections the breadth and geographical reach of these partnerships is substantial. The RAF Museum is involved in joint aircraft restoration programmes in New Zealand and Eritrea. The latter is a tripartite project with the Italian Air Force Museum.

Museums with an international collection seek to develop good relationships with source communities to ensure that the objects are handled sensitively and that a body of knowledge is developed about them. Brighton Museums work closely with communities in Myanmar (Burma) and Papua New Guinea, Bristol Museums and Art Gallery is working with Museo Nacional de Antropología on Mexican objects in the Bristol collection, and *Across the Board* is a Tate-wide initiative to deepen their engagement with art in Africa. This will include performances, seminars, conferences and events in London, Lagos, Accra and Douala, and will be supported by acquisitions and two exhibitions in Tate galleries: *Ibrahim El Salahi* and *Meschac Gaba* (all 2013).

6 Impact

Good but less formal relationships developed or sustained through cultural activity can create a positive context within which more formal trade relationships can flourish. The UK has been ranked 3rd in the world for cultural resources by the World Economic Forum. The British Council reports *Trust Pays* and *Culture Means Business* demonstrate the impact of cultural activity, and there are many examples of high profile cultural exchange between museums in countries and regions where more formal channels of communication face greater challenges.

Museums are uniquely able to present objects and exhibitions in a contemplative environment, allowing visitors to explore their own culture, history and identity, as well as that of those they see as “other”. The central position of Imperial War Museums in the UK’s commemoration of the First World War, and their ability to have encouraged more than 400 UK and international organisations to join their First World War Centenary Partnership, demonstrates this and the trust placed in these institutions.

An important part of UK museums’ international work is the impact on the domestic audience as museums seek to be the place to explore the world around them. The involvement of British troops in Afghanistan has made the UK audience more familiar with that country than previously. The British Museum, Tate and the British Library used the World Collections Programme funding to develop public programming for both UK and Afghan audiences which looked at ancient, historic and contemporary Afghanistan and drew links through periods of history. *Afghanistan: Crossroads of the Ancient World* at the British Museum in 2010 proved to be very popular as audiences wanted to explore the ancient history of Afghanistan and see the ancient gold treasures protected by museum professionals at the National Museum in Kabul from the Taliban. At the same time, Tate commissioned photographer Simon Norfolk to conduct workshops with young photographers in Afghanistan as they sought to recreate the 19th century photographs taken by John Burke (which are in the collection of the British Library). The resulting exhibition, *Burke + Norfolk*, was mounted in Kabul and at Tate Modern. The third element of the project was a British Library exhibition of the reproductions of the John Burke photographs staged in Kabul and Herat (and visited by thousands of Afghans). That exhibition was accompanied by a catalogue (printed in English, Dari and Pashtu) which was sent to educational establishments in Afghanistan. In each case, the seed funding provided by the World Collections Programme then levered in additional support from various sources including Bank of America, British Embassy in Kabul and the Aga Khan Foundation.

It is also important that museums’ international work filters into work in local communities. The National Media Museum in Bradford holds an annual International Film Festival, and in 2013 this coincided with their showcase of *One Hundred Years of Indian Cinema*. The museum works with local Asian communities on public programming for the festival, but also hosts English classes for local Pakistani immigrants.

7 Trust and Reach

Museums’ international activity, including extensive programmes of touring exhibitions and partnerships, raise the profile not only of individual museums and collections but the UK as a whole. Research by the British Council demonstrates that international cultural

relationships build trust in the UK and are associated with increased levels of interest in visiting the UK as a tourist, studying here or doing business with the UK.¹⁷³

The unique position of the UK cultural sector as a trusted broker was illustrated by the Culture Ministers' Summit in 2012. The event, co-organised by the Scottish Executive, DCMS and the Edinburgh International Festival, was an opportunity for culture ministers from across the world to meet and discuss international collaboration against the backdrop of an internationally re-known event. The Summit dinner was held at the National Museum of Scotland and was an opportunity to showcase not just the international work of the museum, but the refurbished building, remarkable collection and provide an opportunity for staff to meet officials from across the world.

Our leading museums work with press agencies around the world to promote their exhibitions. The Natural History Museum's Veolia Environment Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition consistently has a wide international media reach. The 2011/12 campaign attracted approximately 93 articles internationally, in addition to over 200 in the UK. The 2012 exhibition was featured in press articles in Russia, Brazil, USA, China, India and France. A feature on BBC TV World News was broadcast in South East Asia, India, Pakistan, Europe and North and South America, and an interview with the competition winner, Paul Nicklen on BBC World Service Outlook radio programme reached 145 million listeners across the world, sparking particular interest across North America.

The British Museum's collaboration with the BBC on the radio series *A History of the World in 100 Objects* has raised the profile of the museum around the globe. There have been over 30 million international downloads of the programme and the book has been sold in 12 countries including France, Germany, Spain, Russia, China and India. The British Museum estimates that the series brought an additional 266,000 visits to the Museum in 2010.

The British Museum sent 13 exhibitions on tour to 9 countries in 2012 including the USA, China, India and Russia. When the British Museum borrowed high profile objects from Xi'an for the hugely successful *First Emperor* exhibition (2007) and took their touring exhibition *Britain Meets the World* to Beijing in the same year, there was a noticeable increase in visitors to the British Museum from East Asia: there was much greater awareness of the British Museum brand in China.

8 Funding

The World Collections Programme, Stories of the World and specific programmes co-ordinated by the British Council and the London 2012 Festival all show the impact that can be achieved by the national and leading UK museums with comparatively modest seed funding from the public purse. Many of the activities – including *We Face Forward* and *In Search of Immortality* – were part of the Stories of the World programme. Tate's programme in Africa, now supported by Guaranty Bank Trust was initiated using World Collections Programme funding, as was the collective work in Afghanistan, the British Museum International Training Programme (now also independently funded and involving seven regional museums) and the V&A's initial touring exhibition to venues in India, *Life and Landscapes*. An impact of the recent public funding cuts may be that, as the cuts take effect,

¹⁷³ *Trust Pays: how International cultural relationships build trust in the UK and underpin the success of the UK economy*, British Council, 2012.

museums have to be more selective about the international work they undertake focusing more on less challenging or commercial activity.

The UK Government has invested in the GREAT campaign, and this investment in the positive legacy of the London Olympics is welcome. Nevertheless, the most effective advertisement for British culture is the cultural activity itself and seed-funding the sort of activity which the World Collections Programme and Stories of the World enabled would support the aims of the GREAT campaign.

Museums have to be more selective about their international work, and increasingly rely on external funding to be able to deliver this activity. They may narrow their focus on income generating international work such as commercial touring and consultancy. Whilst the largest national museums, such as the British Museum, may attract private investment in their international activities, it is far more difficult for museums outside of London to raise funds in this way (as recently published statistics from Arts & Business illustrate).

9 Tourism

Museums and galleries are the UK's most popular visitor attractions. There are over 50 million visits a year to national museums alone, and over half of the UK's adult population visited a museum or gallery in 2012. Museums are at the heart of the UK's cultural offer which is frequently cited as the main reason to visit. UK museums lend high profile objects or complete touring exhibitions to venues in all of VisitBritain's top 20 markets for projected growth (2011–2020). The cities where UK museums exhibit, lecture and collaborate with artists are no longer just in their familiar regions of North America and Western Europe, but in Kuala Lumpur and Kobe, Moscow and Mumbai, and Riyadh and Rio de Janeiro. International visits to the UK's leading museums have almost doubled in the past decade. Museums' international touring exhibitions and loans ensure familiarity with those institutions and their collections in both established and growing overseas tourist markets.

Overseas visits to national museums have increased by 95% in the past decade, with over 19 million overseas visits in 2011/12.¹⁷⁴ Museums are a key strength for the UK's international brand and a motivator to visit, and are a popular activity for both domestic and international visitors.¹⁷⁵ The Natural History Museum recorded a 234,000 increase in overseas visits in 2011/12, compared to 2010/11. The museum has seen a significant rise in international visitors over the past 5 years. The largest growth in numbers has come from Europe but it is clear new markets are also opening up. Visitors from Africa, Asia, South and Central America increased from 6% of overseas visits in 2010/11 to 11% in 2011/12. This trend is not just restricted to London. The Wordsworth Trust, which runs Dove Cottage in Grasmere, makes special provision for Japanese visitors and overseas visitors accounted for 25% of their visitors between April and July 2013.

USA, Commonwealth and the EU

The commonalities of history, collections and language can make it easier to establish relationships with institutions within the Commonwealth. UK museums relationships with Indian institutions have been eased by some of the familiarities of the Commonwealth, and

¹⁷⁴ Visitors from overseas made over 18.7m visits to the 17 museums sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2011-12. Overseas visits to these museums have increased by 95% over the past decade, from 9.6m in 2001-2. Overseas visitors also make a significant number of visits to our national museums in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and to those sponsored by the Ministry of Defence.

¹⁷⁵ *Culture and Heritage Topic Profile*, VisitBritain, 2010

the forthcoming commemoration of the First World War has shown that the common understanding of networks like the Commonwealth and the EU allows for a less polarized study of history. Bristol Museums and Art Gallery is using the Commonwealth as the basis for a major exhibition in 2014, *Global Conflict*, and in doing so are building relationships with organisations for loans and research.

The European Union creates a helpful structure within which to engage internationally, provide funding and some common understanding. The visa regime between members of the EU also helps to deliver museum activity, and is in contrast with the difficulties some museums face in securing visas and work permits for the overseas visitors, artists, curators and staff required to run pre-eminent institutions. The challenges that the visa regime presents is one barrier to museums being able to engage in some international activity.

The area with which there is greatest exchange between museums is the United States, and this is likely to be driven by similar histories and collections, a common language and the familiarity with each museum sector.

Universities

UK museums work closely with UK universities and there are hundreds of research and teaching partnerships in place. Many of these have international dimensions. City museums which are located close to a university tend to develop good relationships, such as that which exists between the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Exeter University. University museums are able to seek the benefits of the wider international relationships their parent body develops whilst also maintaining some of the UK's leading collections. Universities are also sometimes the most appropriate partner for major research projects. Royal Museums Greenwich is working with the University of Cambridge on a 5-year joint AHRC-funded research project on Longitude. Whilst the main partners are UK based, this project is of global significance. One outcome of the partnership has been a fully digitised archive of the Board of Longitude papers and wider collections material. This information is now [electronically available](#) for the benefit of scholars and researchers across the world.

Devolved Administrations

It would be helpful if there was a more co-ordinated or joined-up approach with the devolved administrations. It is important to be able to maintain different but complementary narratives for Scotland, Wales, NI and England. That diversity is one of the attractions of the UK and would assist Government moves to encourage investment and tourism beyond London.

September 2013

Dr Robin Niblett, Chatham House – Written evidence

Soft power, Hard foundations: The future of the UK's International Influence¹⁷⁶

Chatham House (the Royal Institute of International Affairs) is a world-leading source of independent analysis, informed debate and influential ideas on how to build a prosperous and secure world for all. The institute is an independent body which promotes the rigorous study of international questions and does not express opinions of its own. The opinions in this submission are the responsibility of the author.

Summary

1. This submission assesses the extent to which the UK's soft power will enable it to exert influence within a changing international context, and examines some ways in which UK soft power could be enhanced. I argue that soft power is a core aspect of Britain's international influence, but that it does not exist distinct from more traditional sources of power. Rather, it is built upon them.
2. This submission will deal principally with the relationship between the UK's traditional sources of international influence and its soft power. The submission explores the economic, multilateral and non-state aspects of Britain's soft power.
3. Britain has the potential to retain its capacity to enhance its international influence through soft power, even though it faces a number of near-term challenges. In order to live up to its potential, Britain's leaders must concentrate on three priorities.
4. The first is to ensure that the UK sets its economy on a path to sustainable and productive growth. Without a strong economic base, Britain's many attributes for international influence as well as its power of attraction will begin to erode.
5. Second, the UK will need to leverage its national and diplomatic strengths more proactively and challenge the status quo more frequently if it is to be influential in promoting its values and interests. Britain's proactive role within the key institutions and relationships that helped promote its interests over the past sixty is a central pillar of its soft power, but that position is now more precarious than ever. In this context, leaving the EU would represent the greatest risk to the UK's soft power.
6. Third, the UK government must continue to invest in or create the necessary supportive environment for those organisations and institutions which enhance Britain's soft power – its universities, the BBC and other UK-based media organisations, the British Council, and the rich mixture of British non-governmental organisations.

Defining soft power

¹⁷⁶ This submission draws upon a forthcoming essay: Robin Niblett, "Insider and outsider: The UK's enduring capacity for influence" in Douglas Alexander and Ian Kearns (ed.), *Influencing Tomorrow* (London: Guardian Books, 2013).

7. A country's power and influence in international affairs reflect a combination of factors. They include a country's material and human capabilities, along with the ability to apply political will-power towards international objectives.
8. Soft power is the ability to influence others through attraction rather than coercion. It rests upon the attractiveness of a state's culture, the appeal of its values and the authority or legitimacy of its actions.¹⁷⁷ But these qualities are also rooted in core aspects of power, and the two cannot be separated fully. For example, a country's attractiveness is increased by steady economic growth and a successful socio-economic model.
9. To understand the extent of the UK's soft power, therefore, a broader assessment of its capacity for influence is necessary. I will assess in turn three different aspects of the UK's soft power: first the economic foundations; second, the international institutional elements; and third, the non-state aspects.

Economic growth and soft power

10. National prosperity is a source of both hard and soft power. By many of the core measures of economic power, the UK is in relative decline, and has been so for the last few decades. Following the global financial crisis of 2008, its economic position has subsided further relative to that of most of the rest of the world.¹⁷⁸ In the first quarter of 2013, the UK's GDP was estimated to be 3.9% below its 2008 pre-crisis peak.¹⁷⁹ The UK's share of global GDP declined from 3.2% in 2008 to a projected 2.7% in 2013.¹⁸⁰ In addition, the UK's share of world exports fell from 6% in 1980 to 2% in 2011.¹⁸¹
11. Strengthening the British economy will enhance Britain's soft power in numerous ways. First, at a general level, economic success will increase the UK's power of attraction to others: increasing the degree to which other states seek out the UK's support, associate themselves with its initiatives, and look to follow its example. If the UK can re-set itself on a path of sustainable economic growth, this will provide an essential platform for it to maintain or increase its soft power.
12. Second, economic strength will also bring material benefits. For example, UK military spending could rise, offering the government greater options to contribute to international peace and stability. These options would include increasing military and

¹⁷⁷ Joseph S. Nye Jr, *The Future of Power*, (New York; Public Affairs, 2011), p. 84.

¹⁷⁸ See, for example, the UK's ranking in terms of household disposable income per head. According to the OECD, the UK ranked twelfth in the world, falling down a list of other advanced economies including the United States, Australia, Canada and a number of Britain's European counterparts. Claire Jones, 'Britons slip down world ready-cash table', *Financial Times*, 14 May 2013, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/02703f38-bcac-11e2-b344-00144feab7de.html#axzz2XtaMGnlq>.

¹⁷⁹ Office of National Statistics, *Quarterly National Accounts, Q1 2013*, Statistical Bulletin, 27 June 2013 (London: ONS, 2013), http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_314093.pdf, p. 2.

¹⁸⁰ Measured by purchasing power parity; International Monetary Fund, 'United Kingdom: Gross domestic product based on PPP share of world total', *World Economic Outlook Database*, April 2013, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2013/01/weodata/weorept.aspx?sy=2008&ey=2013&scsm=1&ssd=1&sort=country&ds=.&br=1&pr.l.x=45&pr.l.y=12&c=112&s=PPPSH&grp=0&a=#notes>.

¹⁸¹ In addition, 'while the UK was the 5th largest exporter in cash terms between 1980 and 2000, in 2011 it was ranked 12th'. See Grahame Allen, 'UK Trade Statistics', House of Commons, 8 October 2012, <http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN06211>.

police training missions in key countries, while contributing to the maintenance of international stability through counter piracy operations, post-conflict reconstruction, and peacekeeping. These actions can have powerful effects, deepening personal ties between Britain and those countries that benefit from these initiatives - networks through which the UK can later engage in dialogue, press its case or make its own appeals for support. All can be offered without demanding specific returns from the recipients of these British investments.

13. Similarly, a healthy budget increases the UK's capacity to play a leading role in disaster relief. The UK's response to the Great Eastern Earthquake and ensuing nuclear disaster in Japan in March 2011 has reinforced the bilateral relationship. These actions build the UK's status as a responsible and proactive member of the international community, one with a stake in the success of collective responses to global problems and that is willing to take on the risks and burdens that come from such a role. Playing this role strengthens the UK's voice in bilateral and multilateral debates and decisions.
14. Third, the government could increase its still modest investment in its diplomatic network. Expanding the UK's diplomatic missions in priority countries have been valuable steps, with 50 new positions created in Beijing and 30 in New Delhi. By 2015, 11 new British Embassies will open, with 300 more staff in emerging economies, including in South Korea, Malaysia, Nigeria, Angola, Argentina, Peru, Pakistan, Vietnam, and the Philippines.¹⁸² But the UK's diplomatic capabilities remain under-funded, from compensation levels to technology infrastructure to overall staff numbers.
15. Fourth, the UK could invest not only in meeting the top-line goal of spending 0.7% of GNI on development assistance, but also in ensuring that it has the national administrative capacity to manage this increased flow of funds, and thus ensure that the support is put to good use. While the UK's role as a leading provider of development assistance strengthens the attraction of its initiatives and approaches within multilateral forums and among other donors, a stretched staff may rely excessively on sub-contracting its initiatives without sufficient resources for effective guidance or supervision.

Soft power and international institutions

16. If there is one distinguishing feature of 21st century international relations, it is the inability of countries to address international challenges on their own. The UK will generally need to act in partnership to pursue its interests and uphold its values. It is important, therefore, to consider the effectiveness of the international institutions through which the UK conducts its diplomacy, as these are all arenas where soft power is a key currency of successful transactions.

¹⁸² See William Hague, 'Our diplomatic network is the essential infrastructure of Britain's influence in the world', speech at the British Academy, 17 October 2012, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/foreign-secretary-speech-on-diplomatic-trade-craft>; and William Hague, 'For the first time in decades our diplomatic reach will be extended not reduced', speech to the House of Commons, 11 May 2011, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-for-the-first-time-in-decades-our-diplomatic-reach-will-be-extended-not-reduced>.

17. What might attract other countries and actors to Britain and its international agenda when it is just one among a growing number of influential players? 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.
18. However, many of the traditional institutional avenues for British influence are in retreat. The UK has enjoyed a privileged position in a Western-led world order that may soon be eclipsed. The UK risks being less influential in the UN Security Council in a world of rising powers; less relevant to the United States as US leaders focus more on Asia; less significant in a leaderless G20 world than one led by the G8; and a more detached member of the European Union.
19. In the future, the UK will need to adapt its approach to its engagement in these institutions. Britain may be relatively less powerful in material terms than was the case thirty years ago, but it can still be confident in its position as a dynamic mid-sized economic, diplomatic and military power.
20. For example, the UK should seek to remain an influential power within the EU. Defenders of the EU have often pointed to its soft power strengths as a rebuttal to its hard power weakness. Europe's attractiveness is rooted in a post-modern form of intergovernmental cooperation and supranational governance, the product of a remarkable 60-year project of reconciliation. The EU's soft power has been enhanced by the attractive power of the single market and leading role as a purveyor of international aid. However, hopes that the EU might serve as a vehicle for its members to play a more influential role – from climate change negotiations to assisting in the political and economic transitions in the Arab world – have been undercut by the EU's loss of credibility during this period of economic crisis and the persistent weaknesses in the structures of EU foreign policy.
21. Despite these weaknesses, the UK government should embrace the soft power benefits that membership of a rules-based, supra-national single market of some 500 million people confers upon Britain. The UK may be destined to sit on the institutional as well as the physical periphery of the EU. But if the UK government can navigate its way through its EU referendum maze, then its 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.
22. In the case of the G8, the UK 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 2012-13, for example, in order to promote within the broader G20 the practical value of increased standards of transparency in governance and taxation. In the case of the Commonwealth, the UK should actively promote rule of law reform as a central tenet for economic development.

23. In the coming years, international influence will be measured more by the UK's ability to set specific policy agendas in an increasingly competitive global environment and less by its capacity to serve as a highly-regarded mediator between sometimes divergent Western views. In all these different forums, the UK government should continue to enhance its soft power by seeking to lead international debates. The UK has a good record on which to build. In the recent past, it has provided conceptual and diplomatic leadership on combating climate change, promoting sustainable development, good governance and global health, and creating agreement on the value of transparency in an interdependent world.

Beyond the state: The third dimension of the UK's soft power

24. The British government should not forget that the sources of its soft power also lie beyond state-centric institutions and dimensions. The UK benefits from some structural advantages in this respect which the government should continue to capitalise on and reinforce.
25. The British Council promotes the study of English as well as a better understanding of British culture across the world. The role of English as an international language enhances Britain's influence in the fields of international negotiation, the arts and scientific research.
26. Ahead of being funded directly by the BBC Licence Fee, the BBC World Service's budget was reduced by 16% in real terms for the three years following the 2010 Comprehensive Funding Review.¹⁸³ And yet, the BBC's reputation for objective analysis has made it one of the most trusted broadcasters in the world. As the government considers the future role of the BBC as a publicly-financed broadcaster, it should remember that the BBC World Service is not only a valuable international public service, it also helps promote the sort of transparency that empowers populations at the expense of entrenched and inefficient authority. It is also popular with the public. In the 2012 Chatham House–YouGov survey of attitudes to international issues, the public ranked the BBC second highest (after the armed forces) in a list of institutions which serve British national interests around the world.¹⁸⁴
27. The UK services sector possesses a number of structural advantages in addition to the status of English as the world's *de facto* international language. With the added benefit of the country's time zone between Asia and the Americas, the strength of the UK services sector has helped make London one of the world's first global capitals and one of the most competitive centres of economic activity in the world. UK-based financial, legal and accounting services are not only major contributors to UK prosperity; they are elements of the UK's soft power. 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.
28. British universities attract students from across the world and deliver world-class research, and in so doing, help build personal networks that can reinforce bilateral relationships. British policy institutes offer international analysis and neutral forums

¹⁸³ See William Hague, 'The World Service should remain an articulate and powerful voice for Britain in the world', written ministerial statement to the House of Commons, 26 January 2011, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-world-service-should-remain-an-articulate-and-powerful-voice-for-britain-in-the-world>.

¹⁸⁴ And in the smaller survey of opinion formers, it was ranked first. For more information, see Jonathan Knight, Robin Niblett and Thomas Raines, *Hard Choices Ahead: The Chatham House-YouGov Survey 2012* (London; Chatham House, 2012), available at <http://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/papers/view/184631>.

for debating policy while drawing on the insights of extensive local diasporas, especially from the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa.

29. And British-based environmental, humanitarian and human rights NGOs are fearless in challenging environmental degradation, natural disasters, poverty, injustice and autocratic regimes. A proactive UK approach to agenda-setting at the international level will need to continue to play to this strength.

Conclusions

30. In the last five years, the UK has under-performed economically, which has undercut its international standing and, to a certain degree, its capacity for international influence, in terms of hard and soft power. However, given Britain's underlying economic strengths and unique political-economic attributes, it is possible that the country may be heading into a period of relatively better economic health.
31. It should not be forgotten that Britain still ranks among the world's leading mid-sized countries from a combined demographic and economic perspective. According to the UN, the UK's population will reach at least 73 million in 2050, which may make it the most populous country in the EU, overtaking Germany at some point in the 2040s.¹⁸⁵
32. Rebuilding its economic strength will be a *sine qua non* to enhance the UK's soft power, allowing it to increase investment in defence, diplomacy and development. It would also enable the government to invest in the institutions and organisations which support the attractiveness of the UK economy and the country's social and political model, as well as to capitalise on Britain's structural advantages of language and time zone.
33. The UK's influence will also depend upon how the country's leaders leverage the UK's position within key international institutions in what is now a highly interdependent world. Enhancing the UK's soft power will make it a more effective player in the networks and coalitions that will be essential to success.
34. 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 become a consumer of global public goods, standards and norms, rather than a shaper of the international environment.

22 October 2013

¹⁸⁵ See United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision* (New York: UN, 2012), <http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/index.htm>.

Richard Norton-Taylor (The Guardian) – Written evidence

From Richard Norton-Taylor, Writer, chiefly for the The Guardian, on Defence and Security but here in a personal capacity.

1. Responding to a comment reportedly made by a spokesman for Valdimir Putin on the sidelines of the G20 summit in St Petersburg in September 2013 that Britain was a “small island no one listens to”, David Cameron told journalists: “Let me be clear – Britain may be a small island, but I would challenge anyone to find a country with a prouder history, a bigger heart or greater resilience. Britain is an island that has helped to clear the European continent of fascism and resolute in doing that throughout the second world war. Britain is an island that helped to abolish slavery, that has invented most of the things worth inventing – including every sport currently played around the world – that still today is responsible for art, literature and music that delights the entire world.”
2. The prime minister continued: “We are proud of everything we do as a small island – a small island that has the sixth-largest economy, the fourth best-funded military, some of the most effective diplomats, the proudest history, one of the best records for art and literature and contribution to philosophy and world civilisation.”
3. The G20 meeting took place at a critical moment in the world affairs the significance of which goes far beyond Syria, the crisis which overshadowed it. In Britain, the House of Commons voted against military strikes in Syria; in the US, President Barack Obama decided to seek the approval of the Congress before embarking on military action. The US and Russia have agreed on a UN security council resolution on the destruction of Syria’s chemicals. Iran’s new president and foreign minister have made astonishingly conciliatory noises and agreed with the US to resume negotiations on Iran’s nuclear programme in an atmosphere appeared unthinkable not long ago.
4. We are at a seminal moment, certainly as far as the Middle East is concerned, a time when the US, the world’s most powerful military power, cannot win its battles and solve the most serious crises and conflicts in the world by the application of force. There is no better time to consider the importance – potential and actual – of soft power.
5. For years, government ministers and military commanders throughout the world, notably in the UK, insisted there was no military solution to the civil war in Syria, just as they had been insisting, for even longer, that there was no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan.
6. In response to growing world-weariness in the UK and US, British and American officials also insisted that whatever military action they threatened, there be no “no boots on the ground”.
7. These assurances referred to troops being engaged in combat operations. The danger, given then prevailing sceptical, even cynical, public mood, is that such empathetic assurances would encourage opposition to British – or American –

troops being deployed even for humanitarian or peacekeeping operations.

8. Ministers, government officials, and military commanders, have been slow to learn the lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan, how hard power without applying any of the instruments of soft power not only failed but proved counter-productive. Examples are legion of how British troops were poorly prepared and badly resourced – how in Basra, for example, some were distributing water while their colleagues nearby were shooting insurgents or bandits. “Lessons learned” should be the easiest of the topics facing the Chilcot inquiry whose report is expected to be published at the end of this year. The Ministry of Defence shies away from discussing these issues in public – a paper it commissioned on “lessons learned” from Iraq by retired Brigadier Ben Barry, now an IISS fellow, has at the time of writing still not been published. It has been left to frustrated former soldiers to publish independently. Two good examples are *Behavioural Conflict*, subtitled: *Why understanding people and their motivations will prove decisive in future conflict*, (Military Studies Press 2011) by Andrew Mackay, a royal Navy commander with experience of Sierra Leone, Iraq, and Afghanistan, and *War From Ground Up* (Hurst 2012) by Emile Simpson, a former Gurkha officer deployed three times in Afghanistan.
9. The government still had not taken on board lessons it should have learned from Iraq – in essence, the importance of soft power – when it deployed thousands of troops to Helmand province in Afghanistan in 2006. (To take just one example, they had little idea how to implement their responsibility for a counter-narcotics programme agreed by Tony Blair at the December 2001 Bonn conference on Afghanistan.)
10. General Sir Peter Wall, the head of the army, fully recognised the need for a fresh approach to military intervention in a speech to the Royal United Services Institute conference on Land Warfare in June 2013. He said: “We’ve experience 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.” It was essential, he said, that military commanders – and, by implication, their political masters – in future understood the consequences of intervening in a conflict. “For in extremis, if we do need to intervene in support of partners, we’ve got to understand the context, locally and regionally, we’ve got to know the key people, political and military, and we’ve got to be familiar with the culture and language.”
11. The key questions are: who are the enemies of the future, what are the causes of likely future conflict, and what are the most appropriate weapons to prevent, or succeed in winning, those conflicts.
12. There is increasing consensus among Whitehall departments, senior military figures, respected thinktanks, academics, and independent analysts, that armed conflict between states is, if not a phenomenon relegated to past history, at least extremely unlikely. Far more likely will be violent conflicts provoked by religious and ideological extremism, notably continuing political extreme political Islamism, by inter-tribal disputes, by climate change, problems exacerbated by drought and disputes over such basic resources as water, all compounded by rising populations increasing pressure

on cities in developing countries. These can only be successfully combated by soft power.

13. A report by the MoD's own thinktank, the Development, Concepts, and Doctrine Centre, published in 2007, painted a picture of the "future strategic context" likely to face Britain's armed forces looked 30 years ahead. In what it called an "analysis of the key risks and shocks", and assessments which were "probability-based, rather than predictive", it pointed to an increase in the population of countries in the Middle East of 132%, while Europe's dropped as fertility fell. Some 87% of people under the age of 25 lived in the developing world, it noted. By 2010 more than 50% of the world's population would be living in urban rather than rural environments, leading to social deprivation and "new instability risks", and the growth of shanty towns. By 2035, that figure would rise to 60%. Migration would increase. Globalisations may lead to levels of international integration that effectively bring inter-state warfare to an end. Instead, "inter-communal conflict" would increase, the DCDC study warned. Rear Admiral, Paul Bennett, the Director of the DCDC, told the 2013 RUSI Land Warfare conference that as crop yields declined, 3bn people will be affected by drought. Globalisation, he added, will erode the power of the state.
14. David Kilcullen, former counter insurgency adviser to General David Petraeus in Iraq and adviser later to Nato forces in Afghanistan, warns in his books, *Out of the Mountains*, subtitled *The Coming of Age of the Urban Guerilla* (Hurst 2013), about the coming threat of urban violence and urbicide. In what he calls a "major shift in the character conflict", he warns that "nonstate armed groups, because of heavier urbanisation and greater connectedness, "will be increasingly able to draw on the technical skills of the urban populations" – He describes how Syrian rebels built a home-made armoured vehicle using a videogame controller to manipulate a remotely-mounted machine gun, and linked cameras to a flat screen TV to help the driver see without gaps in the armour. It is an example, says Kilcullen, of how urban populations can "turn consumer entertainment gadgets into military systems".
15. A combination of poverty, corruption, and weak national governments (as well as counter-productive counter insurgency strategies), has meant that the Taliban remains a powerful force in Afghanistan, and paved the way for al-Shabaab in Somalia. British and other western officials and intelligence agencies are turning their attention to West Africa, where oil-rich Nigeria, the world's seventh most populous country, 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. These are serious threats that can be defeated in the end only by soft power.
16. The recent French-led military intervention in Mali provided an immediate response to an emergency. But such operations can only provide short-term answers. The causes of conflicts which today threaten western interests and western security are many but they cannot be solved by the application of military power. Their solution lies in the application of "soft power" – economic and trade policy, education, appropriate democratic institutions, training programmes.

17. International organisations, the EU as well as the UN, have an important role to play. But Britain, as the prime minister indicated in his St Petersburg riposte, has a unique contribution to offer – culturally; financially through the City; residual military prowess (which despite setbacks in Iraq and Afghanistan is respected throughout the world) that can, and should, be a “force for good”; diplomatically; universities; distinct contributions from Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland; the Commonwealth; and Britain’s security, intelligence, and policy, services.
18. Soft power, it is said, has to be backed up by hard power. But weapons have to be relevant and the threat to use them credible. Britain does not face the kind of threat, now or in the future, that requires a deterrent in the shape of a Trident ballistic nuclear missile system. Most relevant and useful to back up soft power in today and tomorrow’s world are unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) which have multiple military and civilian applications, special forces, submarines equipped with cruise missiles, and defences to counter cyber attacks.
19. The two large aircraft carriers being built for the Royal Navy could have a special role to play to promote soft power as well as hard power, though they would be vulnerable to the new generations of powerful and long range missiles being built by a growing number of countries. The first sea lord, Admiral Sir George Zambellas, said in a speech in September 2013 to the Defence and Security Equipment International exhibition in Britain with the “full range of diplomatic, political, and military, options”. They would become “national icons”, he said. Britain might be a small island, referring to the remark reportedly made by a Russian spokesman in St Petersburg (see paragraph 1), but the carriers would give Britain a “big footprint across the world”. However, serious questions remain over the Lockheed Martin F-35B Joint Strike Fighters that would fly from the carriers, as the Commons public accounts committee recently warned.
20. Influence in the modern world, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, former British ambassador to the UN, observed during a panel debate at the IISS earlier this year, was composed of many things and “nuclear weapons was one of the least relevant”. The economy was the most important factor, said the former cabinet secretary, Lord O’Donnell. A healthy economy, and more investment in such areas as computer science will be increasingly more crucial if Britain is to withstand such “soft power” weapons as energy supplies and cyber attacks in future conflicts. The UK could be the one permanent member of the UN security council to make a virtue of aggressive use of soft power – something that would also help to combat the criticism that in any conflict, Britain acts merely as a “poodle” of the US.
21. The use of soft power effectively, and to promote the UK’s influence in the world, has serious implications for the way Whitehall works. Past experience is not good. Individual departments jealously guard their existing areas of responsibility. The Ministry of Defence, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and Department for International Development, have been very reluctant even to pool their resources for the proposed conflict prevention fund.
22. The National Security Council has not yet seriously got down to discussing a proper strategy to shape and promote the UK’s role in the world, something which many

senior military figures, notably General Sir David Richards, the former chief of defence staff, have called for as a matter of increasing urgency.

23. There is a danger that any public debate about a new profile for the UK, how it could successfully use and deploy soft power in the national interest will be undermined by scepticism, even cynicism, borne out of recent experiences of the deployment of hard power. I sincerely hope this will not be the case and that your Select Committee will success in promoting a debate on a neglected but very important issue.

September 2013

PACT – Written evidence

Executive summary

Pact welcomes the opportunity to put forward a submission to the Lords Committee inquiry on Soft Power and the UK's influence.

As the UK trade association for independent TV, film and digital media companies, Pact's view is that the sector has made a crucial contribution to communicating Britain's soft power around the world. In doing this, it is simultaneously promoting the UK as an attractive business destination, raising awareness of its culture and encouraging foreign investment and tourism to the UK.

The UK is the second largest exporter of TV content in the world (after the USA) and at £838m in 2012, international revenues now account for 30% of total sector revenues in independent TV production. It is important for policy makers to maintain the existing broadcasting model allowing for the continuing success of this sector as established through the Communications Act 2003 introducing codes of practice and terms of trade guiding revenue sharing arrangements between broadcasters and producers.

The impact of Britain's soft power overseas is difficult to measure in the short term beyond export figures, programme earnings or DVD sales. However, the TV and film industry can demonstrate that it has had a unique impact on:

- Promoting the UK as a positive place in which to do business and promoting the UK as a quality and innovative brand; and in turn having a positive impact on the industry itself;
- The promotion of British culture, society and values and the English language overseas;
- Foreign direct investment and tourism.

Introduction

- 1) Pact is the trade association that represents the commercial interests of the independent television, film and digital media production sector in the UK. The sector produces and distributes approximately half of all new UK television programmes¹⁸⁶ as well as content in digital media and feature film.
- 2) Pact works on behalf of its members to ensure the best legal, regulatory and economic environment for growth in the sector.
- 3) The UK independent television sector is one of the biggest in the world with revenues of nearly £2.8 billion in 2012.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ Ofcom, Communications Market Report 2010: independents produced more than 50% of qualifying network programming by hours and 46% by value

¹⁸⁷ Pact Census Independent Production Sector Financial Census and Survey 2013, by Oliver & Ohlbaum Associates Limited, July 2013

- 4) The British independent TV production sector is extremely successful internationally. The UK is the second largest exporter of TV content in the world (after the USA)¹⁸⁸ and at £838m in 2012, international revenues now account for 30% of total sector revenues in independent TV production.¹⁸⁹
- 5) PACT's address is: 3rd Floor, Fitzrovia House, 153-157 Cleveland Street, London, W1T 6QW.

Soft Power and the TV & film sector

- 1.1 Joseph Nye introduced the definition of soft power in 1990, a concept that he subsequently developed in a number of publications¹⁹⁰. He defines soft power as the ability for a country to persuade or get what it wants through attraction rather than the hard power or coercive methods of economic, financial or political power.
- 1.2 TV is a prime means of communicating and disseminating Britain's soft power overseas. The British independent TV production sector in particular is extremely successful internationally. The UK is the second largest exporter of TV content in the world (after the USA) and at £838 in 2012, international revenues now account for 30% of total sector revenues in independent TV production.
- 1.3 From the point of view of independent TV producers, the market has evolved over the last ten years since the introduction of the Communications Act in 2003 establishing the requirement for codes of practice governing how the UK's Public Service Broadcasters (BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and 5) commission programmes from independent producers. The implementation of these codes of practice led to the introduction of negotiated 'terms of trade' in the UK market setting out the rights and revenue sharing arrangements between broadcasters and producers. This gave producers more control over the rights to their work allowing them more opportunities to exploit them in secondary markets too.
- 1.4 The UK independent production sector today is the global leader in developing and commercializing intellectual property. Over the last ten years, UK independent producers have grown to become market leaders and the UK has emerged as a leading global production hub. Independents are driving innovation and diversity in programming and selling programmes and formats overseas (X-Factor, Pop Idol, Who wants to be a millionaire). The UK has also developed into a global production hub attracting overseas productions and foreign investment.

Measuring the impact

2.1 Measuring the impact of the growth in the independent sector on the UK's soft power overseas is difficult to do. This can only really be measured over a longer period of time drawing on a range of indicators. However, in the short term it can be measured in part by export figures, programme or box office sales and DVDs (sales of the recent Sherlock series topped the DVD charts in 2012).

¹⁸⁸ Mediametrie Television Year in the World 2013

¹⁸⁹ PACT Census 2013

¹⁹⁰ *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (2004)

2.2 From a soft power point of view, the UK is demonstrating that it is a world leader in TV but it also having a number of other effects on:

- The promotion of the UK as a positive place in which to do business and of the British brand as a quality and innovative brand; and in turn having a positive impact on the industry itself
- The promotion of British society, culture and values and the English language
- Impact on foreign direct investment and tourism

Impact on doing business and the UK brand

2.3 The strong growth in the TV and film sector is showing that the UK can be a front runner in this space. A knock on effect for international tradeshows and exhibitions is that everyone wants to be where the British are – will the Brits be there? - Is the question on everyone's lips. Through constructive transactions and dealings, the sector is showing that Britain is a positive trading environment. This is confirmed to a certain extent by the fact that the UK features well on the Corruption Perceptions Index¹⁹¹ compared to some other countries in Europe that languish further down the list. In general, the TV and film sector help uphold the view of the UK as a democratic and diverse society upholding the rule of law and human rights.

2.4 The Brits have a reputation for creating quality content but also for their creativity too, Danny Boyle's Opening Ceremony at the Olympics being a case in point showing the history of innovation. The UK is envied for this approach and the quality and innovation of production.

2.5 Another example to offer is of how the UK is disseminating culture overseas. It has penetrated the US market and actually transformed TV formats in the US. Hulu is a US Video on Demand (VoD) service and was responsible for introducing 'The Thick of It' to the American public. Young, smart, Silicon Valley types (the 'decablers', moving away from traditional cable channels) were looking for more edgy content than the mainstream US channels could provide. Hulu wanted to be more than just a catch up channel and the show became one of the top five shows on the service.

Positive impact on the industry itself

2.6 The knock on effect for the industry is that it is sustaining and promoting its own model. The industry is creating a positive cycle for developing itself by making quality content then taking this to the international arena. Businesses are then competing on the world stage, innovating and developing. They then aspire to making more international content of interest overseas, engaging and encouraging more countries to invest in the British brand. 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.

Promoting British society, culture and values

¹⁹¹ Transparency International 2012

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2.7 The exporting success of the sector is demonstrating to the world that the UK is not protectionist and is also allowing the penetration of UK ideas in societies overseas. This has resulted to some extent in a cultural invasion of music, fashion, football and other areas allowing wider sectors to benefit by way of revenue sales as well.

2.8 Through a range of UK hits including Downton Abbey, Bond and many others besides, the UK is communicating lifestyle and culture to the rest of the world and marketing its values too. Hartswood Films, a Pact member and producer of the popular Sherlock series, have developed a British icon; taking the history and nostalgia from the original book and characters and developing it into a modern adaptation with modern technology. The production has given a positive view of the UK as innovative and forward thinking in the process whilst taking from history.

2.9 The success of the TV and film sector is simultaneously communicating the English language around the world. With 1.5 billion people learning English at any one time TV and film is an important medium by which to sell British culture and language (despite the fact that in some countries programmes are more likely to be dubbed). The TV and film sector sustains other industries such as book publishing, the English language education industry and even to some extent English law which is a model used in legal frameworks and contracts internationally.

3.0 Through this exposure to British culture, landscape and scenery, it is then equally as likely that visitors will come to the UK as tourists and spend money in the UK economy having seen the images of the UK on TV or film. Highclere Castle in Carnarvon where the filming of Downton Abbey took place has seen a huge rise in interest from tourists. There is also increased interest in the Warner Bros studios at Leavesden where the studio filming took place.

Pact's role in sustaining success

4.1 Pact is currently supporting independent producers looking to export through its Growth Accelerator scheme in collaboration with UKTI (UK Trade & Investment). The scheme involves access to workshops and seminars, supported access to tradeshows in over 10 markets, tailored support and updates on new territories and global trader bulletins.

4.2 With the UK creating over half of all formats sold worldwide, Pact has also developed an App available to download at www.UKIndies.co.uk which gives valuable information, advice and contacts to anyone looking to license formats for use in their own country. The app gives access to hundreds of UK production and distribution companies who are responsible for documentaries, programmes and entertainment that is ready to licence for broadcast.

4.3 Pact is also working with KPMG on an 'Export Bible' allowing producers to access market information via an App on 58 countries globally helping them negotiate the local terrain when they get overseas and diversify into more markets.

Conclusions

4.3 Pact's message for policy makers would be that the broadcasting model has worked well over the last ten years since the introduction of the Communications Act in 2003. We need

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to continue to ensure that terms of trade truly encourage producers to sustain this success and encourage access to businesses more widely to overseas markets and to innovate and grow.

Dr James Pamment, University of Texas – Written evidence

Dr James Pamment, researcher, University of Texas at Austin, submitting in an individual capacity.

1. I am a researcher in the fields of international communication, diplomacy and international development. My PhD thesis, *The Limits of the New Public Diplomacy* (2011) is a comparative study of public diplomacy policy, practices and evaluation in 3 countries including in the UK, and has been published in a revised version by Routledge as *New Public Diplomacy in the 21st Century* (2013). I have published half a dozen journal articles and book chapters on public and cultural diplomacy, and have presented a similar number of conference papers on those subjects. I am currently conducting research for a book on the diplomatic and promotional efforts surrounding the Olympic Games in 2012, so this inquiry is of great interest to me. I am also conducting a research project for the British Council exploring the relationship between their Official Development Assistance (ODA) activities and cultural relations, and a separate project on aid effectiveness and evaluation for which I have consulted with DfID among other international actors. In this submission, I shall briefly comment upon soft power as a concept; British soft power strategy and the prosperity agenda; the role of language in British soft power strategy in comparison to Germany and France; the GREAT campaign; evaluation and measurement; the role of ODA in relation to soft power; and finally some concluding points about the past and future of British soft power. I will be happy to address specific questions at a later stage.

2. I find soft power a deeply problematic concept. However, it is probably the best term we have for encapsulating ideas for which there are few good terms. It usually refers, depending on the context of usage, to a set of assets/resources, to communicative practices, and/or to the process of attraction. This is particularly difficult when the term is juxtaposed with hard power, which refers equally imprecisely to economic and military assets/resources, the practice of coercion, and/or the process of submission to a superior force. This poor conceptualisation is particularly weak at handling the relationship between economic value and attraction; for example, expensive, rare, important and powerful things are usually highly desirable and attractive. Many of the traditionally attractive soft power assets, such as strong, stable institutions with the capacity to assert and project common values and norms, are a direct outcome of substantial investments of hard resources into those institutions. Therefore the idea that soft power is a cheap alternative to hard power is misleading; soft power 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. A second issue is the idea that soft power is something a nation exerts and a government can control. The inquiry will be well aware of the reasons why the picture is more complex than that, suffice to say that the best a government can hope for is to cultivate, curate and facilitate soft power assets. While there is plenty of room for criticism, let me be clear in stating that Britain has an incredible wealth of soft power resources, and efforts to create a soft power strategy are undoubtedly working from a position of strength.

3. Despite occasional claims to the contrary over the past few years, the UK does not have and has not had a coherent soft power strategy. In practice, the prosperity agenda and GREAT are probably the defining components of what might be considered the current strategy. It seems likely that any formally codified strategy would have to develop out of

these components, but it would require a broader, more inclusive narrative. By narratives, I refer to 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. The current prosperity agenda is aimed at business elites and its central narratives are strongly tied to trade, investment and tourism. This makes a lot of sense, but if the UK is to have a formal soft power strategy, that strategy needs to be broader and more inclusive. Culture, education and international development would need a place within this strategy without their being subjugated to the prosperity agenda and its promotional style. I am particularly critical of the way in which the British Council has been treated in recent years, which has reduced the value of long term cultural relations and turned language teaching into a revenue source in lieu of proper funding. As I mentioned in the above paragraph, soft power should probably be considered the overflow from well-funded institutions with good governance, and not a product that can be packaged and sold. The latter is simply marketing, which the prosperity agenda is exceptionally good at, but marketing is only part of a soft power strategy.

4. Germany and France provide instructive examples of soft power strategies that establish useful narratives while providing relative autonomy to cultural organisations. Germany's strategy positions it as a regional economic power without equivalent political power. This enables it to approach the emerging economies as a humble partner, echoing their calls for reform to the international system in response to geopolitical change. Its foreign cultural, education and communication sector is remarkably well-funded and relatively autonomous, and receives just under 0.5% of GNI (cf the 0.7% target for ODA). It would be interesting if this inquiry could obtain a credible figure on the UK's contribution, which at my best guess is around half this figure. France's soft power strategy is heavily based around promoting a Francophone cultural sphere, though this may be characterised by an anti-hegemonic spirit, as an alternative to American dominated globalisation and with a strong emphasis on international development. Striking in both examples is the centrality of language as the basis for attracting foreigners into national cultures and spheres of influence, and therefore as a platform for asserting norms. The UK has enjoyed the immediate economic value of language teaching and its higher education sector on the basis that English is a global language which people want to learn and are prepared to pay for. However, a long-term British soft power strategy should acknowledge that the English language needs to be protected, provides an essential point of access into British business, education and culture, and is one of the main pillars of the UK's continued international influence. Most importantly, it should recognise that we cannot take for granted the continued global dominance of English over the long term, since language is a key focal point of economic competition through the long term soft power strategies of our closest neighbours. The UK currently lacks a coherent soft power strategy which balances language and culture with political-economic objectives, capable of being expressed as a compelling narrative explaining Britain's place and intentions in the international system.

5. The GREAT campaign is skilfully managed and will in time probably be considered the most successful campaign of its kind in the UK and perhaps elsewhere. In my opinion, there are at least three reasons for its success, beyond the fact that Britain had the Olympics. First is the calibre of individuals involved, from the high-level political support, to the talented individuals running it, to the private sector representatives co-opted into the campaign. Second is the intensive coordination, including weekly meetings, thereby (temporarily at least) resolving problems of coordination highlighted by just about every review of British soft power and public diplomacy conducted in the past 15 years. Third is the opportunities

afforded by its modest funding, that have been valuable for counteracting the natural scepticism of the organisations promoting it. Organisations under financial strain are finding opportunities to run programs and retain staff through GREAT funding. However, there are also problems. The FCO recently had its own central pots of public diplomacy funding removed with the argument that decentralisation is a good thing; yet GREAT represents a centralised fund under the Cabinet Office, with a far more limited economic remit. Likewise, the GREAT board appears to have usurped the Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy board. The inquiry may wish to question which structures best facilitate the UK's soft power organisations to go about their business – and whether those that do more than simply market the UK are adequately represented under the current structure. Second, GREAT is a marketing campaign and hence can only be considered an economic component of a soft power strategy. If a coherent national soft power strategy existed, it would help clarify whether all the UK's soft power organisations and activities – particularly those with cultural remits – benefit from association with GREAT. I suspect some do not. Third, some of the tourism and investment targets for the GREAT campaign that were made public at launch are duplications of other publicly funded programs, which gives the impression that some targets are being paid for twice by the tax payer. In the interests of disclosure, this inquiry may wish to look more closely at the actual objectives for GREAT, which are currently withheld from the public domain.

6. Over the past decade, the FCO and British Council have come a long way in developing methods for the evaluation of soft power. The principle developments may be summed up as tools which evaluate an organisation's capacity to deliver upon its business objectives. This is useful for rationalising organisations, particularly for resource allocation and clarifying whether activities are aligned with an organisation's priorities. They have been aimed at generating data for annual reports and Foreign Affairs Committee inquiries – contributing to an organisation's good governance rather than to an understanding of the actual impact of the soft power activities. Evaluation has been used as a disciplining tool, perhaps necessarily, but we must be clear that this is not the only way to measure the effects of soft power. The more recent ROI measures used for GREAT and around the Olympics intensify the trend for simplistic data that demonstrate impact in very base terms. The risk is that, by producing evaluation data that gives returns based on how an organisation is managed rather than on the wider impact of communication activities on their own terms, activities become less creative and ambitious. In my opinion, any long term UK soft power strategy should complement these kinds of measures with other, more speculative approaches tailored to the variety of practices that soft power entail. They should take an interest in the activities in their own right including their unforeseen consequences, not just on those elements considered relevant for departmental reports, inquiries and press releases. The PD Pilots carried out by the FCO in 2008-2009 is an interesting example, though I'm not sure the FCO is the most appropriate organisation to conduct experimental work of this kind.

7. In a time of austerity, it seems remarkable that the 0.7% of GNI dedicated to ODA is not considered a resource for the UK's soft power. This whole area is poorly conceptualised, but it seems to me that ODA and public diplomacy/soft power overlap in at least two very important ways. First, the UK needs to communicate its ODA activities as part of its everyday public diplomacy work, since ODA is among the best funded resources available for exerting soft power. More ODA-related funding needs to be dedicated to explaining how ODA is spent. Second, many projects funded by ODA money, for example in the areas of governance and civil society capacity building, could equally be considered public or cultural diplomacy. The key evidence here is that some 80% of Chevening Scholarships are

considered ODA, and around two-thirds of the British Council's funding is ring-fenced for ODA. Work needs to be done together with the OECD and other stakeholders to clarify what parts of public diplomacy, cultural relations, language teaching and scholarships meet the definition of ODA. Certainly the 25% grant element is easily met in many cases. Funds that are in many cases diverted to inefficient multilateral organisations or packaged in large-scale projects could be used much more effectively if coordinated and integrated with the communication of the UK's overall interests. A future UK soft power strategy may be able to draw upon the considerable resources dedicated to ODA in creative ways that maximise the value of expenditure in line with soft power objectives. This may furthermore help shape parts of a narrative for British soft power, representing the UK as a force for good in the world.

8. British public diplomacy has evolved over the past 7 or 8 years into a policy tool used to deliver business objectives. Its funding and evaluation structures reinforce this, and the most recent campaigns intensify these trends. This has helped rationalise and professionalise these activities, and it is a positive development for much of the FCO's work, and certainly for UKTI and VisitBritain. But it has also given a dominantly corporate flavour to British soft power. I'm less convinced of the benefits for the British Council, and also for parts of the FCO's public diplomacy, on the basis that many communication activities do not produce – or indeed require – tangible results. Part of the value of public and cultural diplomacy is when the activities are the informed decisions of talented staff who spot an opportunity without expectation of a visible ROI or statistic in the departmental report. While anything can be measured, there is the risk of collecting data that is unable to inform the decisions of policymakers because it has been collected purely to tick a box. Worse, certain activities may be preferred over others because they are more suited to reporting. Some of the effects of communication will be intangible, and it is my view that an organisation like the British Council is well-placed to act as a laboratory for testing new ideas when it comes to interpreting and delivering soft power. The previous Swedish government tried something similar with the Swedish Institute, and did pretty well. Returning to my original conceptual discussion, a government cannot control soft power, but simply cultivate, curate and facilitate it. There have been some recent trends towards control, which makes sense for certain campaigns and organisations, but not for all of them. A future UK soft power strategy needs to reassert not just the independence, but the unique ways of working, of all the soft power actors. It needs a long term strategy that is not chopped and changed every two years, and that hinges upon the core principles of language, development assistance and prosperity, and allows those principles to be expressed in different ways by different voices.

September 2013

Raleigh International – Written evidence

Submission by Stacey Adams, Chief Executive, Raleigh International

1. Thank you for your invitation to contribute to the evidence process on the issue of soft power and UK influence.

We appreciate your broad outreach process and welcome the effort to understand this issue incorporating the experience and knowledge of stakeholders. We particularly wish to identify the irreplaceable value of young people's contributions.

2. [Raleigh International](#) has experience of working 'with' and 'through' youth volunteers for nearly 30 years. Founded as Operation Raleigh in 1984 by HRH the Prince of Wales, we have supported young people from over 96 countries to contribute in finding sustainable development solutions together with some of the world's poorest communities. [Our volunteers](#) come from all walks of life and also [benefit](#) from personal and professional development during their participation on our programmes. They learn to work in cross-cultural groups with communities and other NGOs to deliver previously non-existent services, inspire interest and action from peers locally and overseas; motivate communities to improve their own living conditions and create a sense of global citizenship and shared responsibility.
3. Raleigh International has been supported on many occasions in its 30 year history by the Foreign Office, receiving country specific funding for project work on numerous occasions. We also have close relationships with High Commissioners and Ambassadors in all of the countries where we operate. We are currently working in a Consortium led by VSO delivering the International Citizen Service programme for the Department for International Development.
4. As a result of our operations we can cite a number of specific very tangible results of soft power and cultural influence:

4.1 [Raleigh China](#) – *Serve to Achieve*

Raleigh International ran one expedition in China in 1998 which involved 200 UK and international youth and 22 local Chinese youth. It ran for ten weeks and undertook a number of projects in rural communities. Ten years after that one and only expedition, I was contacted by Lu Feng one of those volunteers of that expedition, who said he wanted to start a Raleigh China. Over the past four years Lu Feng has built Raleigh China into a major domestic organisation working with and through youth to support poorer communities and build civic society. It is registered as a not-for-profit in Shanghai and we were told by the Consul General in Shanghai that it was the only British heritage not for profit registered there. All of the original 22 Chinese who are now hold professional jobs are involved in a steering group. Raleigh China works with thousands of young people across China and ultimately aims to influence the education policy of central government to recognise the value of social action volunteering for youth within the education curriculum.

4.2 [Raleigh Ghana](#) - *Contributing to National Development through Volunteerism*

This local not-for-profit tells a similar story of supporting the development of civil society ten years after Raleigh International left the country. Raleigh Ghana is run by a small number of alumni who have recruited a wide range of volunteers to engage in building their own communities in a genuinely sustainable and altruistic way.

4.3 [Raleigh Hong Kong](#)

This Raleigh alumni society was started by three Chinese volunteers returning after 3 months on Operation Raleigh in 1984. They have remained involved for the last 30 years and are still on its executive committee. Raleigh Hong Kong recruits local volunteers to do conservation work on the island and in the new territories. They also run 2 island wide challenge events the Wilson Challenge and the Mountain Marathon both of which attract hundreds of runners both nationally and internationally.

5. Raleigh's alumni societies are not financially supported by Raleigh International and we only hold a light-touch Global Alliance for Youth framework agreement with all of our societies. There is sufficient trust and alignment of values that we work together in a collaborative way to build a global community.
6. From our experience, it is critical to support long-term relationships between international and national volunteers. These are lifelong, strong bonds that make true changes in lives of both communities, putting firm foundations to future peace and truly sustainable development. The influence of the Raleigh volunteering programme, building tolerance, leadership skills and global citizenship is a very tangible result of the UK influence of soft power. If you would like to discuss any of the above further I would be happy to meet.

25 October 2013

Professor Gary D. Rawnsley, Aberystwyth University – Written evidence

Professor of Public Diplomacy, Department of International Politics

The opinions in this submission are those of the author working as an individual

1. 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. Therefore any attempt to 'develop and employ better' soft power is problematic. (Boosting trade and investment are neither objectives nor methods of exercising soft power; they are by-products.)
2. Therefore it is necessary to unpack the term to understand that it is possible to develop and employ the *instruments* of exercising soft power, such as public and cultural diplomacy, international broadcasting, educational exchanges etc. These help the accumulation of soft power capital, but cannot and do not guarantee soft power effectiveness or success.
3. Evaluation is extremely important but equally extremely difficult for it requires a method of converting intangibles into tangibles. One needs to identify a positive correlation between the exercise of soft power and changes in the behaviour/attitudes/foreign policy decisions of the target countries. This is why it is important to unpack its component parts. Any attempt to evaluate 'soft power' as an umbrella concept will fail, though it is possible to evaluate the success of public and cultural diplomacy initiatives, student exchange programmes and international broadcasting.
4. Yet even in measuring these activities there is a tendency to focus on *outputs* rather than *impacts*: how big is the audience for our international broadcasting? How many overseas students have entered our higher education system? How many people have seen a particular cultural product or watched the opening ceremony of the Olympics? These are quantifiable measures of capacity, but tell us nothing about emotions, attitudes or behaviour; they tell us nothing about 'power' or influence.
5. To understand this one only needs to examine the soft power activity of the People's Republic of China. Polls of public opinion from across the world indicate that China's image and reputation remains negative despite the estimated US\$9 billion per year it spends on developing and facilitating its soft power programmes.
6. Therefore the bottom line is that soft power is not and should not be a panacea for problems in the political or social domains. How a government behaves at home and abroad will always have more impact than its soft power. *Actions always speak louder than words.*
7. The distinction between hard and soft power is increasingly blurred, hence Professor Joseph Nye's recent discussion of 'smart power' to identify the integration of hard and soft power. Moreover, it moves forward the debates about when hard power may be soft, and soft power become hard. For example, Hollywood movies may be considered instruments

of American hard power in those parts of the world which try to protect themselves from American values and see movies as agents of cultural imperialism or hegemony. In this way soft power may not necessarily contribute to national security (I discuss this in more detail at point 20). Similarly when the armed forces are engaged in relief operations after a natural disaster, they may contribute to the accumulation of soft power.

8. Particularly useful in this context is Mingjiang Li's contribution to the debate. He considers it more appropriate to refer to the 'soft use of power'.¹⁹² Again, this suggests that how a state uses its power, especially on its own people, can have an impact on perception abroad.

9. Such definitions also point to how discussions of soft power must consider the audience. In the final analysis, the source has very little power; the power resides in the target who can choose whether and how to accept or internalise the message.

10. Hence the importance of credibility - of both the message and the source. If there is any suspicion about the motivations or method of exercising soft power, any potential benefits are lost. Therefore government or institutions associated with the state are 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. We should consider the question 'Who do we trust?' Polls suggest that trust politicians and state representatives less and less, and even the influence of authority figures and experts has declined. Rather, we now tend to trust most 'people like me'. This leads to the importance of *networks*, especially in the social media, to facilitate public diplomacy.

11. Digital communications are important for public diplomacy, not soft power. However, digital communications, and especially the social media, are only effective if they provide the opportunity for genuine interaction, discussion and debate. The essence of modern public diplomacy is listening and engaging, not just talking. Research indicates that web users are frustrated by the absence of dialogue on official social media sites of institutions (complaints about BBC coverage are rarely addressed on their Facebook pages, for example. Similar criticisms are made about the sites administered by political parties in the UK). Public diplomacy, the most important instrument of soft power, depends on the *building of relationships*. Social media are extremely useful ways of building and maintaining relationships with one's target provided the source genuinely engages with the users.

12. At the same time, it is important to recognise how digital media can undermine public diplomacy and the accumulation/exercise of soft power capital. Unfiltered and unmediated information can be uploaded and distributed around the world at speeds previously unimaginable. Many users lack the skills and literacy necessary to contextualise the information posted, which means that credibility and reputations can be damaged and destroyed in an instant. The digital age also means that it is no longer sufficient to grab the attention of your target audience; shouting the loudest no longer works. The challenge now is to *retain* your audience's attention in an overcrowded information sphere.

13. **The bottom line:** Governments should govern according to ethical, democratic, transparent and accountable principles. This is soft power. Governments should let others - the British and overseas media, cultural products, educational institutions etc. - tell the story.

¹⁹² Li, M. (ed.) (2008), *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics* (Lanham, MD: Lexington), pp.7-9.

The government should facilitate such activity and provide the infrastructure (regulatory and otherwise) and the conditions for investment necessary for non-state actors to work, but should be hands-off as much as possible.

14. However, we should note that it is difficult to measure the measure soft power in terms of returns on investment. The accumulation and exercise of soft power capital is a long-term process and governments cannot expect immediate or short-term returns. One cannot use a business model to design soft power strategies.

15. In the UK, recent debates on immigration have been particularly damaging to how the country is perceived overseas, especially among students. It is now more difficult for overseas students to come to British educational institutions. For example, the requirements for them to pay bonds on top of high fees, stringent and prolonged visa processes, and the abolition of the PSW visa, have all negatively impacted on the UK's soft power. The UK is no longer considered welcoming of overseas students despite the huge amount of money they inject into the economy.

16. When the British government makes policy choices that are against public opinion and may even challenge the democratic foundations on which the British political system is built, the UK's soft power is damaged. Britain's intervention in Iraq in 2003 and the state's collaboration in the most odious aspects of the inappropriately named War on Terror undermined the UK's soft power. Similarly recent revelations about the British government's complicity in American interception of private email correspondence and the detention of David Miranda, partner of Guardian journalist Glenn Greenwald, expose the UK to allegations of hypocrisy in those parts of the world where our soft power is concerned with spreading values associated with democracy, transparency, accountability, the rule of law, free speech and human rights. In soft power and public diplomacy, **actions always speak louder than words.**

17. For this reason, the UK's involvement in aid and humanitarian relief/assistance is effective. However, if there is any suspicion that the government or NGOs are engaging in such activity for other than altruistic reasons, the soft power benefit diminishes. In June 2012 the UK's Department for International Development (DfID) unveiled plans to re-brand British overseas aid. "From today," declared the department's website, "the new UK aid logo will be applied to items like emergency grain packets, schools and water pumps." From now on, all recipients of aid will see the Union Flag and a statement that the aid comes "From the British people." When the media focuses on the problems caused by the invasions of, and continued wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, not to mention having to deal with the legacy of Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib - public diplomacy disasters in their own right - the British and American governments have let slip through their fingers countless public diplomacy opportunities to remind audiences about their assistance to Muslim communities across the world (for example, NATO's intervention in Bosnia; the response to the 2004 tsunami in the Indian ocean). This is needed to help counter the prevailing narratives that the UK and the US have co-operated in a war against Muslims and Islam. So it is possible that the new logo will go help to demonstrate to the international community that international assistance does not come from a faceless bureaucratic machinery or from governments, but from the people who have too many times been the victims of terrorist

atrocities. It may have come too late, but it is a small step in rebalancing public diplomacy efforts towards a people-to-people strategy.

18. Yet flaws remain, and the most serious problem is that the British government has not explained the rebranding as a way of boosting the UK's public diplomacy. Rather, it seems designed to make the British people feel better about themselves. Unveiling the new logo, the International Development Secretary Andrew Mitchell said: "For too long, Britain has not received the credit it deserves for the amazing results we achieve in tackling global poverty.... It is right that people in villages, towns and cities around the world can see by whom aid is provided ... And I am determined that, from now on, Britain will not shy away from celebrating and taking credit for them." In other words, it is all about the British receiving the gratitude of the people they are helping. So, the right action for the wrong reasons. Such explanations do fuel suspicion about British arrogance and ambition. Public diplomacy is not about taking credit; it is about building relationships. If the Secretary had noted that branding British aid helps to make connections between the source and the recipient, then the decision may have been received with more warmth.

19. Another problem specific to the UK is the government's treatment of the BBC World Service, the foremost agent of British public and cultural diplomacy. Decisions to cut or abolish altogether language services has a negative impact in public diplomacy terms. The rationale for cuts is based on an assumption that digital media offer new ways for audiences to listen to the station's output. While the new media do represent a new-style of activism, mobilisation and offer more efficient means of P2P communication, old broadcasting media are also required. 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. For example, the BBC's Mandarin language service built over decades a reputation among its audience for accuracy and credibility, and there is a clear relationship based on trust between broadcaster and audience (see my earlier point about public diplomacy depending on relationships). To abandon such relationships in the mistaken belief that they are antiquated and no longer required in order to save money is a mistake. Both the British Foreign Office and the American USIA throughout their histories have believed that they could turn language services on and off like taps, only to find that when they are needed again, it is not easy to rebuild audiences, reputations and relationships.

20. There are specific problems with cultural diplomacy and depending on culture to provide soft power capital. One weakness is that culture is subjective: What appeals to one member of the audience may not necessarily appeal to others, particularly when cultural products are dispersed around the world for consumption by audiences who have little or no cultural appreciation of what they are seeing. This means the audience holds the power: As Joseph Nye has noted, success in soft power means recognising that 'outcomes [are] more in control of the subject than is often the case with hard power.'¹⁹³ In other words, audiences for international communications decide whether and how they will accept, internalise and act upon the message, and this decision may depend on a range of other internal and external influences – education, family, religious, peer pressure etc. – that affect

¹⁹³ Nye, J.S. (2008), 'Forward', in Y. Watanabe & D.L. McConnell (eds.), *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe), p. xiii.

and determine response. Perhaps this reveals that current approaches to soft power focus too much on the source of the communication and not enough on the power of the receiver living within distinct political, social and cultural contexts.

21. Moreover, there is a danger that the audience may interpret the most benign cultural diplomacy as yet another example of 'cultural imperialism', and thus the effort is squandered and may even backfire: 'A target may find a sender's promotion of cultural and political values (such as democracy) to be an act of coercion, not persuasion. A sender's cultural and political values themselves may be interpreted by a target state to be the potential source of threat to society'.¹⁹⁴ Janice Bially Mattern called this the hard character of soft power.¹⁹⁵ When Karen Hughes was appointed US Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs in 2005, she seemed to offer hope that America's international communications would avoid the kind of rhetoric that generated hostility: 'I am mindful,' she said at her confirmation hearing, 'that before we seek to be understood, we must first work to understand.' However, she then continued by declaring: 'In the long-run, the way to prevail in this battle is through the power of our ideals: for they speak to all of us, every people in every land on every continent. Given a fair hearing, I am sure they will soon prevail.'¹⁹⁶ However, claims of universalism may ultimately rebound as the ideas, principles and values that one nation-state communicates may be a challenge to, and be challenged by a range of alternatives. Confidence in the universal application and value of one set of principles can easily be translated as cultural and political arrogance.

22. Finally it is important to ensure that public diplomacy is integrated into the domestic and foreign policy-making machinery at the highest levels so government can understand the public diplomacy implications of particular policy choices. Further, all diplomats serving in overseas postings require professional training in public diplomacy. The days when diplomats could dismiss engagement with the media as trivial or the work of the press office has long gone; in the digital age that is characterised by the 24/7 flow of global information demanding instant responses, all members of an overseas post are public diplomats.

23. One recent example: In June 2013 the British government announced the creation of a taskforce 'aimed at confronting Islamic extremism and controlling preachers of hate'. All the media reports on this story and the speeches by the senior members of the government responsible for its creation reflected a decidedly belligerent position; the very label 'taskforce' resonates with military symbolism, while the involvement of the security and intelligence forces demonstrates clearly the thinking behind its design. In all the talk of this taskforce and its aims, priorities and methods, one word was noticeable by its absence: engagement; and I do wonder which members of the taskforce have the required expertise to advise on communications strategies that go beyond knee-jerk reactions such as closing down websites, monitoring social media, and trying to curb 'hate speech'. An expert in strategic communication and public diplomacy should be a key member of this taskforce suggesting methods of engaging with Muslim communities and their young members before they can be radicalised. He/she should be making sure that the taskforce talks with (not to) young Muslims about the problems they face and the reasons why fundamentalism might be

¹⁹⁴ Lee, S.W. (2011), 'The theory and reality of soft power: Practical approaches in East Asia,' in S.J. Lee & J. Melissen (eds.), *Public Diplomacy and Soft Power in East Asia* (New York: Palgrave), p.22.

¹⁹⁵ Mattern, J.B. (2005), 'Why "Soft Power" Isn't So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics', *Millennium – Journal of International Studies*, Vol.33, no.3.

¹⁹⁶ Hughes, K. (2005), 'The Mission of Public Diplomacy: Testimony at Confirmation Hearing before of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee,' <http://www.state.gov/r/us/2005/49967.htm>, accessed 26 April 2010.

attractive to them; and above all to ensure that taskforce is prepared to spend as much time *listening* as confronting. It necessary to understand that the militarism of the taskforce may itself be a symptom of the problem, not a cure.

24. So the conclusions:
Soft power must be unpacked into its component parts before a strategy can be designed and their effects evaluated

Soft power is not a short-term solution to problems in the political or strategic domain; it is a long-term process demanding long-term investment. It is a mistake to expect immediate or short-term returns on investment.

Public diplomacy, international broadcasting, cultural diplomacy etc. all require engagement, listening, and building/maintaining relationships. These facilitate credibility - of the source and its message - and without credibility, any soft power capital accumulated is lost.

Actions always speak louder than words and help the credibility of the source and message.

Governments are judged at home and abroad by the decisions they take and how they behave.

To maximise its soft power capacity the British government needs to act responsibly, and according to its principles and traditions of democracy, free speech, human rights, rule by law and transparency. Recent cases in which the government has been accused of violating privacy and press freedom undermine the UK's soft power potential.

Governments should maintain as much distance as possible from all activities associated with soft power. They should facilitate the infrastructures for the non-governmental sector to engage in soft power activities.

August 2013

Research Councils UK – Written evidence

Introduction

1. Research Councils UK (RCUK) is a strategic partnership of the UK's seven Research Councils who annually invest around £3 billion in research. We support excellent research, as judged by peer review, which impacts on the growth, prosperity and wellbeing of the UK. To maintain the UK's global research position, we offer a diverse range of funding opportunities, foster international collaborations and provide access to the best facilities and infrastructure around the world. We also support the training and career development of researchers and work with them to inspire young people and to engage the wider public with research. To maximise the impact of research on economic growth and societal wellbeing, we work in partnership with other research funders including the Technology Strategy Board, the UK Higher Education Funding Councils, businesses, the government, and charitable organisations. Further details are available at www.rcuk.ac.uk.
2. This evidence is submitted by RCUK and represents its independent views. It does not include, or necessarily reflect the views of the Knowledge and Innovation Group in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). The submission is made on behalf of the following Councils:
 - Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)
 - Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
 - Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC)
 - Medical Research Council (MRC)
 - Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)
3. This response focuses only on those questions or parts of questions relevant to RCUK or the individual Councils who have contributed to the enquiry. The response was informed by Research Council funded research, debate and academic thought on soft power.

Science and research diplomacy

4. The Research Councils welcome the opportunity to respond to the House of Lords Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence Call for Evidence. We welcome the opportunity to highlight the knowledge and expertise on diplomacy and soft power in the UK academic research base and would like to draw the Committee's attention to the various programmes and projects mentioned in our response.
5. We agree with other evidence to this Inquiry that has stressed the importance of cultural institutions such as UK universities, the British Council and the BBC World Service. As Professor Mary Kaldor, Director of LSE Centre for the Study of Global Governance and ESRC Science and Security programme¹⁹⁷ award holder argues, cultural industries are likely to become more strategically and economically important in a world of scarce material resources. Whilst being British institutions,

¹⁹⁷ http://www.esrc.ac.uk/news-and-events/press-releases/25236/Science_and_Security_Programme_launched.aspx

they have global reach representing core values of independence, openness and creativity. Hence the UK's cultural industries are in a good position to contribute to on-going global discussions and debates through which rules and norms of the modern world are constructed.

6. It is argued that science and research in particular play a key role in mediating soft power. The UK science and research base has made a long-standing impact on the international positioning of the country by means of its reputation for quality, authority, and expertise. Opinion leading and authoritative sources such as the British Medical Journal, The Lancet and Nature have also contributed to the positioning of the UK's science in the world. The historic legacy of the UK science and research is also to be mentioned as it influences the regard in which UK is held. In this context it is important to note the institutional (e.g. Royal Societies) and individual (e.g. Issac Newton, Charles Darwin, John Locke *et al*) impact.
7. Through our response we would also like to demonstrate the importance of research in strengthening soft power, arguing that research goes beyond facilitating science cooperation, but can contribute more widely to diplomatic relationships. We would like to draw the Committee's attention to the Royal Society report on New frontiers in science diplomacy that argues that "'Science diplomacy' is still a fluid concept that can usefully be applied to the role of science [and research], technology and innovation in three dimensions of policy:
 - informing foreign policy objectives with scientific advice (science in diplomacy);
 - facilitating international science cooperation (diplomacy for science);
 - using science cooperation to improve international relations between countries (science for diplomacy)."¹⁹⁸
8. Soft power is an important component of the development of international relationships in research. In general, in the formation of consortia to conduct joint research programmes or construct major facilities, there is little hard power present. This means that relationship building, understanding of mutual strengths and expectations, and some willingness to adapt are essential pre-requisites of a successful partnership. The use of English language is also important in providing the ability to coordinate scientific projects. These are all elements of the exercise of soft power. There are numerous examples of UK researchers working in collaboration with their colleagues in other countries to create joint proposals, for example to bid under the EU's Framework Programme for Research (FP) or to build up a joint infrastructure project to become a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC). The Research Councils have frequently provided support to facilitate the development of international partnerships.
9. The Research Councils have specifically facilitated research collaborations with other countries through supporting networking opportunities and funding joint research initiatives. An example of this is the ESRC Rising Powers Research Programme which enables building and strengthening of research networks for collaborative research,

¹⁹⁸ <http://royalsociety.org/policy/publications/2010/new-frontiers-science-diplomacy/>

<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/research/major-investments/Rising-Powers-Research-Programme.aspx>

Responses to the inquiry questions

The meaning and importance of soft power

Question 3: 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?

10. Mary Kaldor's analysis of national security versus human security may provide some useful insight here. National security is taken to be about the defence of the UK from external threats and risks. Although the National Security Strategy conveys a wide range of possible risks, the tools are still somewhat focussed on conventional military forces designed to meet the threat of an attack by a foreign state. Human security concerns the security of individuals and the communities in which they live and involves both physical security and material security. Human security is often said to involve soft power options as opposed to national security and hard power. And yet this is clearly a false dichotomy-conventional military forces nowadays are to a considerable extent used for 'soft' purposes such as reinforcing diplomacy and protecting communities. And an effective human security approach can require the use of force in robust ways for rights-based international law enforcement (eg intervention over Kosovo).
11. The content of the communication, regardless what tools are being used, is important, particularly if the aim is to enhance the legitimacy of soft power. There may well continue to be a role for the use of force along with other instruments, but conceived in terms of the overall message being conveyed.
12. A human security approach would require the full array of tools available to contribute to multilateral efforts (the UN, the EU, or the AU etc.) to enhance human security. These include development aid, policing, disaster assistance, healthcare support, support for justice as well as military force. But military force would be used in quite different ways for international law enforcement rather than an act of war. This means the focus is the protection of civilians, the arrest of war criminals and the minimising of all casualties rather than the defeat of enemies.
13. The UK has a comparative advantage in the type of approaches needed for human security. In particular, the current UK- led EU anti-piracy mission in Somalia and the intervention in Sierra Leone in 2001 are good examples of missions that had strong human security elements.

Question 4: In a digitally connected world, is soft power becoming more important? If so, why, and will this trend continue?

14. Soft power is becoming more important in a digitally connected world with the use of social media to harness local support and to highlight events happening across the world, for example the Arab Spring movements.

15. In a digitally connected world technology can be used as a tool for influencing/increasing soft power. On the one hand soft power could be considered as a ‘force for good’ but it can also be subverted (e.g. state and non-state actors monitoring and shaping online discourse). However, the ability to use the technology does not automatically imply the ability to influence (ability to speak versus ability to be heard).

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

Question 5: What are the most important soft power assets that the UK possesses? Can we put a value on the UK’s soft power resources?

16. The UK’s world leading universities and broader HE sector is one of the most central soft power assets the UK possesses. UK universities being world leading, attract foreign students and thus expose them to UK norms and cultural values. As argued above, universities and cultural industries in general are likely to become more strategically and economically important in a world of scarce material resources, and it would be advisable to make more use of them in their soft power capacity. See also the response to Question 28.

17. Languages play an important role in cultural diplomacy. Research into other cultural traditions and the language expertise that makes this possible, are a key part of sustaining the UK’s openness to the global world; hence the UK’s reputation as a country that is open to other ideas and perspectives. There are clear advantages in diplomatic personnel having a good understanding of the history and culture of country(s) they are dealing with for example. As such the UK’s academic experience in languages and cultures has a significant role to play in informing UK diplomacy. Therefore, we would like to encourage the Committee to look into the importance of engagement between the FCO and academic research and knowledge.

18. The role of English language as a soft power asset is outlined in our response to Question 26.

Question 7: 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?

19. Evidence from the research of the cross-council [Digital Economy programme](#) suggests that businesses can look to generate soft power for the UK in terms of their image, branding and marketing. For example [Digital Shoreditch](#), the collective that brings together creative, technical and entrepreneurial expertise within East London and Tech City.

Question 10: Is there sufficient return for the Government’s investment in soft power? Is the Government’s investment adequate?

20. See also the response to Question 26.

Question 11: 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?

21. On the role of UK universities, cultural industries and English language see response to Questions 5 and 26.
22. Professor Linda Woodhead, director of AHRC/ESRC funded [Religion and Society Programme](#)¹⁹⁹ [has argued that](#) religion is a key element in cultural and political influence, and the UK's use of 'soft power' would be greatly enhanced by taking account of this. Some mechanism for serious engagement with religious institutions worldwide would greatly enhance the UK's ability to exercise influence.
23. See also response to Question 5 above.

Question 12: 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?

24. An appreciation of how soft power might have succeeded or failed in the past, though an understanding of the historical dimension to international relations and politics, could be one way to advance current day deployment of soft power. For example, the AHRC has funded a series of Witness Seminars at King's College London organised with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office on Britain's High Commissions and Embassies (<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/innovation/groups/ich/witness/diplomatic/index.aspx>).

Soft power and diplomacy

Question 14: 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?

25. The Research Councils facilitate the development of international research networks and infrastructure in a number of ways. Apart from targeted initiatives to support networking opportunities such as the ESRC-led Rising Powers Research Programme, the Research Councils have also adopted a mechanism for including international collaborators in responsive-mode research grants. Thus for example, the ESRC's International Co-Investigator Policy (introduced in 2007) provides the opportunity for UK researchers to collaborate with appropriate researchers from anywhere in the world to enhance and strengthen international collaboration, and to add value to the research. A similar model has been now adopted by the AHRC.

¹⁹⁹ <http://www.religionandsociety.org.uk/>

26. Through engagement with the UK research community, the Research Councils develop a comprehensive and well-argued view of the UK interests and requirements and are then in a position to make a strong input to international policy and planning activities. For example, we play a leading role in developing European initiatives such as the European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) and inputting to the development of EU Framework Programmes. An example of this is the support ESRC provided to the European Social Survey's²⁰⁰ application to become the first social science research infrastructure consortium.
27. A measure of the UK success in this is that the UK is often trusted as an honest broker by both European and non-European nations, giving us the opportunity to act as chair in key meetings and to assist all parties towards successful outcomes.

Question 15: 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?

28. ESRC-funded research suggests that the UK needs to be smarter and more effective in how it undertakes media monitoring²⁰¹. The volume of data available and the speed with which events occur and are reacted to leave much media monitoring looking flat footed. The UK has an advantage here – it is well positioned through investments in linguistics and computing to build rapid and effective machine-aided systems to help monitor, understand and respond to media events. This is in contrast to some countries that have significantly reduced human expertise in the study of language.

Question 18: How can the UK promote its values abroad without being accused of cultural imperialism, propagandising, or hypocrisy?

29. Research in the social sciences and arts and humanities encourages a deep understanding of identities, values and cultural diversity. This knowledge is vital to maintaining an open, informed and tolerant democratic society in the UK which is an important element in promoting those values abroad. Humanities research helps to preserve and interpret the UK's national heritage and history in an open, honest and objective way. Research in creative and performing arts disciplines enrich the creative outputs in visual art, music, design, performance, exhibition and creative writing. The arts and humanities therefore contribute to UK culture, which attracts tourists and overseas businesses, both of which are important for generating influence abroad.

Aspects of soft power

²⁰⁰ The ESS was established in 2001 and is directed by a Core Scientific team from the City University London. The UK component of the survey and the Core Scientific Team is funded by the ESRC <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>

²⁰¹ See, for example ESRC [Corpus Approaches to Social Science \(CASS\) Centre](#), University of Lancaster

Question 25: What roles do sport and culture play in boosting the UK's soft power?

30. Undoubtedly culture plays an important role in shaping the UK's soft power. Arts and humanities research makes an important contribution by enriching UK culture, heritage and history (making the UK attractive to other countries); it increases understanding of the history and culture of other countries and regions (allowing for better engagement with those countries and regions); and it provides further insight into the value of culture in soft power and the history of diplomacy more generally.
31. The recent report *Attraction, Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century*²⁰² by the British Council and Demos argues that in the modern world, culture and international politics are interdependent. Culture (in its broadest definition including language, education, sport, food, religion, and identity) can build trust that, in turn, increases prosperity and security.
32. Soft power is not just about directly projecting UK culture and values, but also about the values we project indirectly through the public engaging (and being encouraged to engage) with other cultures. Arts and humanities research also underpins many major exhibitions in the UK (e.g. Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam at the British Museum resulting from AHRC-funded research - <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/News-and-Events/News/Pages/Hajj-Journey-to-the-Heart-of-Islam.aspx>) and abroad which themselves play an important role in demonstrating openness to the world, to foreign governments and populations. An example of this the AHRC-supported touring exhibition with the FCO in China on 'Picturing China 1870-1950' that was curated by the historian Professor Robert Bickers from British collections. Launched from the Embassy in Beijing in April, it reached over a million followers on social media and was covered by 18 Chinese newspapers and broadcasters. The FCO estimate an audience reach of over 10 million) Also, arts and humanities research projects can provide a neutral platform for collaboration between UK cultural institutions and those in countries where there are political sensitivities, thereby fostering diplomatic and cultural exchange. An example of this is the Shah Abbas exhibition at the British Museum in 2009 which involved UK museum representatives engaging with senior government officials in Iran.
33. Arts and humanities and social science research, beyond contributing to culture, can also investigate the role of culture in soft power and diplomacy. For example, there has been an exploratory award on 'Understanding the Role of Cultural Products in Cultural Diplomacy' (David Clarke, Bath university - <http://www.bath.ac.uk/polis/networks/role-cultural-products-cultural-diplomacy/>) under the AHRC's Translating Cultures theme. It is also being explored through the AHRC's Cultural Value Project, under which an award to Professor Marie Gillespie, 'Understanding the Changing Cultural Value of the BBC World Service and British Council', is looking at the role of these key national-to-global institutions charged with representing British identities and interests. The ESRC's Centre for Research on Social-Cultural Change (CRESC) has also organised a conference which looked at the role of the BBC World Service and British soft power in perspective - <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/politics/SoftPowerprogramme.pdf>.

²⁰² <http://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/documents/influence-and-attraction-report.pdf>

Question 26: 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?

34. Professor Tony McEnery, Director of the ESRC [Corpus Approaches to Social Science \(CASS\) Centre](#), University of Lancaster argues that the role of the English language in advancing the influence of the UK abroad is undoubtedly very high and has been for a long time. The export of the English language has long been known to have a cash value, assessed by looking at the value of English language teaching (ELT) operations and the output of the UK ELT publishing and testing industry. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills estimate the value of the ELT industry to be worth £2,300.2 million annually to the British economy.²⁰³ In terms of increasing the leverage of English language for the UK, two issues could be considered: first a targeted support for the ELT industry and second, a clearer realization that what needs to be leveraged is British English (see next paragraph).

35. Professor McEnery argues that there is a need to leverage the influence of British English as there are *Englishes*, not simply English. Again the ELT industry provides a telling example of why this is so – UK language testing concerns, notably Cambridge Assessment²⁰⁴ offering the IELTS²⁰⁵ test, are in competition with other language testing concerns, in particular the Educational Testing Service²⁰⁶ based in the US, offering the TOEFL²⁰⁷ exam. Students with a stronger orientation to US English are advised to take TOEFL, those more comfortable with British English take IELTS. As the influence of American English grows, pressure is created on the UK ELT industry while the main exams are slanted towards one variety of English, so is the teaching and materials used to teach students. That pressure is intensified both by the soft power of the US and research funded into language teaching and testing in the US.²⁰⁸ If the UK is to leverage the growth of English to its advantage, its ELT English should be defended by soft power, i.e. students should be influenced culturally to adopt British English. Failing that, a real need will be created to undertake some form of protective support of the British ELT industry.

Question 28: 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?

²⁰³ See <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/higher-education/docs/e/11-980-estimating-value-of-education-exports.pdf>

²⁰⁴ See <http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/>

²⁰⁵ International English Language Testing System

²⁰⁶ See <http://www.ets.org/>

²⁰⁷ Test of English as a Foreign Language

²⁰⁸ See for example http://www.ets.org/research/policy_research_reports/

36. As our response demonstrates, UK universities in particular make an important contribution to the UK's soft power through their involvement in the global science and innovation system. The Research Councils, through the research activities they fund and promote, support UK universities in collaborative work with overseas partners and sustain UK research excellence, which attracts foreign students and researchers to the UK. RCUK has offices in China, the USA, and India working with research funding organisations in their respective countries to facilitate collaboration between researchers in the UK and abroad. The teams also work closely with the Science and Innovation Network and others such as UKTI and the British Council to align activities and present a joined up picture of UK research resources and expertise. RCUK also has strong links with research agencies in Europe as well as other countries such as Japan, Brazil, and South Africa.
37. Research into other cultural traditions, and the language expertise that makes this possible, are a key part of sustaining the UK's openness to the global world, and therefore, the UK's reputation as a country that is open to other ideas and perspectives. [The Language Based Area Studies \(LBAS\) Centres](#),²⁰⁹ established with funding from the Research Councils, HEFCE and the British Academy from 2006-1, have developed considerable international profiles in the regions that they are concerned with. The AHRC and the British Academy are currently supporting the LBAS Developing Funding scheme to extend the impact of the work undertaken by the centres:
- The British Inter-University China Centre (BICC)
 - The Centre for the Advances Study of the Arab World (CASAW)
 - The Centre for East European Language-Based Area Studies (CEELBAS)
 - The Centre for Russian, Central and East European Studies (CREES)
 - The White Rose East Asia Centre (WREAC)

Question 29: 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?

38. Professor Paul Collier from the University of Oxford argues that the UK aid programme is a definite source of soft power for Britain²¹⁰; "The UK aid programme is well-run and has brought us respect from our peers and affection from many recipients. Africa is the world's fastest-growing region and the UK is well-placed to benefit from this growth. The fact that we are being generous at a time of austerity has been noticed, and does us a lot of good," he says. "The US is now savaging its aid budget, even though - like UK aid spending - it is far too small for the cuts to affect their fiscal deficit." Aid is partly a responsibility, and partly an opportunity that the UK should be quick to grasp.
39. ESRC, along with some other Research Councils, collaborates closely with the Department for International Development through a number of joint schemes that fund world-class research on a broad range of topics which contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. For example the ESRC-DFID

²⁰⁹ <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funded-Research/Funded-themes-and-programmes/Language-based%20area%20studies/Pages/Language-Based-Area-Studies.aspx>

²¹⁰ http://www.esrc.ac.uk/news-and-events/features-casestudies/features/25320/The_soft_power_of_international_aid.aspx

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joint fund for poverty alleviation research, <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding-and-guidance/funding-opportunities/international-funding/esrc-dfid/>.

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Professor Laura J. Roselle, Elon University, USA – Written evidence

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Summary:

- **Soft Power is an important component of international relations.**
- **Soft Power cannot be understood without understanding the importance of narratives in social and political relations.**
- **Hard power is increasingly tied to soft power.**
- **Strict control of soft power undermines power.**
- **A new communication ecology undergirds soft power possibilities.**
- **Multi-method analyses are needed to understand soft power.**
- **Specific Recommendations (p. 5)**

Soft Power is an important component of international relations.

Joseph Nye's conceptualization of soft power recognizes the importance of ideas and culture in international relations and foreign policy. Rather than focusing on hard power as the ability to coerce or induce another to do something, scholars and politicians often say that soft power is the ability to influence others through the attraction of culture, values, narratives, and policies – which are soft power resources.²¹¹ A different way to think about soft power is 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. Creating a shared consensus, however, 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.

Soft Power cannot be understood without understanding the importance of narratives in social and political relations.

Narratives are central to the way human beings think. They are important to people as conceptual organizing tools that allow individuals to understand one another within a particular context. Sir Lawrence Freedman, who has encouraged thinking and research on strategic narratives, suggests that narratives are “compelling story lines which can explain events convincingly and from which inferences can be drawn.”²¹²

First, 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

²¹¹ Nye sets out culture, values, and policies as important resources of soft power.

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2006/02/22/think_again_soft_power Of course, these are not distinct - as all are mutually constructed. I add narratives to the list of soft power resources. Conceptually 'narratives' focus attention on communicative processes associated with soft power.

²¹² Lawrence Freedman, *The Transformation of Strategic Affairs* (London: Routledge, 2006), 22.

specifics of a policy, for example. Second, narrative communication as a process is one way through which soft power resources can be understood to work more broadly.²¹³ Soft power resources – such as culture, values, and policies - may be attractive to someone in an audience because they fit within a preexisting or developing personal narrative. Finally, when we see how different states try to use narratives *strategically* to sway target audiences, we begin to see how difficult it is to employ soft power resources, especially in a more complex media ecology.

Strategic narratives are defined as *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.*²¹⁴ Debates over the environment, energy provision, reform of global institutions, security, and power transition can all be understood through the lens of strategic narrative. Each proposal to confront problems of the international community is driven by underlying narratives that may be strategically deployed by actors. This is a complex endeavor as the world is marked by contestation over narratives, but a compelling narrative may become a soft power resource on its own.

Hard power is increasingly tied to soft power.

Hard power resources include military and economic resources. Soft power resources include culture, values, narratives, and policies. However, there is a different utilization of hard and soft power resources. Hard power resources are most often kept in reserve, and are used at specific moments, or within certain theatres and timeframes, with specific strategic and tactical objectives in mind. A state need not deploy hard power resources, but may threaten the use of these resources, and still exert power. Many soft power resources are not kept in reserve, but *must* be shared. It makes no sense, for example, to fund a cultural program that is not implemented, or to produce a BBC documentary that is not aired. That said, there may be times at which communication about soft power assets and narratives may be used strategically – more in the lines of hard power resources (as in representational force or in strategic narratives).

In addition, hard power resources are held, at least in most cases of military resources, as a state monopoly. Soft power resources are found both inside and outside of the public sector – and this fact, itself, contributes to the soft power of the UK. Any plan for utilization of soft power resources must recognize that among the UK's most important soft power assets are the values associated with an open, complex, diverse, and complicated society.

Today there is an important trend associated with the use of soft power by traditional bastions of hard power. This can be seen in the case of Afghanistan for example. Military forces have taken on quite a large role in stabilization and development. This means that the military employs soft power resources as well as hard power resources. This goes well beyond Nye's idea that "A well-run military can be a source of soft power"²¹⁵ to suggest that it is vital that the military continue to study soft power resources, including culture, values, and narratives.

Strict control of soft power undermines soft power.

²¹³ See for example Fred Everett Maus, "Music as Narrative" <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/2022/3432/MausMusicAsNarrativeV12.pdf;jsessionid=00BAC0039657DE3C43EBEC5BC352793A?sequence=1>

²¹⁴ Alister Miskimmon, Ben O'Loughlin, and Laura Roselle, "Forging the World: Strategic Narratives and International Relations." Centre for European Politics / New Political Communications Unit Working Paper, 2012.

²¹⁵ http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2006/02/22/think_again_soft_power

States and other political actors may attempt to use soft power resources, and especially narratives, for strategic purposes. Some countries have tried to form and project a single strategic narrative about their identity and their place in the world. States attempt this at their peril. One important case that highlights the problems with this strategy is the Soviet Union/Russia. Certainly in the Soviet Union there was strict control over education, culture, and narratives. In the early years of the Soviet state all means of mass communication were appropriated by the state. With the development of satellite technology, Soviet governmental officials were able to project a strictly controlled message across 11 time zones. And yet, government officials did not understand that strictly controlled messages and information campaigns are understood by the audience to be exactly that -- governmentally controlled information. This undermines the legitimacy of the message communicated, especially if one's own experience contradicts the official narrative. This is exacerbated in a new media ecology.

A new communication ecology undergirds soft power possibilities.

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.²¹⁶ Soft power may be a resource on which leaders can draw; however, skilled political leadership is still required as soft power is employed in foreign policy and international relations. As Richard Holbrooke once commented to Michael Ignatieff in an interview, "Diplomacy is not like chess. . . . It's more like jazz—a constant improvisation on a theme." The ability to devise and implement a coherent strategy rests on the vagaries of events and the views of others.²¹⁷

Multi-method analyses are needed to understand soft power.

There are many new ways of monitoring, measuring and evaluating the impact of strategic narratives in a new media environment. Examples of quantitative measures include: analyses of reach, time spent with online content, number of Twitter followers and re-tweets, positivity of sentiment, for example. However, these do not capture the *quality* of engagement, and what follows from it. Qualitative research is needed as well – including focus groups, interviews, and participant observation. A multifaceted approach is needed to fully understand the use and effectiveness of soft power.

Recommendations

- ❖ **The UK Government should develop a multi-disciplinary and multi-method approach to the study of soft power. Quantitative measures will not be sufficient to a clear understanding of how soft power functions.**
- ❖ **The UK Government should study narratives, with attention to what narratives and values are attractive to other parts of the world.**
- ❖ **The UK Government should seek to project a loose collection of narratives to reflect the character of its regions.**
- ❖ **The UK Government should maintain significant support for cultural, educational, and scientific programs.**

²¹⁶ Robin Brown, "Getting to War: Communication and Mobilization in the 2002–03 Iraq Crisis," in *Media and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Philip Seib (New York: Palgrave, 2005); Andrew Chadwick, *The Hybrid Media System: Politics and Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Monroe E. Price, *Media and Sovereignty: The Global Information Revolution and Its Challenge to State Power* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002)

²¹⁷ Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle, 2013, 69.

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- ❖ **The UK Government should recognize that consensus developed in and through international organizations enhances soft power.**
- ❖ **The UK Government should study and address potential complications associated with the growing expectation that the military be tasked with enhancing UK soft power.**

22 September 2013

Dr Christina Rowley, University of Bristol

What is your understanding of soft power?

1. A number of inter-related definitions and conceptualisations of soft power have been put forward to and by members of the committee, such as soft power's opposition to, or place on a spectrum alongside, hard power; its relationship to smart power; and the notion that soft power is about attracting rather than bribing or forcing. The committee Chairman suggested that soft power comprises "things that make a people love a country rather than fear it" (Evidence Session 4), while others have talked about trust and reciprocity between actors, and have pointed out that soft power is not something that can be possessed, stockpiled or deployed in an instrumental fashion. On this view, the paradox at the heart of how soft power functions is that the very attempt to pursue it strategically makes it less (or un)attainable.
2. Often, in both academic studies of power and in the practice of international relations and foreign policy, power is implicitly or explicitly understood as 'power over' others – X's ability to coerce Y into doing what X wants. Soft power, as it has been discussed by some witnesses, doesn't entirely get away from this notion, in that the goal is still to attract Y to do something that X [the UK] desires. However, if we conceive of power not as 'power over' but rather as 'power to', the relationship between X and Y looks fundamentally altered: it may be that X enables Y – gives Y the 'power to' do something – or that X and Y come together in such a way that the relationship gives them both, collectively, the 'power to' achieve something they might not otherwise have been able to accomplish alone. 'Power over' is a negative understanding of power and of the world as a zero-sum game full of competitors and threats, while 'power to' is a positive way of viewing power, and one's own and others' roles and relationships.
3. Professor Cox also talked about soft power as being structural in nature (Evidence Session 2). Pursuing this line of thought, we can understand soft power as the ability to set agendas, to frame issues, to determine discourse and narratives – what Antonio Gramsci called hegemony. Hegemony differs from dominance in that audiences consent to the validity of these meanings. The agendas, issues, discourses are taken for granted as 'true' and 'natural'; that is, the structural power at work is largely invisible. Contrary to the perception that hard power is 'real' power, then, political, social and cultural hegemony – governing by consent, setting the rules of the game, or the international order – is power indeed; while having to resort to force (dominance) is a clear sign that that power is being contested, challenged and resisted (consider the events of Spring 1989 commonly referred to by the term 'Tiananmen Square').
4. Different actors have different institutional resources to establish hegemonic meanings; global political and economic elites are some of the most powerfully placed (Rowley and Weldes 2008). It appears obvious that we should refer to "the Vietnam War" (although,

to the Vietnamese, it is known as “the American War”). Language and images actually hold much greater power than we typically allow (Weldes 1999a). In recent weeks, for example, with regard to the Syrian civil war, only one type of action exists: military intervention. Other actions – refugee assistance, diplomatic negotiations, supporting local and regional security actors – are not ‘action’. Elected officials in the US and UK worked hard to persuade publics that they faced a choice between ‘action’ and ‘inaction’; between military intervention or ‘armchair isolationism’ (Kerry). The terms of the discourse are controlled in such a way as to render non-military ‘action’ nonsensical. When successful – when we are not aware that and how the terms of the debate are predefined – we do not see the ‘soft power’ at work.

5. Consider the two images of soft power that have consistently been deployed in this committee’s evidence sessions. The first deploys the metaphor of economic competitiveness – which itself draws on a host of sporting metaphors: soft power resources become “assets” that provide a return on investment, which we are keen to quantify and exploit. Soft power gives the UK “advantages” against “rivals”, “new entrants into the soft power market” and “competitors” in the “global race”. While the UK is “top of the soft power index” and others are “playing catch up”, we must not be complacent, for “there is a global competition to topple the UK from its number one position in the soft power league table” and we must aim to “punch above our weight” or we will “lose out”.
6. Contrast this image of soft power with that conjured by the language of exchange and dialogue, of intercultural respect and trust, of reciprocity and generosity of spirit and the risk of taking friendships for granted. It is not that one of these images is “true” or “biased”. It is not a matter of truth or falsehood, impartiality or bias. Maps are an apt analogy in this context, since they are neither true nor false; they are all simplifications and abstractions of a complex world, but serve different purposes and have different effects. It is crucial that we reflect carefully upon which ‘map’ of soft power we should rely. Does the UK wish to pursue soft power instrumentally and self-interestedly for its advantages over rivals (which, several witnesses have warned, 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?

What roles do sport and culture play in boosting the UK’s soft power?

Are there any soft power approaches used by other countries that are particularly relevant to the UK?

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 organizations... have multiplied in power and reach, and where the grips of traditional elites on the flows of information in their countries have weakened?

In a digitally connected world, is soft power becoming more important? If so, why, and will this trend continue?

7. Power, in this understanding, is much more diffuse and does not only reside with political or economic elites. Crucially, cultural artefacts (such as advertisements, films, television programmes) and practices (sports, tourism, fashion, art, and so on) also matter far more than we typically give them credit, for it is in these apparently mundane texts and practices that publics' understandings of the world, or other cultures and interstate/intercultural relations, are largely constructed (Rowley 2010b). If we wish to understand the US's self-perception of its role in international affairs, we might not immediately look to *Star Trek* but the depiction of the Federation closely resonates with US rhetoric about its own identity (Weldes 1999b); in the latter years of the Cold War, *Star Trek* was the most syndicated show on the planet. While a causal argument would be impossible to demonstrate beyond doubt, it is highly likely that *Star Trek* presented the US in a favourable light to its fans, without most (including the makers themselves) being aware of this function.
8. It is in the realm of the popular, the mundane and the everyday in which the majority of the world's populations (the UK included) that political attitudes, beliefs and opinions are formed and here that they have the potential to be reformed. To be clear, this is not an argument in favour of greater government involvement in cultural industries – far from it. To look to another US example, the ways in which the Pentagon has directly involved itself in how US military institutions are portrayed on screen is deeply problematic and the UK should avoid such involvement (not just the appearance of involvement). David Robb (2004) argues persuasively that military assistance in making films and television show in return for explicit control over scripting and editorial decisions is, in effect, a form of government censorship and, I would argue, akin to propaganda (although without the “hard sell” that most deem necessary for propaganda to function).
9. Success with social media strategies comes not through one-way dissemination of information but through genuine engagement and dialogue. Social media offers exciting opportunities for local, national and international relations because of its democratising potential: people have greater access to multiple sources of information on which to make decisions; they also have more direct access to sources of institutional power that have historically been guarded by elite gatekeepers.
10. However, technology is never neutral because it is not created or used in a vacuum. Technology is always developed and utilised in particular, concrete, social, cultural, political and economic contexts. It is vital, therefore, that the democratising potentialities of the internet and of social media are nurtured and promoted, rather than being taken for granted as an inherent feature of the digital world, and that the power dynamics – who owns, who uses, and who is able to access the online world, for example – are assessed and not permitted to be monopolised by either governments or corporations. It is vital to acknowledge that it is not the whistleblowing of Edward Snowden or Chelsea

Manning *per se* that has damaged the US's soft power resources but the institutionally sanctioned behaviours they exposed.

11. Soft power is not becoming more important; rather, its importance is becoming more readily apparent to us. Does social media mean that soft power is generated differently? Insofar as more people now have access to multiple sources of information and perspectives on governments' and non-state actors' rhetoric, decisions and behavior – and the contradictions between their rhetoric and their actions – this may be the case. The best strategy is likely to be one in which perceptions of gaps between rhetoric and action are minimised, and in which the UK government is less concerned with presenting only its best side, and presents its many sides, 'warts and all'.

To what extent have other countries tried to form and project a single strategic narrative about their identity and their place in the world?

How can the UK promote its values abroad without being accused of cultural imperialism, propagandizing or hypocrisy?

Can soft power promotion contribute to national security?

12. In some ways, the US might be seen as a country that attempts to form and project a single strategic narrative about its identity and world role. For example, despite the substantial differences between Democrats and Republicans on domestic policy issues over the last fifty years, not only are US elected officials keen to stress their concern for bipartisanship and the national interest in matters of foreign policy, we also see remarkably similar rhetoric emerging from the White House on foreign policy matters, regardless of party affiliation – to the extent that it is sometimes almost impossible to identify the party from an anonymised presidential speech. US presidents' projections of the US's role in the world post-Vietnam all deploy the same rhetoric of a benevolent and defensive country, in a world where all are begging for US leadership, and whose efficacy in establishing global peace is built on its military strength (Rowley 2010a, ch.3). However, this narrative does not travel particularly effectively abroad – indeed, it seems to be primarily designed for domestic consumption. The evidence that other countries and publics accept the US's self-image is mixed at best.
13. Attempting to project a single strategic narrative is doomed to failure. It is neither possible nor desirable to create a single unified or coherent image or narrative. Different audiences (e.g., cultural versus trade, Latin American versus South Asian) expect different messages, and aspects of British culture, British values and British identity have varying resonances with these divergent audiences. Just as a person might be female, a mother, Asian-British, Sikh, gay, an athlete, and so on, all at once, so too nations are multifaceted. Different aspects of one's identity are more salient than others in different situations. We should also acknowledge that our own self-perceptions may not resonate with others' perceptions of ourselves – and we need to take this seriously. The UK may believe that it leads the world in terms of democratic traditions and practices, but when

others point out that this is at best a partial understanding of the UK, we should listen. In any case, attempting to maintain a singular narrative takes incredible amounts of ideological labour – far better to celebrate the messy complexity of UK history and identity.

14. Understandably, 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. “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, are likely to attract friends and establish enduring relationships with others in the world, as Lord Faulkes suggested in the first evidence session.
15. I am not as pessimistic as Michael Cox that “we have lost certain parts of the world and will never get them back”. After all, we have new opportunities with each generation that comes of age. However, acknowledging that we bear some of the responsibility for the breakdown of relations with these states is a good starting-place. Focusing on the ways in which the UK is superior, and can teach others is not as likely to succeed as engagement built upon *empathy* – acknowledging the ways in which we share problems, rather than presenting the UK as having solved problems that others still face. To take an example: rather than understanding democracy as a journey with an “end-state” at which we have nearly arrived – or, at least, are closer to having “achieved” it than are others – what might we gain from seeing ourselves as having as much to learn from the cities of developing world as we seem to believe they do from us?
16. If soft power is what makes people love a country rather than fear it, then soft power not only has the power to contribute to national security, it should be the first line of defence. However, in the same way that, above, the deployment of soft power in strategic and instrumentally self-interested ways was problematised, so too, the notion of ‘national’ security should give us reason to pause. States, groups and individuals are most secure when others too feel secure. Instead of dismissing other states’ and organisations’ rhetoric, it is necessary to take seriously others’ insecurities, and consider how we may be contributing, unwittingly perhaps, to those insecurities. This is particularly necessary for the most vulnerable in global society, the most marginalized and disenfranchised (Rowley and Weldes 2012).

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September 2013

The Royal Commonwealth Society – Written evidence

Executive summary

- The Commonwealth is an important venue in which member states can construct shared understandings on certain values and principles.
- As a network of countries that share significant traits, the Commonwealth helps uphold those values that member states agree to be important and relevant in the modern world.
- Given that soft power can be said to exist in a situation where other states ‘want what you want’, the Commonwealth provides a venue in which soft power can be both created and utilised.
- The Commonwealth is not simply a venue through which the United Kingdom can further its own interests. Each state’s voice has the same weight.
- It can be said, however, that the values that Commonwealth states have freely chosen to uphold are very much in line with UK foreign policy goals.
- This means that the Commonwealth is a ready-made network in which 53 nations have, of their own accord, bought into the main tenets of Britain’s overarching worldview.
- The modern Commonwealth therefore represents an unparalleled opportunity for Britain to further its soft power objectives.
- Britain must maintain and strengthen its engagement with the Commonwealth, both at an institutional level and at a grassroots level.
- The negative or non-existent public perception of the Commonwealth that our research has uncovered must be addressed by Britain actively and publically making the case for the modern Commonwealth.
- Accusations of irrelevance and anachronism need to be confronted head on, and a positive case for a renewed institution needs to be made.
- At the grassroots level, Britain must ensure that those civil society organisations that work to promote Commonwealth values remain strong and influential. It is at this level that change can be achieved on issues that require societal rather than just governmental change.
- Britain must also ensure that engagement between businesses in Commonwealth countries grows and strengthens. This is especially relevant considering that the Commonwealth contains some of the fastest growing economies in the world.

The Royal Commonwealth Society

- I. The Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS) is a civil society organisation founded in 1868. The RCS seeks to identify contemporary issues and propose practical solutions that contribute to the wellbeing and prosperity of Commonwealth nations. Headquartered in London, the RCS has an international network in some 40 Commonwealth countries. It is the oldest and largest civil society organisation devoted to the modern Commonwealth. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the work of this committee.

Soft power as shared understanding

2. Our conception of ‘soft power’ goes along with that outlined by Professor Joseph Nye. This quote covers the definition quite comprehensively:

“The basic concept of power is the ability to influence others to get them to do what you want. There are three major ways to do that: one is to threaten them with sticks; the second is to pay them with carrots; the third is to attract them or co-opt them, so that they want what you want. If you can get others to be attracted, to want what you want, it costs you much less in carrots and sticks”²¹⁸.

3. 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.

Commonwealth values

4. The Commonwealth represents a commitment amongst 54 states to a shared set of values. These states have agreed that in certain areas, they indeed *want* the same outcomes as one another. The Commonwealth Charter, which was signed by all 54 states and by The Queen in her role as Head of the Commonwealth in March of this year is the most recent and clearest formulation yet of these core values.
5. If we are to look closely at the values contained within this document, it is clear that they are mainly those same values that the UK considers a core part of its identity on the international stage. For instance, the UK has worked to establish itself as an advocate for principles such as Democracy, Human Rights, Freedom of Expression, Rule of Law, Sustainable Development, protecting the Environment, and Gender Equality. All of these principles are contained within the charter (Articles I, II, V, VII, IX, X and XII respectively)²¹⁹.
6. A cursory reading of this might lead one to believe that the UK simply uses the Commonwealth as a neo-imperial conduit for furthering its own values amongst its former colonies. The reality, however, is far more complex. The Commonwealth is an institution that operates on a consensus basis. The Charter, for instance, was unanimously adopted by all Commonwealth states. 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.
7. Rather than viewing the Commonwealth as an avenue through which British soft power can be accrued and utilised, it should be viewed as a venue in which large states and small states, developed states and developing states all with some shared

²¹⁸ Nye, J (1990) *Soft Power*, Foreign Policy, vol. 80, pp 153-171.

²¹⁹ Commonwealth Secretariat (2013), *Charter of the Commonwealth*, retrieved 1 September 2013, <<http://www.thecommonwealth.org/files/252053/FileName/CharteroftheCommonwealth.pdf>>

historical experiences can present their value systems, and can also learn from the value systems of other members.

8. With this in mind, the agreement around the Commonwealth charter has handed Britain a considerable soft power opportunity. 53 other Commonwealth states have freely chosen to adopt a shared value system that closely resembles the UK's overarching worldview. There is now immense potential within the Commonwealth for the UK to strengthen the shared understandings with these countries that underpin its soft power. It can then use this to achieve meaningful change at both national and societal levels.

The public perception of the Commonwealth

9. The Commonwealth suffers from several problems with regard to its image. The most dangerous of these is that many see it as an irrelevant and anachronistic institution. Considering its potential for furthering values that the UK supports, the British government must counter this by making a case for the continuing importance and relevance of the modern Commonwealth.
10. Research carried out by the RCS in 2010 found that amongst British citizens, the Commonwealth was seen to have the least value to the UK when compared to the UN, G8, NATO and EU. On top of this, nearly half of respondents could not name *any* activities undertaken by the Commonwealth²²⁰.
11. This disengagement with the Commonwealth directly affects the UK's interests. The more that the Commonwealth is viewed as a historical relic, the less effectively its intergovernmental and civil society functions will operate. The institution already suffers from a 'historical baggage' problem as a result of its imperial past. A strong case therefore needs to be consistently made for its relevance as a contemporary institution. If the UK government fails to clearly make this case, the institution will continue to lose importance, and will have less of an impact on the governments and societies of member states.

Commonwealth civil society

12. One of the unique features of the Commonwealth is that it does not only operate at an intergovernmental level. High level interactions take place on top of a deep network of ties between businesses, academic bodies, professional institutions and civil society organisations.
13. It is naturally hard to quantify the benefit that the non-governmental Commonwealth brings the UK. However, one only has to look at the work of bodies such as the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, or the Commonwealth Lawyers Association to see that this network is contributing to the longevity of institutions such as the rule of law and parliamentary democracy worldwide. Non-governmental Commonwealth bodies are maintaining and strengthening the UK's soft power.

²²⁰ Bennett J., Sriskandarajah D. and Ware Z. (2010) *An Uncommon Association, A Wealth of Potential: Final Report of the Commonwealth Conversation*, London, UK: Royal Commonwealth Society.

14. In addition to their modern activities, it must also be kept in mind that many of these Commonwealth bodies have an inheritance that no other international institution could claim to have. The Royal Commonwealth Society itself was founded in 1868, and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in 1911. Institutions such as the EU or G8 are still very young in comparison, and they cannot compete with the historical capital existent in the Commonwealth. This should be seen as a unique source of strength, legitimacy and continuity.
15. Ensuring that these bodies remain strong and active is just as important as engaging with Commonwealth countries at the governmental level. This is especially relevant on issues where deep societal change, rather than just a change in government policy is needed. The UK needs to increase its dialogue and involvement with such organisations.

Commonwealth business

16. Whilst it has been noted that much of the value that the UK derives from the Commonwealth is hard to quantify, it is also true that the UK certainly derives a material, financial value from its membership of the institution.
17. Research undertaken by the RCS found that if one compares the trade volumes that are passing through two country pairs, the trading volume between two Commonwealth members is likely to be a third to a half more than trade between a Commonwealth member and a non-Commonwealth member. The familiarity between countries, similar legal systems, shared business networks, the use of the English language and other factors produce what the RCS terms the ‘Commonwealth advantage’²²¹.
18. Indeed, the English language in itself is a major asset. When referring to sources of soft power, Professor Nye stated that English ‘has become the *lingua franca* of the global economy’²²². The language of the Commonwealth is also the language of business, and this provides a tremendous advantage for member states.
19. What we see here is the ‘soft’ aspects of the Commonwealth delivering a ‘hard’, measurable benefit to its member states. It is our intention to further explore this quantifiable impact in our research series ‘*Commonwealth Compared*’.
20. Britain is using its Commonwealth advantage to some extent. Some of the biggest leaps in UK exports – of both goods and services in the last two years (2010-2012) have been to Commonwealth countries. 33.5% to India, 31.2% to South Africa, 30% to Australia, and 18.3% to Canada²²³.
21. Despite this, there is more that can be done. The only body that works to promote trade is the Commonwealth Business Council (CBC). There is currently no formal mechanism through which the Commonwealth promotes trade or investment. This is clearly one area in which the UK can have an impact. It is also worth noting that

²²¹ Bennett J., Chappell P., Reed H. and Sriskandarajah D. (2010) Trading places: the ‘Commonwealth effect’ revisited, London, UK: Royal Commonwealth Society.

²²² Nye, J (1990) Soft Power, Foreign Policy, vol. 80, pp 153-171.

²²³ Howell, D. (2013) Britain, the EU, and the Commonwealth, The Independent, London, 17 July

promoting the informal Commonwealth institutions mentioned above will have a real effect on the material benefit that the UK derives from the network. These institutions preserve the Commonwealth effect, and making sure that they prosper is exactly how the UK should be working to maintain its soft power.

Conclusion

22. In 2011, the UK government made a commitment to putting the Commonwealth ‘at the very heart of British foreign policy’²²⁴. Whilst we have seen some progress, it does not seem that the UK has really grasped the fact that it is a member of a network of 54 countries that overwhelmingly buy into its worldview. There is a wealth of potential here that the UK can use to further its objectives, but in order to do so, it must meaningfully engage with all sides of the modern Commonwealth.

September 2013

²²⁴ Hague W. (2011) The Commonwealth is “back at the heart of British Foreign Policy”, speech delivered to 2011 Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference, London, 27 July

The Royal Society – Written evidence

The Royal Society welcomes the opportunity to submit evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence. The Royal Society is the national academy of science in the UK; it is a self-governing Fellowship of many of the world's distinguished scientists. This response draws on the advice of ten Fellows, including three former Foreign Secretaries of the Royal Society and its current Foreign Secretary, Professor Martyn Poliakoff CBE FRS.

I Summary

This response draws on the Royal Society's recent international work and concludes that:

- The UK is not exploiting fully the UK's science strengths and the reputation of its science institutions as a source of soft power on the international stage. The scientific values of rationality, transparency and universality can enable science to be used to build constructive international relations and should be an important part of soft power.
- Science diplomacy, as an arm of soft power, has the potential to help defuse complex and tense geopolitical situations by providing opportunities to build apolitical partnerships in developing and emerging economies.
- The UK Government has a role to play in minimising barriers to science cooperation, e.g. visa regulations and security controls, and providing diplomatic assistance, e.g. contract negotiations and intellectual property agreements; as do initiatives that champion scientific freedom and access.
- The FCO should develop a strategy that explicitly sets out a vision for how science cooperation should feature in UK foreign policy and how this vision should be implemented across Government. The role of the FCO/BIS Science and Innovation Network and British Council are instrumental here.
- There need to be more effective mechanisms and spaces for dialogue between policymakers, academics and researchers working in the foreign policy and scientific communities to identify projects and processes that can further the interests of both communities.
- The global influence of the European Union, the degree to which it legislates for the UK, and the progressive development of the European Research Area provide imperatives and opportunities for the UK to continue to help shape European policy. Interactions between UK and European scientists and institutions are strong and provide a useful, but presently underexploited, source of soft power.
- Science cooperation requires funding. The UK should continue to participate in large international scientific initiatives, such as the EU's Horizon 2020 programme and ICSU's Future Earth initiative, both of which have the potential to become truly global.

The Royal Society – Written evidence

- National science academies and learned societies are an important source of independent scientific advice to national and international policymakers, and in deploying science for soft power.
- With its Fellowship drawn from across the Commonwealth, the Royal Society can play a leading role in the UK's Government's renewed focus on these 54 nations.
- Capacity building in science programmes can contribute to soft power.

2 Introduction

2.1 The term “**soft power**” is interpreted as a power that “builds on common interests and values to attract, persuade and influence.”²²⁵ Science has always played a role in the development of hard power capabilities, such as military technologies, but science cooperation is also a source of soft power because it is attractive both as a national asset and as a universal activity that transcends national interests. **The scientific values of rationality, transparency and universality can enable science to be used to build constructive international relations and should be an important part of soft power.**

2.2 Throughout its history, the Royal Society has demonstrated leadership in using science as a source of soft power, or science for diplomacy, promoting and facilitating international scientific collaboration during times of diplomatic or military tension. During the American War of Independence in the eighteenth century, Benjamin Franklin, a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS), arranged that American warships should not interfere with Captain Cook on his last voyage. In the Napoleonic Wars soon after, the then-President of the Royal Society, Sir Joseph Banks, used his influence in England and France to ensure that explorers of the two nations were not obstructed by the conflicting armed forces, and that French scientists should continue to be elected Fellows of the Royal Society; and in the 20th century, the Royal Society played a leading role in ensuring that scientific links between the UK and the Soviet Union continued despite the tensions of the Cold War.²²⁶

2.3 The Royal Society's mission to support international scientific exchange goes back even further. Philip Zollman became Foreign Secretary of the Royal Society in 1723, nearly 60 years before the British Government appointed its first Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Zollman's role was to maintain regular correspondence with scientists overseas to ensure that the Royal Society's Fellows remained up-to-date with the latest ideas and research findings.

2.4 The 2010 publication of *New Frontiers in Science Diplomacy*²²⁷ articulated the importance of science diplomacy and international scientific cooperation to the Royal Society's work. The theory and practice of soft power underpin much of its current international portfolio, whether through policy studies, capacity building, or bilateral and

²²⁵ Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The means to success in world politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004)

²²⁶ Melvyn Bragg, *In Our Time: The Royal Society and British Science*, episode 4.

²²⁷ <http://royalsociety.org/policy/publications/2010/new-frontiers-science-diplomacy/>

multilateral engagement. Where opportunities arise, the Royal Society will promote scientific cooperation between countries where there have been tensions or recent conflict. It will also provide advice to, and work with, UK and international policymakers and institutions on the relationship between science and diplomacy, in order to further the international objectives of the Royal Society and, where practicable, the UK. The Royal Society is part of a global network of science academies, capable of mobilizing the world's best science and scientists on issues of global concern, including those where political negotiations may be fraught.

3 International perspective

3.1 Recent years have seen a fresh surge of interest in science diplomacy, most noticeably in the US, the UK and Japan. The post of Science and Technology Adviser to the US Secretary of State was created in 2000, where science diplomacy was defined as the 'use of science interactions among nations to address the common challenges facing humanity and to build constructive knowledge-based international partnerships'²²⁸ The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) continues to lead science diplomacy thinking. In 2008, AAAS established a Centre for Diplomacy and in 2012 launched a quarterly journal, *Science and Diplomacy*²²⁹, the first of its kind. It has also signed a formal agreement with the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS) to work on joint projects that build regional cooperation and networks, as well as increasing the capacity of foreign ministries, research ministries and international policy organisations to build science partnerships.²³⁰

3.2 Japan has placed significant emphasis on science diplomacy since the publication of their Council for Science and Technology Policy report in 2008, 'Towards the reinforcement of science and technology diplomacy', which identified four key objectives: negotiating the participation of Japanese scientists in international research programmes; providing scientific advice to international policymaking; helping to build science capacity in developing countries; and using science to project power on the international stage, in ways that increase Japan's prestige and attract inward investment. This last area is motivated, in part, by Japan's own recognition that its scientific and technological strengths are a key source of strategic and economic value. In 2011, science and technology diplomacy was designated as an issue of national importance in the government's 4th Science and Technology Basic Plan.²³¹

3.3 In 2001, the UK government set up a Science and Innovation Network (SIN), with the aim of linking science more directly to its foreign policy priorities. SIN facilitates collaboration between UK and international research partners across a wide variety of policy and scientific agendas, including energy, climate change and innovation. Over 12 years, the SIN has expanded to include around 90 staff (a mix of UK expatriates and locally engaged experts) across 47 cities in 28 countries. SIN officers are typically located in UK embassies, high commissions or consulates, and work alongside other diplomats and representatives of bodies such as UK Trade and Investment. The place of science in UK

²²⁸ Nina Federoff 2009

²²⁹ <http://www.sciencediplomacy.org/>

²³⁰ http://www.aaas.org/news/releases/2011/1117aaas_twas_mou.shtml

²³¹ <http://www.sciencediplomacy.org/article/2013/rise-science-and-technology-diplomacy-in-japan>

foreign policy was further strengthened in 2009 by the appointment of the first Chief Scientific Adviser to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). There are also UK science attachés in Beijing, Brussels, Washington and New Delhi. In London, there are science attachés posted to the embassies of Brazil, Canada, China, Russia and several European countries, who meet regularly as the London Diplomatic Science Club.

4 Three dimensions of science diplomacy

4.1 Although a fluid concept, science diplomacy can usefully be applied to the role of science, technology and innovation in three different ways:

- a. using science cooperation to improve international relations between countries and regions (*science for diplomacy*)
- b. facilitating international science cooperation (*diplomacy for science*);
- c. informing foreign policy objectives with scientific advice (*science in diplomacy*);

4.2 Building, nurturing and sustaining partnerships are important to all of these, and are central to science diplomacy, but it is the first category – science for diplomacy – that perhaps best illustrates the role of science in soft power.

a. Science for diplomacy

4.3 Examples of science for diplomacy tools include:

- *Scientific cooperation agreements*, which have long been used to symbolise improving political relations, for example between the United States and the USSR and China in the 1970s and 1980s. A science agreement was the first bilateral treaty to be agreed between the United States and Libya in 2004, after Libya gave up its biological, chemical and nuclear weapons programmes.
- *New institutions* can be created to reflect the goals of science for diplomacy. Perhaps the best example is the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN), which was founded after World War II to help rebuild bridges between nations. CERN enabled some of the first post-war contacts between German and Israeli scientists, and kept open scientific relations with Russia and other Eastern bloc countries during the Cold War. SESAME, a similar initiative in the Middle East led by Sir Chris Llewellyn Smith FRS, involves the construction of a CERN-style particle accelerator, the region's first major international research centre, outside of the Jordanian capital, Amman. Scientists from Iran, Israel, Turkey, Cyprus, Bahrain, Pakistan and Egypt are working together on the project despite the difficult relations between some of their countries.
- *Educational scholarships* are a well-established mechanism for network-building and encouraging partnerships. For example, the Royal Society runs the high profile but modest Newton International Fellowships scheme, in partnership with the British Academy, to select the best early stage post-doctoral researchers from around the world, and offer them long-term support to carry out research and sustain relations with institutions in the UK.²³²

²³² <http://www.newtonfellowships.org/>

- *Science festivals and exhibitions*, particularly linked to the history of science, can be an effective platform from which to emphasise the universality of science, and common cultural interests. China, India, Iran and other Islamic countries are particularly proud of their contributions to the history of science. The Royal Society is beginning to explore opportunities to use its extensive archives for (UK-based and travelling) exhibitions; recent examples include Spain and Qatar, with China as a future prospect.

4.4 Examples of the Royal Society's current science for diplomacy projects include:

- *The Commonwealth*
The Royal Society is particularly keen to develop its links with the Commonwealth. Its Fellowship is drawn from across the leading Commonwealth nations – with around 165 Fellows living in Commonwealth countries other than the UK. In November 2014, the Royal Society will host the first biennial Commonwealth Science Conference, the inaugural event in India, to engage the very best scientists, engineers and technologists from across its 54 countries. The conference will celebrate excellence in Commonwealth science, facilitate cooperation between scientists and inspire younger scientists in different Commonwealth countries. The Royal Society is presently raising funds for this Conference series.

With the UK Government's renewed focus on these 54 nations²³³, the Royal Society, as the UK's national academy and academy of science of the Commonwealth, can play a leading role in this area.

- *The Atlas of Islamic-World Science and Innovation*²³⁴
This project promotes science cooperation as an area where trust and cooperation between Europe and the Islamic world can be strengthened at a time when political relations are strained. The project takes the form of a unique partnership between the Royal Society, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the British Council, Nature, the International Development Research Centre and Qatar Foundation, and is chaired by the OIC Secretary General. This complex multi-partner project has attracted interest from government and scientific communities in the UK, Europe, US and OIC countries, and has to-date published reports on science and innovation in Malaysia, Egypt and Jordan.
- *Mount Paektu geoscientific project in North Korea*
The Royal Society is currently supporting an unprecedented collaboration that offers a unique opportunity to open up engagement with North Korean scientists. Mount Paektu spans the border between China and North Korea but little is known about its North Korean side. However, in the 10th century it was responsible for one of the world's largest eruptions of the past few millennia; the eruption having profound consequences in East Asia with substantial ash fall reaching Japan. Following a recent earthquake swarm beneath the volcano, attention has turned to its current state.

²³³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-commonwealth-is-back-at-the-heart-of-british-foreign-policy>

²³⁴ <http://royalsociety.org/policy/projects/atlas-islamic-world/>

There has never been any direct collaboration between North Korea and China, and data that may have previously been collected by North Korean scientists have not been shared internationally. In the summer of 2012, scientists from Imperial College London and Cambridge University went to North Korea to discuss a collaboration to monitor, image and better understand the hazards associated with Mount Paektu, in partnership with the Institute of Volcanology of the North Korean Earthquake Administration. Research is now underway with monitoring equipment deployed on the North Korean side of the volcano for data collection over the next year. Future collaboration could involve North Korean scientists being trained in the UK and possibly even reciprocal exchanges in the longer term. This collaboration was politically inconceivable: it would not have taken place without the Royal Society's facilitation as a co-signatory of both an MOU and research agreement, and its undertaking of political, scientific and legal due diligence.

4.5 The Royal Society's experience shows that **science diplomacy, as an arm of soft power, has the potential to help defuse complex and tense geopolitical situations by providing opportunities to build apolitical partnerships in developing and emerging economies.**

b. Diplomacy for science

4.6 Flagship international projects, such as the Large Hadron Collider at CERN, carry enormous costs and risks but are increasingly vital in areas of science that require large upfront investments in infrastructure beyond the budget of any one country. These projects are the visible examples of everyday, bottom-up collaboration that takes place between individual scientists and institutions. The scientific enterprise is now premised on the need to collaborate and connect. This was articulated in the Royal Society's 2011 report *Knowledge Networks and Nations*²³⁵, which explored trends and developments in global science as well as different models of, and barriers to, collaboration.

4.7 Collaborations are no longer based purely on historical, institutional or cultural links. This creates an opportunity for the foreign policy community. **Science can be a bridge to communities where political ties are weaker, but to develop relationships in these areas, scientists may require diplomatic assistance, whether in contract negotiations, intellectual property agreements or dealing with visa regulations.** The Royal Society is currently providing this kind of support to the collaboration between UK volcanologists and their North Korean counterparts mentioned above.

4.8 At a multilateral level, the Royal Society is a member of the International Human Rights Network of Academies and Scholarly Societies and has been an active supporter of scientific freedom and access²³⁶. The Royal Society is also a member²³⁷ of the ICSU Committee on the Freedom and Responsibility in the Conduct of Science²³⁷, which advocates the Universality of Science so that scientists are not discriminated by virtue of citizenship, religion, political opinion, ethnic origin, race, or gender. Through this Committee, the Royal Society supports the free communication between, and association

²³⁵ <http://royalsociety.org/policy/projects/knowledge-networks-nations/report/>

²³⁶ For example, in 2002, the Society supported a statement against a boycott on international cooperation with Israeli scientists during the Israel-Palestine conflict.

²³⁷ <http://www.icsu.org/about-icsu/structure/committees/freedom-responsibility>

with, other scientists and can help scientists overcome barriers to cooperation, sometimes in spite of political impasse.

4.9 Whilst independent, the Royal Society cooperates with the FCO, BIS and other government departments, the British Council, UK Research Councils and other learned societies on the UK's international science effort. Whilst this cooperation is constructive, it is not always efficient. **The FCO could usefully develop a strategy that explicitly sets out a vision for how science cooperation should feature in UK foreign policy and how this vision should be implemented across Government. This should include how science could feature more prominently in the British Council's cultural relations narrative** (alongside the arts and education): with offices in six continents and over 100 countries, it has huge potential to use science as a source of soft power. **The role of the FCO/BIS Science and Innovation Network is also instrumental here:** the Network provides a high quality level of service by providing in-country intelligence, identifying expertise, brokering partnerships, and delivering on-the-ground logistical support and advice. SIN officers develop an in-depth understanding of the policies, people and priorities of their host countries, and identify collaborative opportunities for UK scientists, universities and high-tech firms – a service that is critical to the UK's prosperity agenda. **There also need to be more effective mechanisms and spaces for dialogue between policymakers, academics and researchers working in the foreign policy and scientific communities to identify projects and processes that can further the interests of both communities.**

4.10 All collaborative science requires funding. The EU framework programmes and now *Horizon 2020* are good examples of how significant pots of money have enabled significant collaboration between EU countries and now, increasingly, third countries. With an €80 billion budget, **Horizon 2020 has the potential to become the first truly global science initiative, and a significant source of soft power.** Global platforms for research cooperation – such as the International Council for Science's (ICSU) new 10 year *Future Earth* programme – will similarly mobilise thousands of scientists, while strengthening partnerships with policy-makers and other stakeholders to provide sustainability options and solutions in the wake of Rio+20. **It is critical that the UK continues to participate in large-scale funding programmes and regional and global platforms for cooperation.**

c. Science in diplomacy

4.11 The effective use of scientific advice in foreign relations requires international policymakers to have a minimum level of scientific literacy, or at least access to others who have it. It also requires scientists to communicate their work in an accessible and intelligible way, which is sensitive to its wider policy context.

4.12 **National science academies and learned societies are an important source of independent scientific advice to national and international policymakers, and in deploying science for soft power.** The Royal Society, as one of the oldest and most prestigious academies, has world-leading scientific capital and significant political capital: it works unilaterally, regionally and globally with other science academies to strengthen scientific advice to governments, and nurture scientific collaboration with the UK.

4.13 The global influence of the European Union, the degree to which it legislates for the UK, and the progressive development of the European Research Area provide imperatives and opportunities for the UK to continue to help shape European policy. Interactions between UK and European scientists and institutions are strong and provide a useful, but presently underexploited, source of soft power. The Royal Society works with its sister academies in the EU through European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC)²³⁸ on wide-ranging policy issues, such as carbon capture and storage, and crop genetic improvement technologies for sustainable agriculture. EASAC is an important institution for soft power at the European level.

4.14 Similarly, at the G8 level, the G8+5 science academies have met annually since the UK's G8 Presidency in 2005 to produce joint statements on issues of importance to the G8. This year, the Royal Society hosted the first ever meeting of G8 Science ministers and national academies as part of the UK's 2013 G8 Presidency²³⁹; a meeting where agreement was reached on a number of open science issues that had been difficult to negotiate bilaterally.

4.15 The Royal Society also advises international institutions on global scientific issues through its membership of the InterAcademy Council (IAC), the IAP global network of science academies, the International Council for Science (ICSU) and other bodies, and seeks to build its own links with intergovernmental organizations (including the OECD, Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and UN agencies).

4.16 International institutions are beginning to take science advisory systems seriously. The EU has established a Chief Scientific Adviser to the Commissioner²⁴⁰ and the UN Secretary General has set up an international scientific advisory board²⁴¹ reporting directly to him. In 2001, the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) agreed to set up a science diplomacy initiative to improve 'the provision of science and technology advice to multilateral negotiations and the implementation of the results of such negotiations at the national level'.²⁴² Its focus has been on building the capacity of scientists and diplomats from developing countries to participate in international negotiations.²⁴³

4.17 The Royal Society has a long history of building science capacity in Africa, promoting science cooperation between UK and African researchers and building the capacity and profile of African science academies²⁴⁴. In doing so, African researchers and academies can become vital contributors to research and evidence-based policymaking in their own countries, as well as enhance their national and continental voice in international debates. Capacity building in science programmes can contribute to soft power.

5 Concluding remarks: what the UK Government can do to support science as soft power

²³⁸ <http://www.easac.eu/>

²³⁹ <http://royalsociety.org/news/2013/science-ministers-and-national-academies/>

²⁴⁰ <http://www.nature.com/news/first-eu-chief-scientific-adviser-named-1.9412>

²⁴¹ <http://www.nature.com/news/unesco-to-set-up-un-science-advisory-board-1.10884>

²⁴² UNCTAD 2003

²⁴³ <http://stdev.unctad.org/capacity/diplomacy.html>

²⁴⁴ <http://royalsociety.org/about-us/international/capacity-building/>

A UK strategy for science diplomacy

5.1 The UK has a positive story to tell on science with considerable strength and prestige in the international scientific arena. *The Scientific Century (2010)*²⁴⁵ showed how, with just 1% of the world's population, the UK provides 3% of global funding for research, 7.9% of the world's papers, 11.8% of global citations, and 14.4% of the world's most highly cited papers. The UK is a heavyweight, but it is not yet using this strength to its full advantage. The UK Government should treat science as not just intellectual or economic capital. The UK can still go further in exploiting its scientific expertise to further its diplomatic aims. The FCO should develop a strategy that explicitly sets out a vision for how science cooperation should feature in UK foreign policy and how this vision should be implemented across Government.

Creating an infrastructure for science diplomacy

5.2 The FCO could usefully place greater emphasis on science within its strategies and draw more extensively on scientific advice in the formation and delivery of policy objectives. The FCO/BIS Science and Innovation Network and the post of FCO Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) are critical for integrating science across FCO priorities and developing stronger links with science-related policies in other government departments. It is encouraging to see that a new department now supports the FCO CSA role, and that a deputy CSA has also been employed.

5.3 Other mechanisms to help build stronger links could include:

- ensuring messages about the value of science are promulgated throughout foreign ministries and embassies, including to all Heads of Mission;
- incorporating science policy training into induction courses and training for foreign ministry staff, and specialist diplomatic training for dedicated science officers;
- involving more scientists in foreign ministries to advise at senior and strategic levels;
- encouraging the recruitment of science graduates as part of the general intake for the foreign service;
- encouraging secondments and pairing between diplomats and scientists;
- encouraging independent scientific bodies to provide science policy briefings for foreign ministry and embassy staff.

Practical barriers to scientific exchange

5.4 An important set of constraints to science diplomacy are regulatory barriers, such as visa restrictions and security controls. Immediately after September 11 2001, more stringent travel and visa regimes in countries like the US and the UK severely limited the opportunities for visiting scientists and scholars, particularly from Islamic countries. Although efforts have been made to unpick some of these strict controls, there are still significant problems with the free mobility of scientists from certain countries. **Such policies shut out talented scientists, hinder opportunities to build scientific relations between countries, and often hold up progress in UK-based research.** Security controls can also prevent collaboration on certain scientific subjects, such as nuclear physics and microbiology. These policies are based on concerns over the dual use potential of some scientific knowledge. However, it is important to take into consideration the diplomatic value of scientific partnerships in sensitive areas to help rebuild much needed trust between nations.

²⁴⁵ http://royalsociety.org/uploadedFiles/Royal_Society_Content/policy/publications/2010/4294970126.pdf

Widening the circle of science diplomacy

5.5 Scientific organisations can play an important role in diplomacy or soft power, particularly when formal political relationships are weak or strained. The scientific community may be able to broker new or different types of partnerships. The range of actors involved in these efforts should expand to include non-governmental organisations, multilateral agencies and other informal networks. A nation's scientific diaspora is also strategically important, as scientists based overseas are often keen to retain a close involvement with their country of birth.

5.6 There need to be more effective mechanisms and spaces for dialogue between policymakers, academics and researchers working in the foreign policy and scientific communities, to identify projects and processes that can further the interests of both communities. Foreign policy institutions and think tanks can offer leadership here by devoting intellectual resources to science as an important component of modern day diplomacy.

Dr Tracey Elliott, Head of International, Science Policy Centre

Acting on behalf of the Royal Society's Foreign Secretary, Professor Martyn Poliakoff CBE FRS

18 September 2013

Professor Philip Seib, University of Southern California – Written evidence

Philip Seib is Professor of Journalism and Public Diplomacy and Professor of International Relations at the University of Southern California, and served as director of USC's Center on Public Diplomacy 2009-13. He is author or editor of numerous books, including *Headline Diplomacy: How News Coverage Affects Foreign Policy*; *New Media and the New Middle East*; *The Al Jazeera Effect*; *Toward A New Public Diplomacy*; *Global Terrorism and New Media*; *Al Jazeera English: Global News in a Changing World*; and *Real-Time Diplomacy: Politics and Power in the Social Media Era*.

All countries wield power to some extent. Some do so primarily through conventional means, such as large military establishments and economic clout. Other nations, wary of hard power's proximity to conflict, rely on soft power – exerting influence through persuasion and attraction rather than threat or coercion. Soft power is exercised through traditional means such as educational and cultural exchanges, and also through technological tools, such as Qatar's expansion of influence through the Al Jazeera broadcasting channels.

The request from the House of Lords is broad – in fact, it would be a good outline for a book – so this memorandum will be limited to facets of soft power in a digitally connected world, particularly in terms of public diplomacy, for which a brief definition is government-to-people rather than government-to-government diplomacy. I hope the thoughts presented here will stimulate thinking and discussion, and I would be happy to provide supplemental information if it would be of use. For expanded treatment of items in this memorandum, readers are referred to my book *Real-Time Diplomacy: Politics and Power in the Social Media Era* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), from which much of the following material is drawn.

In his 1939 classic, *Diplomacy*, Sir Harold Nicolson wrote, “In the days of the old diplomacy it would have been regarded as an act of unthinkable vulgarity to appeal to the common people upon any issue of international policy.” Nicolson lamented technological advances such as “the invention of the wireless,” which gave “a vast impetus to propaganda as a method of policy” and allowed manipulators such as Adolf Hitler to wield “a formidable weapon of popular excitation.”²⁴⁶

Today, it would be an act of unthinkable stupidity to disregard “the common people” (more felicitously referred to as “the public”) in the conduct of foreign affairs. Propaganda can still be effective, but the public is not at such a disadvantage as it once was because of the vast array of information providers that can offset, as well as deliver, the messages of propagandists. Empowered by their unprecedented access to information, many people have a better sense of how they fit into the global community, and they are less inclined to entrust diplomacy solely to diplomats. They want to be part of the process.

With members of the public having rising expectations about participating in democratized diplomacy, their activism affects not only policymakers of their own country, but also those who implement the foreign policy of other states. This expectation makes the diplomat play

²⁴⁶ Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy (Second Edition)* (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), 168-9.

more of a conventional political role than she or he may have done in the past, with a constituency far larger than the traditional foreign policy establishment. Shrewd domestic politicians, such as George H. W. Bush's secretary of state, James A. Baker, and Hillary Rodham Clinton, secretary of state during Barack Obama's first term, possess skills that have become essential supplements to the traditional art of diplomacy. They recognize that their domestic public is affected by the 24-hour news cycle, as are publics in many of the countries with which they deal, and so their diplomacy must reflect sensitivity to shifting political currents, at home and abroad. Thanks to recent communication tools – from satellite television to Twitter – the world intrudes into more lives than ever before.

A reordering of relationships is underway among those who make policy, those who carry it out, and those who are affected by it. Henry Kissinger observed in a 2011 interview that “new technologies make it much easier to acquire factual knowledge, though they make it harder in a way to process it because one is flooded with information, but what one needs for diplomacy is to develop a concept of what one is trying to achieve. The Internet drives you to the immediate resolution of symptoms but may make it harder to get to the essence of the problems. It's easier to know what people are saying, but the question is whether diplomats have time to connect that with its deeper historical context.”²⁴⁷

Balancing recognition of historical context with the pressures generated by new information and communication technologies requires a new approach to the construction of diplomacy and to being a diplomat. The word often used by public diplomacy officialdom to describe wielding influence is “engagement,” but that is a mushy term that lacks clear meaning. It can refer to something as ephemeral as the digital version of “pen pals” – useful but in a minimal way – or to a broad-based online discussion forum that has a substantive effect on opinion formation. Engagement should not be seen as a strategy or a policy goal in itself; it is merely one tool among many. Public diplomacy requires multifaceted efforts designed to meet the particular political and cultural interests of the public for whom outreach is designed. This means, in part, that despite the infatuation with social media, public diplomacy should include direct personal contact whenever appropriate and feasible.

Considerable effort is required to grapple with security and financial constraints, but projects based in tangible physical space, such as American libraries and their equivalents organized by other nations, remain valuable in ways that cyber connections cannot match. The audience reached individually by such ventures might not be as large as that which visits Facebook walls and reads Twitter feeds, but the qualitative value of the contacts might be more significant. The U.S. Embassy in Jakarta has received much attention for its digital campaigns, and its amassing of more than 300,000 Facebook followers is a tribute to the initiative of the embassy's staff. But what is the real nature of this connection? Are people truly learning about the United States and its policies? Are their opinions being changed? As with any contact with the public, numbers in and of themselves mean little. This is particularly true given the casual ease with which “following” or “friending” or making other online connection can be done.

The U.S. State Department is among the government organizations that have added “digital outreach” to their repertoires. By posting messages on Arabic, Urdu, Persian, and other Internet forums, the State Department project tries to connect directly to individuals who are part of target audiences, which is the essence of public diplomacy. The big question, to

²⁴⁷ Blake Hounshell, “Henry Kissinger,” *Foreign Policy*, July/August 2011, 28.

which there is not yet a definitive answer, is, does this technology-based approach work better, or at least as well, as more traditional contact techniques?

A report released in January 2011 by Stanford University found mixed results of the State Department's digital outreach venture. The report focused on the department's efforts related to President Obama's 2009 Cairo speech, and its principal findings included these:²⁴⁸

- The Department states that the mission of the Digital Outreach Team (DOT) is “to explain U.S. foreign policy and to counter misinformation.”
- The team members always identify themselves as working for the U.S. State Department.
- Because members of the team must share their items with colleagues before posting them, the average response time was 2.77 days, which “makes it hard for readers to keep up with the points that they are specifically responding to.”
- The DOT “does present an image of a government that is trying to engage with and listen to people directly (although this has been met with skepticism by some users who accuse them of being spies).”
- “When the DOT starts a thread about Obama's Cairo speech, it aims at making people think about the speech, putting it on the thought map.”
- “If U.S. foreign policy toward the Middle East does not produce more than rhetorical change, public diplomacy 2.0 will not be able to alter perception of the USA in the region.”

This final point sometimes is overlooked when the mechanics of message delivery receive inordinate attention and the substance of issues positions is treated only cursorily. Public diplomacy is a process, but it cannot be separated from policy. As Obama's short-lived post-speech surge in popularity in many Muslim countries indicated, deep-rooted skepticism about U.S. intentions in the Arab world will limit even the most cleverly designed public diplomacy tactics.

In these matters, another concern should center on the question of intellectual influence afforded by use of new media, particularly social media, as public diplomacy tools. To what extent are publics' opinions actually changing as a result of what they pick up from these media? Is there an intrinsic strength in this kind of messaging that makes the State Department Twitterer the equivalent of the Peace Corps volunteer? Do Tweets have the same impact in communities as a hands-on project, such as a new sanitation system?

High and low tech need not be – and should not be – mutually exclusive. The challenge for diplomats – the expeditionary diplomat in the field or the policymaker in the foreign ministry – is to create a public diplomacy that incorporates the modern without wholly abandoning the traditional. If soft power is to be effective, it must be built upon a solid foundation of policy that is complemented – not dominated – by new information and communication technologies.

September 2013

²⁴⁸ Lina Khatib, William Dutton, Michael Thelwall, “Public Diplomacy 2.0: An Exploratory Case Study of the U.S. Digital Outreach Team,” *CDDRL Working Papers*, No. 120, January 2011, Center on Democracy, Development, and The Rule of Law, Stanford University, 3, 6, 17, 23, 24, 26.

Giles Scott Smith – Written evidence

Meaning and Importance

Soft power can be summed up as a set of characteristics and values that are associated by others with a particular nation and its people, and which appeal to others in such a way that it can affect their opinion and perhaps their behaviour towards that people and nation in a positive way. The effect could be negligible, but even negligible change can be the difference between acting or not acting. For Britain, such characteristics might include the reputation of its institutions of higher education and the media (BBC), the sense of humour of its people, its democratic traditions, and its rich historical heritage. Such characteristics could also include blends e.g. the tradition/modernity mix of current-day Britain, or stereotypes, e.g. the British and fair play. Whatever the characteristics, the outcome is a general sense that a) Britain stands for something in terms of values, and b) Britain is unique, or at least recognisably different from other nations, in a positive way.

Extent and Use

The key is not so much to identify what is best about Britain, but to find out what images and perceptions of Britain play most positively with audiences around the globe, and then to think how best to build on that foundation.

Setting 'targets' for such an exercise is probably not a worthwhile exercise, unless one wants to devise a set of measurables such as numbers of tourists to Britain per year, numbers of foreign students at British universities, and so on. Even then, what is being 'measured' is not necessarily soft power, but fluctuations in the value of the pound, or the increasing costs of higher education, and the impact these changes might have on peoples' decision-making. Of course, the continuing wish of international student to attend British universities despite the fact that the costs are rising is in turn a sign of Britain's soft power as a place for higher education. A few years ago a British Council study concluded that while international students go to America for career-based reasons and to Germany because it is affordable, they tend to go to Britain for quality. It is important that British universities maintain that quality in an increasingly competitive marketplace for international education. That would be a useful target for the upcoming five years.

One of the problems of the digital era is that the level of information saturation makes it difficult to differentiate between sources, and difficult to make one stand out beyond others. At the same time, there is a fear of being 'left behind' or 'invisible' in the digital era, sometimes causing an engagement with social media platforms for no other reason than 'everyone else is'. It is not possible to 'dominate' the hugely dispersed media environment of the 21st century. What is possible is to a) maintain a constant awareness of how political behaviour and actions are conveyed to the (mainstream) media, and b) identify the key social media sites (as regards quality and number of followers) where forms of careful engagement could bring dividends. But any sense of social media engagement for purely public relations or selling policies will achieve little.

Learning from Others

Some attempts to apply soft power as positive imagery are meant well but jar too much with the actual reality. A few years ago the US State Department made a short introductory film of the American landscape and its people to be shown at airport passport control points. While the film expressed the welcoming and friendly nature of the American people and the diversity of American society, its positive message was not matched by the long queues for those waiting to go through immigration control, or the hard-edged attitude of the US immigration staff themselves. The exercise was well-meant, but the wider context devalued its message. This is a good example of getting the message right but the reality wrong.

Economic diplomacy is of increasing importance, with trade delegations now making up a major part of any diplomatic outreach, and soft power is often regarded as a means to enhance this. Other nations are very good at focusing on particular aspects of this. The Netherlands has for a number of years run a Dutch Design campaign that makes use of innovation as a key theme. Alongside the ubiquitous 'tulips and windmills' imagery, Dutch Design is used as a way to express youthful talent, self-confidence, problem-solving, social improvement, and networked engagement. It also expresses value - the added value of what the Netherlands brings to other nations and to the world. It mixes a combination of entrepreneurial spirit and economic potential with the fungible impact of 'cool objects'. It also cleverly manages to elude the fact that the Netherlands no longer has any particular manufacturing base - the point is not to make the product, but to be at the leading edge in designing it. The overall message is therefore that the Netherlands may be small, but its well connected, and it provides a valuable service in the global knowledge economy. In terms of displaying innovation, Britain has long been successful. The remarkable British pavilion at the Shanghai World Expo probably did more to nurture the image of innovative Britain with the millions of Chinese visitors than any other campaign could. In contrast, Dutch Design is an ongoing campaign 'selling' the same message on a broader scale.

The Netherlands has also developed a series of 'rolling anniversaries' which mean in practice a year of cultural event and exchanges with a particular nation with which it has had long-running ties. Examples recently have been with the United States (1609-2009), Turkey, Vietnam, and, in 2013-2014, Russia. The risk with some countries is that, without careful management, the colonial heritage of the past will cloud any attempt to repackage the relationship as some kind of 'partnership of equals' (and even careful management can end up looking as if it denies the violence of the past. The positive side of this approach is the emphasis on mutual interests in the current-day and the future, particularly for trade and business. It is a way to put the spotlight on and build on existing ties, which can perhaps be developed further in the diplomatic arena via international organisations etc.

Soft Power and Diplomacy

A country's soft power is important because it denotes a certain legitimacy to that country's actions in the eyes of others. The harder the power applied, the greater the legitimacy required, and so the greater the need for soft power. But soft power cannot simply be generated at will, its features can only be identified and promoted over time (i.e. through public diplomacy, or careful use of 'nation-branding'). Neither do all of its characteristics necessarily have a universally equal impact – cultural differences obviously play a role in terms of reception.

Institutions such as parliament definitely resonate positively in other parts of the world. The recent vote against a military strike against Syria was a good example of democracy in action. Whether more could be made of parliament is another matter, since any suggestion that Britain has all the answers democratically will inevitably risk alienating others with its arrogant undertone.

It is fair to say that Britain faces something of an identity crisis. The very notion of 'Britain' as a political unit is coming under increasing strain. The so-called 'special relationship' with the United States clearly has little meaning for the Obama administration, beyond fixed agreements on information sharing and nuclear security. Britain's place within the European Union is probably to be reconsidered in the coming years, with the outcome highly uncertain. An economy buffeted by recession has led to the capacities of Britain's armed forces and diplomatic service, and their capabilities for global engagement, being reduced.

But soft power is as much about indicating change - and peaceful change - as it is about displaying fixed values. Some of the most effective campaigns to re-brand a nation's image have been all about democratic change - Spain and South Korea are good examples. Should Scotland become independent, it would obviously be a challenge to the conception of Britain, but there are also ways to turn it into an advantage by highlighting exactly the peaceful evolution of Britain into new forms. Britain has already evolved from imperial to post-imperial, from industrial to post-industrial, and we may be entering a new phase of 'post-Britain'. This would not be easy to achieve, since any public diplomacy campaign should also involve a public affairs component, i.e. any campaign needs to resonate with the national populace as much as it successfully conveys a message to those abroad. Propaganda – conveying an overly positive message that has little connection with reality – can backfire with one's own nationals as much as with anyone else. But it is worth thinking how this might be done, since in a world of incessant change, those who can manage and harness that change come out ahead.

Britain benefits a great deal from the inventiveness and professional qualities of its diplomatic staff and apparatus, particularly in international organisations such as the UN. This is respected worldwide. The key for the future is to generate solutions for mutual problems. It is impossible to satisfy everybody in this way, but it is possible to influence those for whom solutions are more important than ideological prejudices. For many around the globe, Britain still represents a colonial past and a country that assumes by right its place at the top table of global governance (such as in the UN Security Council).

As time goes on and other powers rise in importance both economically and politically, this position will become increasingly resented. On what grounds can Britain continue to claim its 'special status' as it gradually moves down the rankings of relative power? Only by providing a) connectivity and b) expertise towards problem-solving. Other countries also have these qualities in abundance, but they may not possess the ability to link up with others as successfully. Britain needs to position itself not as a nation that has all the answers, but as a nation that has the qualities that can bring the answers nearer for the mutual benefit of others as well. This is not a major departure from existing British diplomatic practices. What will be different is the realisation that it has to become central to the whole enterprise, simply because Britain cannot hold on to its position at the centre of global governance purely on privilege and the past. A mutual approach not based on 'tutoring' will also avoid potential accusations of hypocrisy and cultural imperialism.

It is impossible to reach out to all peoples worldwide, and there is always the risk of focusing on the leaders and the elites and missing the 'street'. Britain should aim to connect with the aspirations of the rising global middle class. This is the community with both ambition and vulnerability (to economic shocks). This means not only 'acting entrepreneurial', highlighting quality education and investment opportunities, but also acknowledging and promoting sustainability in everyday life. There is great scope for 'sustainable soft power', and the failure of traditional diplomacy should not prevent the success of other more informal approaches. It is at present not possible to secure a follow-up to the Kyoto agreement due to the wide differences between the nations of the North and South. But this does not close out building lower-level connections between sustainable enterprises and ventures that recognise these efforts not as marginal or exotic but as necessary and normal. Britain would benefit enormously from an approach that looked to utilise the vibrancy of its existing 'green', sustainable economic sectors and use this as a means to link up with what is happening in other nations in innovative and novel ways. If this is done without hubris (i.e. without any sense of 'tutoring'), and with a focus on connectivity, expertise, and sharing life experiences towards mutual sustainable solutions, it would certainly enhance Britain's soft power reach.

September 2013

Lord Soley of Hammersmith – Written evidence

¶1 The UK has a strong and well established international reputation for the rule of law, good governance and political stability. This reputation 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.

¶2 We recognise and respect the importance of the role of international development, and DfID in particular, in addressing world poverty and providing humanitarian relief together with financial and practical support in the fields of health, education, economic regeneration etc. We recognise also the contributions made by FCO, WFD and others in promoting parliamentary democracy and free elections in those countries undergoing radical change in governance.

¶3 However, whether political and governmental change results from military action or from popular movements and revolutions, we believe that we are not giving sufficient priority to establishing the rule of law in a country before concentrating on what popular opinion always believes to be the first step towards democracy, i.e., democratic and free elections.

¶4 There has been unprecedented international political upheaval since 9/11. In that time the west has, through military action, brought to an end the rule of the Taliban in Afghanistan and repressive dictatorships in Iraq and Libya. We have to varying degrees supported the Arab Spring and other grassroots revolutions in such countries as Egypt, the Ukraine and Tunisia. In now facing the crisis in Syria and following our experience in Iraq and Afghanistan we are reluctant to become militarily involved in a conflict where civil war exists and where the opposition is unlikely to provide stable and free government subsequent to any regime change.

¶5 In many of these countries, the immediate demand (outside of economic and industrial development and reconstruction) has been for a new constitution and free elections and the West has responded by helping to deliver on these demands without a full appreciation of the fact that such political concepts are unlikely to survive or succeed without the state very quickly establishing the rule of law. Public participation, and acceptance and access to the law are of course essential for the rule of law to be effective, but constitutions, parliaments and elections are tools to be used to deliver and endorse these ends; they are not ends in themselves.

¶6 As we know from history, the rule of law depends on many other factors, not least an independent judiciary, a professional but accountable police force, an army subject to the decisions of the state and so on. Egypt provides a good illustration. Popular protest secured the resignation of Mubarak. Free elections swiftly followed to great applause. Within months of Morsi’s presidency, he was accused of disregarding the law. Importantly the Muslim Brotherhood adopted a ‘winner takes all’ approach to democracy and sought to change the constitution in a way that favoured their religious view of the world. The resulting street protests led to the military taking over again. Democracy is never built in days or months, and the lesson to be learnt from Egypt and elsewhere is that the rule of law is key. Namely,

it can provide a stabilising influence while the more sophisticated aspects of democracy are established.

¶17 In recognition of the above arguments, I established the Good Governance Foundation CIC (a not for profit company) in 2011. My aim was to work with other governments and institutions to prioritise the rule of law. Our first project was the establishment of a post graduate law course at Zayed University in the Emirates with outreach to Palestine. This project had two key objectives: to promote the rule of law and to assist with the

creation of the institution of a state in Palestine. This initiative was successful and the first students are now in place. I took advice from a number of Law Lords in the House when setting up this programme.

¶18 I also gave a lecture in Abu Dhabi at the Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research last year on “Rule of Law and the Stable Society”. At the time I proposed this lecture might serve as the first of an annual prestigious event designed to give high profile regional coverage to the rule of law. I am currently uncertain whether the authorities in the Emirates will take this forward. We also agreed with Zayed University to publish in Arabic Lord Bingham’s seminal book ‘The Rule of Law’. Some progress has been made, but no final decision has been reached. We believe there is a real need to promote books and other resources which support the rule of law and governance that are easily available in English but not available in the languages of countries emerging from authoritarian rule.

¶19 The Good Governance Foundation (GGF) is now working with Libya and Burma/Myanmar (short courses on the rule of law for officials in the Ministry of Justice, and a proposal for an in-country Academy founded on the rule of law). In both these countries however, there is difficulty in establishing and maintaining the necessary in-country contacts and relationships required to deliver workable training programmes. They are often overwhelmed by offers from around the world and too much time is spent by a relatively small number of decision makers talking to representatives of other governments, NGO’s and business groups. We are attaching letters which demonstrate support and interest given in good faith but where follow up has either not materialised or been less effective than it could have been.

¶10 In a move to counter these problems, we are in discussion with the Director of Clinical Programmes, Department of Law at York University, and the Training Gateway (also at York University), about setting up a partnership arrangement to establish an Academy for Governance and the Rule of Law here in the UK. The Training Gateway links UK universities with those in other countries in order to facilitate the development of joint undergraduate and post graduate programmes as well as supporting staff training and development to ensure the delivery of relevant, effective high quality educational provision in-country. In these respects, I believe the Training Gateway provides an appropriate structural model for the Academy that the Good Governance Foundation is proposing.

¶11 The proposed Academy for Governance and the Rule of Law would be based within a UK University but at an ‘arm’s length’, working with UK universities and governments to put in place training programmes, jointly administered in-country and the UK to ensure delivery of the agreed programmes. The Training Gateway would work with the GGF to

identify potential partners and suppliers of high quality training courses to support the work of the Academy through its well established network of accredited universities, colleges and private training providers in the UK. (We have worked with and learnt a great deal from the Training Gateway with its well-established infrastructure and connections abroad, and I would in fact suggest that their work is less recognised and appreciated than it should be.)

¶12 Existing links between UK universities (including the Open University) and the Training Gateway are extremely valuable but what is lacking is an organisation dedicated and committed to the promotion of the rule of law and good governance, the basic ingredients for a stable and free society. We recognise that many other factors are necessary but the rule of law is an essential starting point and, most importantly, many states in transition recognise and welcome assistance in this field even where they may be hesitant about democracy and elections.

¶13 The Academy courses and activities we are proposing will feature ‘hands on’ experience as well as the academic provision so that people selected for our programmes meet with their counterparts in the UK and benefit from the actual experience of people doing the job in the UK. The GGF has access to people and organisations working in the field or with recent relevant experience.

¶14 A dedicated Academy for Governance and the Rule of Law would reach out to countries and put in place the administrative structures necessary to deliver required outcomes. Such an Academy lies at the heart of this submission to the Select Committee on Soft Power.

¶15 So what would an Academy for Governance and the Rule of Law do that is not already being done? The primary objectives and methodology would be:

1. To provide a one-stop-shop for courses, information and assistance on governance and the rule of law. It would aim to be a prestigious Academy that draws on Britain’s reputation in this field and on the high respect held for UK universities the world over. All areas of governance should be included: financial competence and integrity are as important as is accountability of politicians.
2. To work in partnership with UK universities, colleges, institutions of government, NGO’s and others to draw on the widest possible experience that can be shared with other states and political parties. More specifically, the Academy would work closely with such organisations as the British Council, the Open University, the Bingham Foundation for the Rule of Law, the Training Gateway, DFID, the Bar Council and a variety of organisations including those in a position to help in the establishment and training of a free media. This is not an exclusive list but is suggestive of how we see the Academy having a wide ranging role that draws together the overlap of know-how that exists in so many organisations at present. We also anticipate that there is an opportunity to liaise with the Commonwealth organisations in selected cases.

3. Wherever possible existing courses and resources would be utilised to draw on the expertise available in the UK. I believe we make insufficient use of such expertise. In the House of Lords we have people with recent and very relevant experience as heads of the civil service, police, armed forces etc. Viscount Slim, for example, has military experience in India and his father Field Marshall Slim is remembered by the ruling generals in Myanmar. Not to make use of him in the delicate transfer of power is an opportunity that we are in danger of missing. Viscount Slim has a good understanding of the attitudes of the Generals ruling the country and has met them but at present we have no structured way of utilising his special knowledge and experience. The same applies to other Members of the Lords and as I indicated earlier I drew on the experience and knowledge of the Law Lords for my work with Zayed University and the Palestinian Authority.
4. To identify, work with and support key 'in country' individuals in accordance with agreed priority areas of work and strategies for effecting progress towards the rule of law and good governance. Burma/Myanmar is a case in point – they are clear about wanting the type of courses we are offering but lack the institutional structures within the country to act.

¶16 Example Outputs

- i. Work with DFID/FCO and others to identify which countries would be prioritised as key for this service.
- ii. Work with in-country authorities to identify those groups or individuals who require training, and support and develop e.g. 6- 12 month training programmes to deliver the agreed priority objectives set out in point 4 above.
- iii. Work with universities and other relevant organisations to organise and deliver short courses, individual lectures, work experience or personal mentoring as appropriate to fulfil training programme needs.
- iv. Promote high profile lectures / seminars/ papers / consultancies with leading experts, and establish in-country 'shadow' academies at in-country universities linked to the UK Academy. (The intention would be for in-country academies to become self- supporting within three to five years, so providing a long term and sustainable resource.
- v. Facilitate the translation, publication and distribution of related academic works (e.g. Bingham's "The Rule of Law")
- vi. Establish a competent website resource which promotes the Academy and provides an educational resource, with a view to establishing online / distance learning facilities which may, where appropriate, be accredited by UK institutions
- vii. Respond to specific requests by providing bespoke programmes of activity. The Tunisian Ambassador asked if we could help establish an organisation similar to

the BBC. This would be possible but currently we do not have an organisation equipped to handle such a request.

¶17 Conclusion

The work that the Good Governance Foundation has done to date strongly suggests that the UK could play a key role in assisting states trying to achieve political stability and build up the rule of law and supporting governmental structures. Our contacts both within the UK and with external organisations like the Commonwealth, the EU and the UN provide a powerful base from which to influence countries in the process of political development. It is envisaged that the proposed programmes will by and large be self-funding, as many of the countries we have had discussions with are in a position to pay, and seem to prefer the independence and control that an aid programme cannot give them. Where they cannot pay funding would have to be provided by an aid programme.

¶18 Recommendations

That the Government supports the establishment of an Academy for the Rule of Law and Governance as an ‘arm’s length’ organisation located within a British University but independent of it. As the Good Governance Foundation is already in talks with York University and one other university showing interest, we do not need any Government assistance at this stage. In due course some seed corn funding would be needed, and at that point we would recommend that the Government look at such a request sympathetically.

Lord Soley of Hammersmith
Director and Chairman, Good Governance Foundation

18 September 2013

Professor Annabelle Sreberny, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) – Written evidence

Professor Annabelle Sreberny, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) – Written evidence

Professor Annabelle Sreberny, Centre for Media and Film Studies, SOAS, University of London

1) I have been working on British-Iranian relations for some time. My recent focus has been the relationship between the BBC Persian Services and the FCO. The latter institution seems finally to have recognised that the more hands-off and non-interventionist it is, the greater the efficacy and impact of the World Service (my book on the subject, Persian Service: The BBC and British Interest in Iran, is currently in press with IBTauris). Clearly the integration of the World Service within the wider BBC and its operations under the license fee will alter both, perhaps dulling the edge of world service activity in the wider world but potentially bringing greater richness and complexity to domestic news coverage.

2) The Islamic Republic has reacted forcefully to the range of “soft power” channels directed at it from the West, including the BBC Persian Services, and has developed a notion of “soft war”. I have written on the subject (<http://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/2004>) while further argument is presented in the above-mentioned volume. The Iranian response is a clever piece of rhetorical subterfuge but it carries a warning against any crude adoptions of “soft power” as simple weapons of public diplomacy.

3) To me, “soft power” is a woolly concept of limited analytic purchase; it is overused and its scope is unclear. I do not think it has much resonance amongst Politics and IR scholars, while cultural writers now invoke Buddha as instances of Indian soft power; one imagines him squirming in his grave. If we have to use the term, I would argue strongly that it is most effective as a process of channeling and representing British culture in all its glorious raucousness and complexity to the world. This is far more efficacious than getting ambassadors to tweet to foreign audiences or any other limited activity that smacks of old-fashioned propaganda. Only on rare occasions might a government have a clear ‘message’ that it would like to broadcast to a foreign audience but such instrumentalised approaches are weak tools. A more eclectic, generous and creative sharing of ‘our’ culture is a far better approach.

4) But this also implies the necessity for joined-up thinking. British higher education is an enormous asset, highly prized around the world. I teach at SOAS and see the transformation that an open, engaged and questioning academic environment can have on international students, many of whom are arriving from countries where they have never been asked for their opinion or where to offer such has had dangerous consequences. Yet, we price many good students out of the higher education market and we make it hugely difficult, through the current UKBA policies and processes, for many more to arrive. Higher education is neither the location for waging the ‘war on terror’ nor a quick fix for immigration policy and the negative stories about harassment do huge damage. More affordable higher education and more reasonable visa-processing would expand international student numbers, restoring Britain as a preferred international student destination in relationship to US, Canadian and Australian universities.

Professor Annabelle Sreberny, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) – Written evidence

5) Joined-up thinking is also needed in relation to the arts. Britain's theatre and performing arts, music, plastic arts and design are admired worldwide and the best "soft power" approach would be to support these and market them to the world, through a panoply of exchanges, exhibitions, etc. Instead, the arts are currently under-funded, theatres have closed and the financial provisions for travel in both directions – artists coming in to Britain and British artists travelling abroad – is much reduced. Here again, policy coherence is required – the arts have to be supported in order to be used for 'soft power' ends! And there are border issues here also: the UKBA has also prevented various Iranian artists from entering Britain at a waste of time, effort and goodwill of all those involved in trying to build 'soft-power' exchanges. Recent discussions at CARA about trying to support and develop British-Iranian activities in academic research and the arts floundered on these issues, compounded by the draconian sanctions regime in place against Iran which add further layers of difficulty .

6) Let me return to the BBC World Services which I think are one of the best resources we have for international engagement. These now employ many highly-educated people from the countries to which it broadcasts; such native intellectuals embellish the understanding of foreign countries that has been built up by cadres of British journalists such as John Simpson and Jeremy Bowen to make British newsgathering and reporting the best in the world. This is the most effective model for 'soft power' elaboration (for more academic research on the BBC World Services that addresses issues of digital diasporas and soft power, see the recent AHRC-supported project, Tuning In at <http://www.cresc.ac.uk/our-research/reframing-the-nation/tuning-in-diasporic-contact-zones-at-bbc-world-service>). The development of bi-lingual journalist and their utilization throughout the BBC is an excellent step toward enriching the news coverage of international affairs and should be expanded to improve domestic news reporting also. British audiences should benefit from such enormous and diverse resource. The domestic audience includes members of many different diasporas who have chosen to live in Britain. The more they 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. Islamophobia and little-Englander attitudes work against British soft power influence in the world.

Yours,

Annabelle Sreberny
September 2013

Jack Straw MP – Written evidence

1. Thank you for your communication of 5th September in which you kindly asked me to submit evidence to your Committee. I am very happy to do so, as I would be if your Committee wished me to give oral evidence. My apologies for the delay in replying to you, as I know my office has explained to you, I have been rather preoccupied by the arrival, within two days of each other, of our first two grandchildren.
2. This letter is intended to give your Committee a brief overview of my views.
3. Let me turn to the substantive issue your Committee is addressing. I remember Joseph Nye's seminal work on soft power when it was first published, in article form²⁴⁹, in *Foreign Policy* in the autumn of 1990, and I often reflected on his thesis whilst I was Foreign Secretary, as I have done again more recently.
4. There always was a paradox about Nye's timing. He published his essay as the world entered an unusual era, with a single super-power, whose military might, and therefore its political influence, completely overshadowed all other nations, including its adversary the Soviet Union (on the verge of collapse as he wrote), and the former great powers of western Europe, as well as Japan, and China.
5. It will be recalled that Nye argued that the cost (political, financial, social) of military involvements had increased vastly compared with the nineteenth century when the European colonial powers had, "carved out and ruled colonial empires with a handful of troops"²⁵⁰. He drew particular attention to Vietnam, and Afghanistan, from which the US and the USSR respectively had had to withdraw after prolonged, and ultimately unsuccessful, engagements. He then went on to assert the emerging importance of "soft power", in short, "when one country gets other countries to want what it wants"²⁵¹.
6. Although Nye was quite correct to draw the distinction between the relatively low level of troops needed by the nineteenth century colonial powers (not least, I might add, because of their vastly superior organisation and *materiel*, such as, towards the end of that century, the Maxim machine gun or the Lee-Enfield rifle), the more successful European powers – France and the UK – did not eschew the use of soft power, even if they did not use this term *per se*. A comparison between the Belgian colonial experience on the one hand, and that of France and the UK on the other, is instructive. Belgium's approach was unapologetically rapacious²⁵², and made no pretence to have any higher purpose than power and exploitation. Although these were also the overriding factors for France and the UK, both nations to varying degrees sought to modify, and indeed to soften, these purposes by institution-building, and an inculcation and spread of the values which had, in their own eyes, made these two nations amongst the most civilised on earth.
7. Just a few months after Nye had published his essay in *Foreign Policy*, with its assertion that the US and the Soviet Union had found the costs of maintaining troops in



²⁴⁹ The term was used first in his book, of the same year, entitled *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books).

²⁵⁰ *Foreign Policy*, Autumn 1990, p 162

²⁵¹ *Ibid*, p.166

²⁵² See Joseph Conrad, *The Heart of Darkness* (1899) and Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost* (1998).

Vietnam and Afghanistan “unsupportable”²⁵³, the United States was in the vanguard of prosecuting large scale military action against Iraq, in the first Gulf War. This was followed in the 1990’s by US-led action in the Balkans in 1998/9, and, on a much smaller scale, by the United Kingdom in Sierra Leone (in 2000). In the last decade, post 9/11, there was the invasion and military occupation of Afghanistan beginning in late 2001, and the invasion and military occupation of Iraq, from the spring of 2003, both led by the USA. This decade has witnessed western-led military action against the Gadaffi regime in Libya.



8. Iraq has unquestionably cast a long shadow over the use of force, and the readiness of parliaments and publics to see, and to allow their military capabilities to be deployed in third countries, especially if there is no international consensus reflected, reflected in a UN Security Council Resolution. However, against the background of the last two decades, we can see that whilst war has indeed become more costly, it has not been abandoned as the ultimate means by which nations with power are able to assert their power.
9. This leads me to one key conclusion – on which I would be happy to expand – that there is no intrinsic dichotomy between “soft power” and “hard power”; rather, the reverse, with the one supporting the other.
10. The United States is the best exemplar of my point. It remains by far and away the strongest military nation on earth, with its defence expenditure equalling that of the next ten nations put together.²⁵⁴ At the same time, the United States’ hegemonic influence not only far exceeds that of any other nation, but in many respects has been built and then reinforced by its defence expenditure.
11. Towards the end of the Second World War, the United States sought to capitalise on the huge advantage it had gained by its intervention in the war, by ensuring that the vanquished nations, especially Germany and Japan, were restructured to western democratic norms. It also ensured that the design of international institutions, from the United Nations, through to International Financial Institutions (IFIs) like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund was such that they benignly served the United States’ interests as well as those of the wider international community.
12. The internet is unquestionably the best example of a nation’s soft power. It is wholly dominated by the United States. Its development, especially in its early stages, was funded and directed from the US’s military budget, through the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)²⁵⁵.

Soft Power and the United Kingdom:

13. If my argument is accepted that in significant part soft power derives from and is dependent upon hard power, it follows that it would be naive in the extreme for a

²⁵³ *Foreign Policy, ibid, p. 162*

²⁵⁴ [SIPRI](#) Yearbook 2013

²⁵⁵ Founded in 1958 by President Dwight D Eisenhower, DARPA’s original mission, established in 1958, was to prevent technological surprises like the launch of the Soviet satellite “Sputnik”, which had signalled that the Soviets had beaten the U.S. into space. The mission statement has evolved over time. “Today, DARPA’s mission is still to prevent technological surprise to the US, but also to create technological surprise for our enemies” DARPA 2005

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.



14. The central purpose of both our military power, and softer influences should be to provide security for our nation in its widest sense, to further our economy and our trading opportunities, and to proselytise some of the key values which we hold dear - of democracy, human rights, the rule of law, the protection of minorities, and our wider culture - in the belief that the more these become norms across the world, the more peaceful the world is likely to be.
15. In the UK in the last decade and a half, it had been assumed, even if it has not been explicit, that there is some direct trade-off between cuts in defence spending, a squeeze on the Foreign Office’s budgets (including for the British Council, and the BBC World Service)²⁵⁶, and rising expenditure on overseas aid within DfID’s budgets.
16. I am proud that as a nation we have been able (unlike many comparable countries) to give such priority to overseas aid, but I have always been uncomfortable that DfID’s budgets have been ring-fenced by the “0.7% of GDP” target while Defence and the FCO’s has not, thus making rational debate about where best to invest our limited resources on soft power, and hard power, more complicated. I regret the closures of some British posts overseas which took place during my time as Foreign Secretary (and through to 2010), along with certain decisions by my successors. (None of these decisions were made willingly, but were a consequence of budgetary constraints).
17. I am in no doubt that a strong diplomatic presence produces high dividends for the United Kingdom, and, as such, I am happy to applaud the efforts of the current Foreign Secretary William Hague to re-open some Posts, and to open some new ones (whilst sensibly reducing some of our FCO activity in EU member states, given the density of our contact with those nations in other ways, not least through EU institutions).
18. The BBC World Service, and the British Council both do valuable work in terms of “cultural diplomacy”. As Foreign Secretary I sought to encourage such diplomacy in all its forms. For example, I gave strong and active support to Neil Macgregor and his colleagues in the British Museum in their successful endeavours to secure cultural exchanges with Iran during the very difficult period of the Ahmadinejad Presidency.
19. I think we can see from other countries’ experience what happens when the balance between hard and soft power, traditional diplomacy and military spending versus aid, is not struck in the right way.
20. Take Germany. This is the world’s most successful exporter; its generally high living standards are built on this. But its approach is essentially mercantile. It does have armed forces (and they played a part in peacekeeping operations in northern Afghanistan) but 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.
21. Or, in contrast, take China. China, as yet, has confined itself largely to a tactical rather than strategic role in foreign affairs. Its decisions are mostly ad hoc and are predicated strongly on short-term economic cost/benefit analysis. That being said,

²⁵⁶ From 1st April 2014 funding for the BBC World Service will transfer from the Foreign Office to the BBC, financed by the licence fee.



due in no small part to its strong, indeed growing, armed forces, China is treated with considerable diplomatic regard. Coupled to its diplomatic clout, where it chooses to exert it, is China's growing soft power reach, most evident in Africa. China's presence on the African continent now manifests itself in substantial aid spending and significant infrastructure projects. Recent research found evidence of some 1,000 projects that are either live or complete, at a total of \$48.6bn.

Conclusion:

22. Henry Kissinger, writing in 2005, aptly summarised that in foreign policy, "The best strategy is one in which there is combination of soft power with other power in reserve."²⁵⁷ As I have set out in this brief overview it is my strong opinion that 'hard' and 'soft' power must go hand in hand for either limb to exert the full influence it can bring to bear. An over-emphasis on military power, as Vietnam showed us, can have deleterious effects on a state's soft power influence, while too great a reliance on soft power, without the requisite military capability to underpin it, can leave a country, as Germany finds today, unable to bring its full weight to bear internationally. Put more succinctly, as Theodore Roosevelt wrote in 1900, a state should seek to, "Speak softly and carry a big stick."²⁵⁸

30 September 2013

²⁵⁷ Henry Kissinger; *Searching for a new trilateral partnership* (2005)

²⁵⁸ Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Henry L Sprague, 26 January 1900.

Transparency International UK, Ian Birrell, Columnist and Foreign Correspondent, Jonathan Glennie, Overseas Development Institute and International Alert – Oral evidence (QQ 126-151)

Transparency International UK, Ian Birrell, Columnist and Foreign Correspondent, Jonathan Glennie, Overseas Development Institute and International Alert – Oral evidence (QQ 126-151)

[Transcript to be found under Ian Birrell, Columnist and Foreign Correspondent](#)

UK China Visa Alliance (UKCVA) – Written evidence

Introduction

1. The UKCVA has been invited to submit evidence to the Select Committee on the impact that the UK visa regime has on the ability of Britain to exploit the full potential of the benefits from its soft power.
2. UKCVA is a private sector body established by major retail, hospitality and travel businesses who wish to work with Government to improve the visa system so that the UK can perform as well as our major European neighbours in the number of Chinese visitors we attract. Our founding members are New West End Company (the Business Improvement District representing 600 retailers in London's West End), Walpole Luxury (representing 180 British luxury brands), Global Blue (the tax free shopping company), MacArthur Glen (designer retail outlets) and London First (the pan-London business organisation). The Alliance's full membership can be seen on our website²⁵⁹. Our chairman is the Retail Director of the John Lewis Partnership.
3. Our evidence to the Select Committee reflects the scope of the Alliance's remit. We focus only on visitor visas for Chinese travellers. We cannot comment with authority on issues outside this remit. However, many of the issues we raise are relevant to other countries and, in some cases, to other forms of visas. Indeed, the analysis and solutions we propose for applying for visitor visas in China could be a model to use in other important markets.
4. This evidence comprises our formal evidence plus a more detailed appendix.

The importance of Chinese visitors to the UK

5. China is a huge and growing market for tourism. In 2012 Chinese people became the world's top spenders in international tourism, moving ahead of Germany and the United States²⁶⁰ with expenditure of \$102 billion. Chinese visitors in the West end spend three times more than the average overseas tourist²⁶¹. The UK benefits from Chinese tourists both from the money they spend and by raising the profile and attractiveness of the UK as a place to invest and do business.

Britain's underperformance compared with European neighbours.

6. Britain significantly underperforms in terms of the number of Chinese visitors it attracts compared with major European neighbours.
7. Visit Britain estimates, based on passenger surveys, that France attracts up to 7.5 times more Chinese visitors than the Britain does²⁶². Home Office figures show that the maximum number of Chinese visitors to the UK, based on visas issued in 2011-12, was 210,400. In the same period, the Schengen area issued 1,185,000 visas to

²⁵⁹ www.ukcva.com

²⁶⁰ United Nations World Tourism Association "Tourism Highlights 2013" Page 13
http://dtxtg4w60xqpw.cloudfront.net/sites/all/files/pdf/unwto_highlights13_en_hr_0.pdf

²⁶¹ New West End Company internal consumer research

²⁶² Visit Britain "Market and Trade Profile – China (excluding Hong Kong)" http://www.visitbritain.org/Images/China%20-%20Sep%2013_tcm29-14678.pdf page 30

Chinese visitors, six times more²⁶³. Visitors with a Schengen visa can visit any of the 26 member states in Europe.

8. The UKCVA estimates that the UK loses up to £1.2 billion in revenue annually because of this underperformance, which would create up to 24,000 new jobs.

Why does the UK under perform in terms of the number of Chinese visitors we attract?

9. The need to get a separate visa to add the UK to a European tour is a significant factor in the UK's underperformance in attracting Chinese visitors. The Government's Tourism Regulation Task Force reported in 2012 that although "the government has made clear that Britain needs to punch its weight more strongly in international tourism.....the current visa regime conspires against this goal". "Visa restrictions directly impact visitor numbers. Key inbound tourism markets where visas are required include Russia, India and China"²⁶⁴.
10. The key issue is that Chinese people visiting Europe usually wish to visit more than one country. Research by the European Travel Operators' Association showed that the average Chinese visitor visited 4 European countries²⁶⁵. To visit the UK and other major European countries a visitor requires two visas. A Schengen visa will allow access to 26 European countries. Because Britain is not a member of the Schengen Agreement an additional UK visa is needed to visit the as part of a multi-country tour. This puts Britain at a competitive disadvantage.

UKCVA's analysis of the visa problem.

11. The Home Office and the visa service in China have recognised the problem and have introduced a range of measures to streamline the visa service. These are welcome improvements and they have clearly helped to increase the number of visas issued, although these increases reflect a general increase in visas obtained by Chinese visitors. The Home Office states that the number of UK visas issued to Chinese visitors in 2012 (286,000) was 75% more than the number issued in 2009²⁶⁶. However, during the same period the number of Schengen visas issued in China rose from 597,000 to 1,186,000, an increase of 98%²⁶⁷.
12. The problem is not so much that there is an under-performance in terms of processing and issuing visas, it is that not enough Chinese travellers are applying for a UK visa. Applying for any visa, UK or Schengen, takes time, effort and money. It involves a trip to a Visa Application Centre which in China can often be many hours away. Rather than having to go through the time consuming application process twice

²⁶³ Home Office "UK Visa and Immigration – The UK Visa Service in China, September 2013"

²⁶⁴ Tourism Regulation Task Force "Smart Regulation and Economic Growth"

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121204113822/http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/bha_taskforce_report.pdf page 20

²⁶⁵ European Tour Operators Association "Europe: Open for Business?" http://www.etoa.org/docs/visa-reports/2010_origin-markets-report.pdf?sfvrsn=2 page 6

²⁶⁶ Government news release "New Service launch in China to support growth in Chinese visas"

www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/new-services-launch-in-china-to-support-growth-in-uk-visas

²⁶⁷ European Union "Complete statistics on short stay visas issued by the Schengen States 2012"

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy/index_en.htm

it is easier for potential visitors simply to leave the UK off their itinerary and instead visit other countries already covered by their Schengen visa.

13. This is shown by Government figures. Only around 6% of Chinese visitors to Europe bother to obtain two visas²⁶⁸. 85% obtain just a Schengen visa and 9% obtain just a UK visa. So other European countries can welcome 91% of the 1.3 million Chinese visitors to Europe. The UK can welcome only the 15% who have obtained a UK visa.
14. In effect, 1.1 million Chinese people travel half way around the world to visit Europe each year but, because they do not have a UK visa, they do not then make the short trip across the Channel to visit Britain. This is a lost opportunity to the UK and its economy.
15. The challenge is to find a way to share data collection so that the Chinese traveler experiences as much as possible just one procedure for submitting their applications for both visas *but without joining the Schengen Agreement*. This would encourage more to apply for a UK visa at the same time as a Schengen visa but the UK would still maintain border security by processing every application.

How do we allow potential visitors to apply for two visas at the same time?

16. The Government has announced that it proposes to work with tour operators in China to improve the system because they manage the majority of trips to Europe and the UK. The Alliance agrees with the focus of the Government's activities and looks forward to working together on this initiative although we are still awaiting details. But the scheme has to allow tour operators to apply for both visas at the same time and same place if it is to make a significant difference.
17. In addition, there is evidence that more Chinese people are travelling independently rather than in organised tours²⁶⁹. This is particularly the case with high net worth individuals who are an important market for the UK. Any improvements need also to address the requirements of these individuals.
18. The UKCVA believes that an additional way forward by reaching bilateral agreements with the three major European countries that issue most visas in China and whose application process is similar to ours, to share the collection of data. France and Germany and Italy between them issue over 775,000 of the 1,186,000 Schengen visas in China²⁷⁰. In 2012 France and Germany opened a common visa centre in Beijing indicating that bilateral co-operation is possible²⁷¹. The UK already shares Visa Application Centres in China with Italy. We strongly recommend that this avenue is actively explored.

Conclusions

²⁶⁸ UKCVA analysis of visa numbers issued by the UK and Schengen members in 2011-12 and Visit Britain estimate of the number of Chinese visitors to the UK obtaining a Schengen visas in China Market and Trade Profile (40%).

²⁶⁹ "Chinese International Travel Monitor 2013" Page 7

²⁷⁰ European Union "Complete statistics on short stay visas issued by the Schengen States 2012"
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy/index_en.htm

²⁷¹ "Chinese International Travel Monitor 2013" Page 32

19. UKCVA is committed to working with the government to find practical ways to increase significantly the number of Chinese visitors to the UK for the good of our economy. Marginal improvements are welcome but more radical ideas are needed to present some form of one-stop-shop process for applicants to submit their applications for both visas as the only way to make significant improvements in Chinese visitor numbers.
20. The UKCVA recommends that -
The Government accepts the principal that, in order to achieve significant increases in visitor numbers, ways need to be found to enable potential visitors, those travelling both on tours and independently, to apply at the same time and same place for both visas required to include the UK on a multi-country European tour, and actively seeks ways to deliver this.

Appendix

A more detailed assessment of the issues and proposed solutions to the UK's under performance in attracting Chinese visitors

The importance of Chinese visitors to the UK

1. China is a hugely important market for the UK tourist industry. While visitor numbers are relatively small they are growing fast. The former UK Border Agency issued 205,000 visitor visas to Chinese nationals in 2011. Its successor, UK Visas and Immigration, issued 289,000 in 2012-13, a 30% increase²⁷².
2. In November 2011 Visit Britain published its Market and Trade Profile China (excluding Hong Kong)²⁷³. This shows the importance of the Chinese market and the extent to which the UK benefits -
 - China has a population of 1.3 billion which is growing at 0.5% annually.
 - Its economy is growing by around 8%
 - Chinese people spend \$54.9 billion annually on international tourism (2010).
 - In the ranking of global spending on tourism it is placed third for 2010.
 - The country has over 535,000 high net worth individuals (with more than \$1 million in assets)
3. Visit Britain's research also shows that -
 - In the 12 months to June 2011 the number of visitors from China to the UK was 133,000, an increase of 69% on the same period up to June 2010
 - Of these visitors 38,000 were on holiday (28%), 40,000 on business (30%) and 32,000 (24%) were visiting friends and relatives
 - In 2010 Chinese visitors spent £184 million in the UK
4. In 2012 the Chinese became the world's top spenders in international tourism, moving ahead of Germany and the United States²⁷⁴ with expenditure of \$102 billion

²⁷² HMG "Tables for Immigration Statistics January-March 2013" <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tables-for-immigration-statistics-january-to-march-2013>

²⁷³ Visit Britain "Market and Trade Profile – China (excluding Hong Kong)" http://www.visitbritain.org/Images/China%20-%20Sep%2013_tcm29-14678.pdf Chapter 3

²⁷⁴ United Nations World Tourism Association "Tourism Highlights 2013" Page 13

(up from the \$54.9 billion in the Visit Britain report). Research by New West End Company, the Business Improvement District for London's West End, shows that Chinese visitors spend over three times the average visitor spend on shopping (£1,688 compared with an average of £567)²⁷⁵.

5. Importantly, the UK benefits not just from the spending made by Chinese visitors, on holiday, studying or visiting families, but also by raising the profile and attractiveness of the UK as a place to invest and do business. Put simply, visitors to the UK are more likely to see the UK as a place to do business.

Britain's underperformance compared with European neighbours.

6. Britain underperforms significantly in terms of the number of Chinese visitors it attracts compared with our major European neighbours, such as France.
7. Visit Britain uses International Passenger Survey (IPS) figures and the French Government's equivalent to conclude that the UK attracted 4% of the market in our competitor set (i.e. countries seen as competing for the same Chinese visitor market, five of which are European) whereas France attracted 30% (i.e. 7.5 times more)²⁷⁶
8. The Home Office questions the accuracy of the visitor surveys used and prefers to look at the number of visas issued. The Home Office's figures for 2012 show the UK issued 210,400 visas to Chinese nationals compared with "fewer than 1.2 million" [1,185,000] issued by the Schengen countries.²⁷⁷ So using the Home Office's figures, because France and the other 25 members of the Schengen Area can welcome all visitors with a Schengen visa whereas the UK cannot, the market for France was around 1.2 million people, compared with just 210,000 for the UK, nearly six times as great.
9. The UKCVA estimates, based upon Visit Britain's figures for spending by Chinese visitors (£184 million in 2010) and the UK's relative underperformance, that the UK economy is losing up to £1.2 billion annually. The tourism industry estimates that one job is created for every £50,000 spent, so this underperformance could be costing the UK up to 24,000 jobs.
10. The impact of this underperformance will increase as Chinese visitor numbers grow. The Government announced in April 2012 that the number of visitor visas issued to Chinese travelers in 2012 (286,000) was 75% more than the number issued in 2009²⁷⁸. However, during the same period the number of Schengen visas issued in China rose from 597,000 to 1,186,000, an increase of 98%²⁷⁹. And whereas a 75% increase for the UK represents an additional 123,000 Chinese visitors, for the

http://dtxtg4w60xqpw.cloudfront.net/sites/all/files/pdf/unwto_highlights13_en_hr_0.pdf

²⁷⁵ New West End Company internal consumer research

²⁷⁶ Visit Britain "Market and Trade Profile – China (excluding Hong Kong)" http://www.visitbritain.org/Images/China%20-%20Sep%2013_tcm29-14678.pdf page 30

²⁷⁷ "UK Visa and Immigration – The UK Visa Service in China, September 2013"

²⁷⁸ Government news release "New Service launch in China to support growth in Chinese visas"

www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/new-services-launch-in-china-to-support-growth-in-uk-visas

²⁷⁹ European Union "Complete statistics on short stay visas issued by the Schengen States 2012"

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy/index_en.htm

Schengen area its slightly higher growth rate represents an additional 590,000 visitors.

11. The case has been put to the Alliance that the smaller numbers of Chinese visitors to the UK stay longer and spend more than the larger numbers visiting other European countries. This may or may not be the case. But what is clear is that 1.1 million Chinese people travel half way around the world to visit Europe each year but, because they do not have a UK visa, they do not then make the short trip across the Channel to visit Britain. This is a lost opportunity to the UK and its economy. British companies would like to be able to compete for a portion of the spending money of these 1.1 million Chinese people in addition to that of our 200,000 Chinese visitors.

Why does the UK under perform in terms of the number of Chinese visitors we attract?

12. There is a range of factors that affect the performance of Britain in attracting Chinese visitors. These include demand side issues such as attractiveness of the destination, general perceptions of the UK as a destination, marketing and historical links and relative costs. There are also supply side issues such as ease of access, facilities for visitors (e.g. flights and accommodation) and available tour packages.
13. On the demand side, there are indications that the UK is attractive to Chinese visitors. According to Visit Britain's review of the Chinese market, the UK scores at number 3 out of 50 countries in terms of its attractiveness as a national brand to Chinese people²⁸⁰. The Government has a major worldwide marketing campaign, "Great", which is aimed at stimulating further demand. In 2012 the Government announced an additional £8 million for the Great campaign in China²⁸¹. Research by Trip Advisor based on millions of visitors to its Chinese travel website show that Paris, Rome and London are the only three European cities that appear in the top 20 searched-for destinations²⁸². It does not seem that relative lack of demand can account for the fact that our major European neighbour attract between six and eight times as many Chinese visitors.
14. It is on the supply side that the difficulty seems to lie. The need to obtain a UK visa to enter Britain as a Chinese visitor is seen as the major factor in the UK's underperformance. The Government's Tourism Regulation Task Force reported in 2012 that although "the government has made clear that Britain needs to punch its weight more strongly in international tourism.....the current visa regime conspires against this goal". "Visa restrictions directly impact visitor numbers. Key inbound tourism markets where visas are required include Russia, India and China"²⁸³.
15. An indication of the impact of visas on visitor numbers was shown when, in 2009 Taiwan was removed from those countries that require a visa to visit the UK and

²⁸⁰ Visit Britain "Market and Trade Profile – China (excluding Hong Kong)" http://www.visitbritain.org/Images/China%20-%20Sep%2013_tcm29-14678.pdf page 25

²⁸¹ Government Press Release, August 14 2012 www.gov.uk/government/news/culture-secretary-calls-for-post-olympic-tourism-revolution

²⁸² Wall Street Journal, September 25 2013 <http://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2013/09/25/chinese-tourists-travel-farther-southeast-asi/>

²⁸³ Tourism Regulation Task Force "Smart Regulation and Economic Growth" http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121204113822/http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/bha_taskforce_report.pdf page 20

South Africa was added to them. In that year visits from Taiwan grew by 40% and visits from South Africa fell by 11%²⁸⁴.

16. The key issue is that Chinese people visiting Europe usually wish to visit more than one country. Research by the European Travel Operators' Association showed that the average Chinese visitor visited 4 European countries²⁸⁵. Visit Britain's research shows that 40% of Chinese visitors to the UK are on multi-country tours²⁸⁶. To visit the UK and other major European countries a visitor requires two visas. A Schengen visa will allow access to 26 European countries. Because Britain is not a member of the Schengen Agreement an additional UK visa is needed to visit the UK (and Ireland) as part of a multi-country tour. This puts Britain at a competitive disadvantage.

UKCVA's analysis of the visa problem.

17. Many individuals, businesses and organisations are frustrated by the barrier that the visa system presents to potential visitors, students and business people to the UK. To its credit, the Government recognises this and, in China, has made a range of improvements to the system.
18. We have heard many stories of difficulties in applying for UK visitor (and other) visas from individuals and organisations. UKVI, which recently replaced the UK Border Agency, responds that 96% of applicants successfully obtain a visitor visa; average processing time for a visitor visa is less than seven days; the number of supporting documents required has been reduced; and the passport passback service allows applicants to apply to the two visas simultaneously²⁸⁷.
19. In December 2012 the Home Secretary announced a series of initiatives aimed at improving further the visas system in China²⁸⁸. These are welcome although, given their recent introduction, the full results have yet to be seen. Operational improvements to the visa service in China, such as additional staff during busy times, has also helped to improve performance. And the new VIP mobile visa service should make it easier for high net worth travellers to apply for a visitor visa.
20. In UKCVA's report on UK visas for Chinese visitors²⁸⁹ we look at the various elements of the visa system where improvements could be made, including reviewing the application form (e.g. reducing its length, allowing applicants to complete it in Chinese), refining the amount of supporting material required, reducing the fee, streamlining the biometric element and addressing the time taken to process applications. But we conclude that while there are always areas of improvement to the system, these marginal improvements in themselves will not lead to the significant increases in Chinese visitor numbers required to match the performance of, say, France.

²⁸⁴ Visit Britain Website, Visas <http://www.visitbritain.org/britaintourismindustry/tourismaffairs/visas/>

²⁸⁵ European Tour Operators Association "Europe: Open for Business?" http://www.etoa.org/docs/visa-reports/2010_origin-markets-report.pdf?sfvrsn=2 page 6

²⁸⁶ Visit Britain "Market and Trade Profile – China (excluding Hong Kong)" http://www.visitbritain.org/Images/China%20-%20Sep%2013_tcm29-14678.pdf page 42

²⁸⁷ "UK Visa and Immigration – The UK Visa Service in China, September 2013"

²⁸⁸ UKBA Latest News and Updates <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2012/december/15-china>

²⁸⁹ UKCVA "Promoting Growth in Britain's Economy" <http://ukcva.com/reports/visa-report-2012/>

21. In a letter to the Home Secretary²⁹⁰ in May 2012 the British Ambassador in Beijing pointed out that the British performance in terms of the number of visas issued compares favourably to that of other European countries. The Alliance agrees with this and understands the Ambassador's frustration that, while his staff are generally processing as many visas as other European embassies, there is still criticism of their performance. But unless something changes, this will always be the case because the main issue is not the under-performance in terms of processing and issuing visas, it is that not enough Chinese travellers are applying for a UK visa.
22. Applying for any visa, UK or Schengen, takes time, effort and money. It involves a trip to a Visa Application Centre which in China can often be many hours away. Rather than having to go through the time consuming application process twice it is easier for potential visitors simply to leave the UK off their itinerary and instead visit other countries already covered by their Schengen visa.
23. And since most Chinese visitors to Europe come on organised tours²⁹¹, the tour operators have to organise all their clients' visas. It is simpler for them to leave the UK off their European itineraries than to make visa arrangements twice for large numbers of travellers. So no matter how much the UK is promoted in China, and no matter how much the application process is improved, the UK will continue to be missed off most European tours.
24. This is shown by Government figures. Only around 6% of Chinese visitors to Europe bother to obtain two visas²⁹². 85% obtain just a Schengen visa and 9% obtain just a UK visa. So other European countries can welcome 91% of the 1.3 million Chinese visitors to Europe. The UK can welcome only the 15% who have obtained a UK visa.
25. The challenge is to find a way to share data collection so that the Chinese traveler experiences as much as possible just one procedure for submitting their applications for both visas *but without joining the Schengen Agreement*. This would encourage more to apply for a UK visa at the same time as a Schengen visa but the UK would still maintain border security by processing every application.

How do we allow potential visitors to apply for two visas at the same time?

26. The Government has announced, at a UKCVA event in May 2013, that it proposes to work with tour operators in China to improve the system because they manage the majority of trips to Europe and the UK. The Alliance agrees with the focus of the Government's activities and looks forward to working together on this initiative although we are still awaiting details. However this must be more than just an easing of the UK application process along the lines mentioned in paragraph 20 above. If

²⁹⁰ Evening Standard "Fortress UK puts off visitors says our man in China" <http://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/fortress-uk-puts-off-visitors-says-our-man-in-china-7820387.html>

²⁹¹ Visit Britain "China Visa Survey" March 2012 56% of Chinese travelers came to Britain on an organised tour. The percentage

²⁹² UKCVA analysis of visa numbers issued by the UK and Schengen in 2011-12 and Visit Britain estimate of the number of Chinese visitors to the UK obtaining a Schengen visas in China Market and Trade Profile (40%). See paragraph 8.

they do not in some way allow for both visas to be applied for at the same time and place it will not make the difference required.

27. In addition, there is evidence that more Chinese people are travelling independently rather than in organised tours²⁹³. This is particularly the case with high net worth individuals who are an important market to the UK. Any improvements need also to address the requirements of these individuals.
28. The UKCVA believes that an additional way forward by reaching bilateral agreements with the three major European countries that issue most visas in China and whose application process is similar to ours, to share the collection of data. France and Germany and Italy between them issue over 775,000 of the 1,186,000 Schengen visas in China²⁹⁴. In 2012 France and Germany opened a common visa centre in Beijing indicating that bilateral co-operation is possible²⁹⁵. The UK already shares Visa Application Centres in China with Italy. We strongly recommend that this avenue is actively explored.
29. The imminent introduction of biometrics by Schengen members (which will require a trip to a Visa Application Centre to give finger prints) may provide an opportunity for closer working given the larger number of Visa Application Centres that the UK already has in China and restrictions on new VACs imposed by the Chinese government. By physically sharing premises to collect data it would be possible to collect it twice but at the same time.

The biometric issue

30. The issue is likely to become worse when Schengen introduce biometrics, possibly in early 2014. Although this will create a level playing field (the UK has had biometric visas since 2007), having to give biometric details for a Schengen visa will make the application process even more onerous. This will make it even less likely that a visitor will go through the application process twice. So some way of collecting the biometric data just once for both visas will need to be found if the UK isn't to lose out even more.

Conclusions

31. UKCVA is committed to working with the government to find practical ways to increase significantly the number of Chinese visitors to the UK for the good of our economy. Marginal improvements are welcome but more radical ideas are needed to present some form of one-stop-shop process for applicants for both visas as the only way to make significant improvements in Chinese visitor numbers.

²⁹³ "Chinese International Travel Monitor 2013" Page 7

²⁹⁴ European Union "Complete statistics on short stay visas issued by the Schengen States 2012"
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy/index_en.htm

²⁹⁵ "Chinese International Travel Monitor 2013" Page 32

UK China Visa Alliance (UKCVA) – Written evidence

32. The UK China Visa Alliance believes that, if the political will is there, practical ways can be found to present some form of one-stop-shop procedure for applying for both visas, without joining the Schengen Agreement, which will have led to significant increases in Chinese visitor numbers while not harming Britain's border security. And if it works for China, it can work for other important markets where a UK visa is required. Britain could then realise more of the potential from its strong position of soft power.

September 2013

UK China Visa Alliance (UKCVA) – Supplementary written evidence

UKCVA submitted evidence to the Select Committee about the effect that the UK visa system has on the number of Chinese visitors to the UK. Subsequently the Government has announced further improvements to the system. This supplementary evidence comments on these improvements.

The UKCVA's central argument is that it is the need to make two separate applications for the two visas required to include the UK on a multi-country European tour that is the main reason why Britain underperforms in the numbers of Chinese visitors we attract compared with France.

Most Chinese tourists to Europe want to undertake a multi-country tour and it is easier to leave the UK off their itinerary than apply a separate UK visa. The answer, then, is to find ways of streamlining the two application processes so that the customer experiences, as much as possible, just one procedure for applying for both visas. The applications would still be processed separately so ensuring the security of Britain's borders.

The announcement made by the Chancellor in Beijing in October is clearly aimed at streamlining the two application processes. A pilot with selected ADS tour operators in China allows them to use a Schengen application form to apply for a UK visa so doing away with the need to fill in two forms. This is a significant move forward²⁹⁶.

Speaking in a Lords debate on China on November 7th 2013 the Foreign Office Minister, Lord Green of Hurstpierpoint, said –

- “Last month, in Beijing, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced measures to streamline and simplify the visa process for Chinese nationals who want to visit the UK for business, study or pleasure. This includes plans to open a 24-hour visa service and streamlining the UK and Schengen visa application process”.
- “The Schengen process itself is moving—or so they claim—to biometrics, which will level the playing-field. I hope that we will increasingly be able to provide, in effect, a one-stop-shop service for Schengen and UK visas”.
- “Progress is being made in discussions with Schengen about how to converge the two processes as much as possible”²⁹⁷.

The UKCVA welcomes both the pilot and the Minister's words as clear signs that the government has accepted the principle of streamlining the two processes. We now look forward to continuing to work with the Government to deliver practical ways to achieve this.

November 2013

²⁹⁶ UK Visas and Immigration announcement 14 October 2013

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2013/october/22-simplified-visas-china>

²⁹⁷ Lords Hansard 7 November 2013 Columns 371-372

UK Sport – Written evidence

I. INTRODUCTION

I.1 UK Sport is the nation's high-performance sports agency. Its mission is to work in partnership to lead sport in the UK to world class success. Primarily this means working with our partner sporting organisations to deliver medals at the Olympic and Paralympic Games. UK Sport's strategic direction, investment and performance support helped British sports and athletes deliver 65 Olympic and 120 Paralympic medals at London 2012.

UK Sport's second priority is to lead the UK's work in the bidding and staging of major international sporting events, and through its 'Gold Event Series' UK Sport is supporting a programme of around 70 world-class legacy events to be staged the UK over the next 6 years.

Finally, UK Sport has a lead role developing the UK's international sporting relations and influence, working in partnership with National Governing Bodies of Sport, the BOA and BPA. A further dimension of our International sporting activity focuses on increasing participation as well as the positive impact of sport for development internationally. UK Sport is funded by a mix of Government Exchequer and National Lottery income.

I.2 UK Sport's core high performance and major event programmes are conducted almost entirely within the international sporting environment. The framework that governs international sport is largely regulated by each sport's International Federation (IFs) in conjunction with various international umbrella organisations including (but not limited to) the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

I.3 The UK's ongoing international sporting success fundamentally depends on the legitimacy and stability of the bodies that govern world sport, as they act as the framework between nations to regulate sporting activity. As a successful nation within international sport, the UK has a responsibility to contribute to these international structures and play a strong role in ensuring the health of the international sporting system.

I.4 Perhaps more importantly, the UK also has a strategic interest in being in a position to shape decisions taken by international sport organisations. These organisations regularly take decisions that directly impact on the UK's ability to be successful in international sport, including:

- Where and when major international sporting events are held (and the positive impact of home advantage on the performance of our athletes)
- The rules and regulations that govern international sport competition
- The qualification, selection and ranking systems that govern the entry of our athletes and teams into international competitions
- The sports and events/disciplines that are included within multi-sport events (e.g. the Olympic/Paralympic/Commonwealth Games sport programmes).

I.5 UK Sport's aim is to ensure that international decisions on the regulatory frameworks and structures that govern sporting competition are sympathetic to the UK's

vision and plans for high performance and major events. As one of over 200 nations that make up the international sporting community, the only way that the UK can shape these decisions is to be actively represented within these international governing bodies and to enter in dialogue with other nations. Coordinating and enhancing the UK's international sporting relationships is therefore an important front-line activity for UK Sport to achieve its main objectives.

1.6 Our focus is not exclusively on developing elite athletes and hosting major events. As a nation that cares passionately about international sport at all levels, UK Sport has, over the years, generated worldwide impact and success through its high quality international development programmes, working in partnership with local, national and international sport bodies and non-governmental organisations. UK Sport provides the executive team for the 'IN' Charity delivering 'International Inspiration', London 2012's Olympic and Paralympic legacy programme, reaching 16 million young people across 20 countries. UK Sport has also been involved in the leadership of global activity advocating the use of sport for development and peace.

2. THE UK'S USE OF SOFT POWER IN INTERNATIONAL SPORT

2.1 Historically, the UK was at the forefront in the establishment, development and management of international sport. British institutions and their administrators have had a direct influence on the structures that govern international sport today. In particular, the UK has had a strong influence in the origins of both the modern Olympic and Paralympic Movements. English has also historically been the international language of sport, alongside French.

2.2 The UK has also been one of the lead countries in the international sport development assistance movement since 1990, when the British Sports Council began to work in southern Africa. Activities in southern Africa have continued since, and UK Sport has also worked in a range of other countries across East and West Africa, the Middle East, south Asia, East Asia, the Caribbean and Brazil, often in partnership with the British Council, to assist the development of sport and, importantly, to liaise with relevant Ministries to embed systems and initiatives into political structures, for example into education systems or national youth policies. These initiatives have provided the basis for friendly collaboration and have generated good will towards the UK and its institutions.

2.3 Prior to being awarded the London 2012 Games, the UK's influence within international sport had, arguably, begun to decline. While trying not to over-generalise, British influence within international sport had frequently become confined to maintaining the rulebook and setting standards in officiating, rather than setting the agenda and shaping the important decisions. In some cases, the UK has been perceived as arrogant and overly-paternalistic by some within the international sport community. This has sometimes been in part due to the occasional lack of cultural sensitivity adopted by British administrators, and perhaps resentment in some corners of the world to the UK's colonial past.

2.4 However, the UK's profile, reputation, representation and general influence within the international sporting community has increased significantly over the last decade, due in no small part to the successful bidding for and hosting of the London 2012 Games and to the fact that we kept 'the Singapore Promise' and delivered a unique and unprecedented international sport and social legacy initiative in 'International Inspiration'. The Games have

generated gains across all the domains of international sport including elite performance, major events, international development and international representation.

2.5 Today, the UK has an attractive stock of sporting venues to offer the international sporting community, a skilled and experienced workforce and a spectator audience that is passionate about sport. The experience gained through London 2012, as well as preparations for Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2014, has given the UK the credibility to position itself as a more outward facing nation in sporting terms which is actively looking to support and deliver sport around the world.

2.6 The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games provided a unique opportunity to work directly with a large number of organisations within and beyond the international sporting community. Having overseen the successful delivery of these Games, there is undoubtedly a positive 'glow' around many British sport institutions, with the UK now seen as a trusted partner to many in the international sporting community. As that community's focus now moves to other parts of the globe, there is a challenge to maintain the UK's global reputation and influence within the administration of international sport and safeguard its position in an ever-changing international landscape. Furthermore, there is a broader opportunity to use the 'glow' and the tangible achievements of International Inspiration and UK Sport's other international development work to generate trust and good will with other governments beyond the domain of sport itself.

3. THE IMPACT OF SPORT ON THE UK'S WIDER SOFT POWER

3.1 Sport today plays a significant role in global soft power. The modern Olympic Movement and the Games were originally founded so that 'the promotion of athletic competition would increase greater understanding across cultures and lessen the chances of war'. While history may suggest otherwise, the Games has arguably taken adversary between nations from the theatre of war to the medals table, with nations investing heavily into their elite athletes. Furthermore, cities spend significant sums in order to just even be considered to host these prestigious sporting events and cement their place as important, vibrant, exciting and cosmopolitan cities. The Games themselves (and indeed many other major sporting competitions) are one of the most visible and most acceptable demonstrations of national identity and symbolism in the modern world.

3.2 Sport is one of the few commodities that can explicitly and without subjective interpretation showcase the UK as a successful nation to the rest of the world. As one of the most successful nations at the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games (3rd in the medal table for both), sport has a unique ability to profile many things that the UK is good at e.g. innovative and ground breaking designs in both stadia and athletic equipment, seamless operations and robust budget management principles, compassionate and helpful volunteers, a nation that belongs alongside the other major countries on the world stage, enthusiastic and knowledgeable audiences to name but a few. Many of these qualities are not confined to a home Games and are also be demonstrated when the UK is successful in international competition.

3.3 A recent study, as reported in this article by the BBC (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22624104>) provides an indication of how sport and the hosting of mega sporting events like the Olympics (if run successfully) can have on international perceptions of the UK and of other nations. This study explored international

perception of 16 countries and whether their influence on the world was viewed as mainly positive or negative, before and after 2012. UK saw a bigger increase in positive ratings than any other country and climbed to third place in the table, in the wake of hosting London 2012.

3.4 The internationalisation of sport is another key development in recent decades. For some time, the administration of sport had been delivered to a greater degree ‘parochially’ with importance focused primarily on delivery at a national level. However, in the same way that football has attracted prominent international owners into the Premier League, the Olympic Movement has seen a similar trend, whereby powerful individuals are seeking to play a direct role in the way sport is run. Many of these individuals have significant business and political interests outside of sport.

3.5 We are now observing a growing ‘battlefield’ for sport, where nations from (amongst others) Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe are having greater influence and challenging what has been the traditional West European dominance. Where the administration of international sport was once dominated by a group of Western European nations, we have observed a gradual but marked shift in the balance of power to emerging nations. This is in part evidenced by the recent award of major events to these countries: the FIFA World Cup has been awarded to Brazil, Russia and Qatar for 2014, 2018 and 2022 respectively and the award of the next four editions of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (summer and winter) have gone to cities from Russia, Brazil, Korea and Japan in 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2020 respectively. The recent election of a German as the next President of the IOC, defeating candidates from other parts of the world, and the location of the vast majority of sporting institutions in Switzerland, suggests that Europe has not completely lost its hold on the Olympic Movement and still retains a significant voice in international sport.

3.6 Following the record breaking performances of Team GB at the London 2012 Games, and the progress that has been made since the Atlanta Games in 1996 (where only one gold medal was won, contrasting with the 29 gold medals secured in 2012), there has been significant international interest in the UK’s high performance system. This suggests two things: firstly that other nations place a large amount of importance on being successful in international (nation-building, promoting national identity, raising national morale etc) and secondly, the UK is recognised as possessing world-leading expertise in this sector: UK Sport regularly receives requests to meet with foreign delegations and present at international sport conferences. We operate in a competitive international environment, so we therefore have to be cautious of what information can be presented and to whom in order that our competitive advantage is not eroded but we willingly share the principles that underpin our work.

3.7 And beyond Team GB’s achievements on the field, and the high standard of event hosting set by London, the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games gave the UK to the opportunity to do something quite unique; something that was not just about promoting the UK, but about positioning ourselves as a nation that cares and that was prepared to share our moment in the limelight of world sport to benefit other nations and specifically the world’s two billion youth. There is a great opportunity for the FCO and UKTI to build on the goodwill created by our delivery of International Inspiration and on the relationships already established with Ministries of youth, sport, education and gender as well as with global fora, such as the Commonwealth Secretariat, through the programme.

4. DEVELOPING THE UK's ROLE WITHIN INTERNATIONAL SPORT

4.1 UK Sport adopts a multi-faceted approach to increasing the UK's role within the structures that govern international sport. UK Sport primarily does this in partnership with National Governing Bodies (NGBs) for Sport through supporting and funding the development and implementation of NGB international relations (IR) strategies. UK Sport also works with other key national partners including the British Olympic Association, the British Paralympic Association, central and local government to help co-ordinate the UK's interests across the international sporting landscape.

4.2 UK Sport also supports the identification and development of future international sports leaders by providing training and development opportunities to aspiring British sport administrators. Through its International Leadership Programme, UK Sport helps to develop the knowledge, skills and competencies of British representatives holding positions in international sport. Training themes include increasing understanding of the international sporting landscape, building strategic relationships, managing cross-cultural differences, negotiation and influencing skills, language training and campaign management skills.

4.3 UK Sport is a world leader in the field of international sport development, with over 23 years' experience of working in 30 different countries. At the heart of UK Sport's development mission is the belief that the UK should play a role in increasing opportunities for young people in developing countries to participate in sport and to improve their lives as a result. UK Sport also seeks to influence ethics and standards in sport through a partnership with UNICEF and other international organisations, to embed standards for the safeguarding and protection of children in community and governing body sport across the globe. UK Sport has also been active in the wider 'development through sport' movement, resulting in the broader appreciation of the potential of sport to contribute to the human rights agenda and a powerful platform for DfID to achieve its Millennium Development Goals and their successors. Examples of UK Sport's contribution in this area include the production of a guide for governments using sport as a tool for human and social development; delivery of programmes to improve the lives of girls and women through better education and a greater choice on family planning; preventing violence against and empowering girls and young women through sport; and developing local leaders to deliver community play inclusive activities for children of all abilities in a safe environment. This work has contributed to an increase in the UK's ability to influence, created a high demand for our 'intellectual capital' on global platforms, and drawn a great deal of international goodwill towards the UK.

26 September 2013

UK Trade Facilitation – Written evidence

Introduction

UK Trade Facilitation is the new champion for UK traders who seek to enter new markets or who find difficulties with existing ones. Its role is to inform traders about markets around the world, to assist them when they have difficulties or require information and to influence barriers to trade in other markets, helping to reduce them. It is funded by traders and is responsive to their needs and requirements. It fills the gap left by the closure of SITPRO in 2010.

This submission is focused mainly on issues of direct relevance in this context.

The meaning of Soft Power

1. Soft Power is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as
 - a. “a persuasive approach to international relations, typically involving the use of economic or cultural influence”

It is not a recent concept, but has existed for as long as the need to convert or convince individuals and people where the use of force would be unsuccessful or achieve only subjugation. It aims to inform debate and thus build consensus with the objective of influencing and, where appropriate, directing policy makers and opinion formers when they are developing and deciding future policies or strategies. Soft power promotes common consent for the common good.

2. In effect, Soft Power is the means of influencing others to get them to agree with and support one’s point of view using persuasion, argument, example, history and culture. In international relations it also depends on the legitimacy or moral authority deemed to be embodied in the culture, political values, institutions and policies of a country. The successful use of soft power relies heavily on the pedigree of the argument and the quality of the presenter. The argument must be cogent, coherent, convincing and above all consistent; it must demonstrate that everybody would achieve benefits from a commonly agreed outcome. Used effectively, soft power should encourage compromise without conceding honest conviction; promote the art of co-operation and the objective of achieving the possible.
3. Soft power should not be confused with lobbying or focus groups. The difference is motivation. Lobbyists and members of focus groups tend to be single issue advocates. Their aim is to pressure decision makers into accepting a specific point of view to the exclusion of all other opinions. The ultimate objective is the implementation of a pre-determined policy or solution. The concept of negotiation and concession is alien to the lobby or focus group because of the perceived virtue of their opinion.
4. Although sometimes successful, lobbying often results in opposition (sometimes violent) to a particular policy, creating discord in society and risking any consequential law being honoured as much in the breach as in the observance. In turn this could create an oppressive environment of enforcement of unpopular legislation or rules, setting the government and its agencies against the community and the citizen.

5. The age of the internet has seen the exponential rise of soft power. An individual with access to the 'blogosphere' can express an opinion and see it 'go viral' in a matter of hours. From such a small beginning, public support can be garnered for a person or a policy: witness the presidential campaign of Senator Barack Obama in 2008. No doubt this trend will continue but, of its very nature, it will focus on single issues generated by individual concern. However, the real exercise of soft power will remain with the contributors to and the participants in meetings and gatherings where views and opinions are exchanged and decisions agreed. Humankind is by nature a communal creature and social interaction involving all the faculties is essential for individuals to form sensible opinions, apply reasoned judgement and make informed decisions.

The extent and use of the UK's Soft Power resources

6. In order to have effect soft power must be focused and directed to the most influential actors - other governments, the European Institutions, international governmental networks and NGOs and other trading blocks. The UK has a justified and justifiable reputation for the effective use of soft power. Established through military success, the spread of empire, especially in India, was nevertheless achieved by employing soft power to build alliances, develop treaties and negotiate mutually beneficial agreements. Of course, the use of hard (physical) power was always in the background but was often only used as a last resort when diplomacy failed. The loss of the American colonies is perhaps the classic example where the UK employed brute force instead of exploring and exhausting the options offered by soft power.
7. The reputation of the UK as the seat of democracy, one of the largest financial centres in the world and a broker of agreements is high. Many of the NGOs and trade and professional bodies within the UK punch far above their weight in European and international fora because of this. Often the extent of the UK's soft power through these organisations is recognised more abroad than at home. Recent cutbacks in the civil service have lessened the ability of the UK government to recognise its potential in soft power while requiring greater reliance on its use.
8. Much of the success of soft power in empire building was the result of the work done by non-state organisations and individuals, particularly religious bodies and the commerce sector. The former inspired with missionary passion, the latter motivated by free trade spread the concepts of freedom of assembly and speech, a free press, the rule of law and respect for the rights and beliefs of individuals. The expansion of 'British' values, accompanied by language and culture gave, and continues to give, the UK a unique place in world affairs.
9. Non-state actors are in an invidious position in exercising soft power. On the one hand they represent companies and consumers whose views may not always correspond with government policy. The exercise of such soft power, while advantageous to the UK, can be seen as undermining government policy which, of necessity, is transitory as the party in power changes. In turn, non-state actors benefit from the prestige and status of the UK with other countries. This is particularly true in international trade where the UK has been able to influence the trend of policies in promoting and regulating international trade and leading the way

UK Trade Facilitation – Written evidence

in advocating international trade facilitation, one of the few areas in the WTO which has universal acceptance.

Soft Power and diplomacy

10. International networks can only help to strengthen the UK's soft power if the UK plays an active part within them. This is now often not the case due to lack of resource. In such cases the UK is dependent on the non-state players who are active within these networks to promote its point-of-view.
11. Many critics express the view that the UK no longer makes effective use of soft power and is drifting toward a more hard power approach to foreign policy and diplomacy. The march to war in Iraq and the continuing entanglement in Afghanistan lends some credence to this view. So the timing of this House of Lords Select Committee inquiry on Soft Power is apposite.
12. Within the European Institutions the current official attitude of the UK towards the EU causes concern. While the role of the UK is not diminished by it, the effectiveness of the UK voice is reduced because of uncertainty regarding the long-term commitment to Europe. Here there is more reliance on non-state players which promote the views of UK business and traders. In Europe and elsewhere, UK institutions such as the Monarchy and Parliament are held in high esteem and continue to contribute hugely to the Soft Power of the UK.

Soft Power and Hard Power

13. Soft and Hard Power are closely inter-related. One may lead to the other or follow it. The UK has a track record of getting the balance right.
14. 24/7 news coverage, the internet, the digital age and social networking have probably swayed the balance in favour of Soft Power in many instances. Governments and policy makers must take note of views expressed via these media which are, or can be, transnational. Governments themselves rely heavily on the Soft Power generated through social media to get across their message and seek approval for these policies.

Non-state soft power

15. The difficulty with the use of Soft Power by non-state actors is that it can be misconstrued and tarred with the same brush as lobby and focus groups. This is especially pertinent in the case of international trade. An idea for improving trading practice or a request to reduce or remove procedural burdens can appear as industry (or service) sector special pleading. A solution to this problem can be the establishment of an independent body at arm's length from the private sector and supported (but not necessarily funded) by government. The body would act as a facilitator, gathering together the appropriate representatives of the business sector and moderating discussion to achieve consensus of the issues confronting the trading community. For this approach to be completely successful government should commit to active involvement in the dialogue and be willing to share its views on current issues and future policy.

UK Trade Facilitation – Written evidence

16. For many years the UK used such bodies to exercise soft power successfully in the technical committees responsible for developing the standards, norms and good practices for international trade. Within the European Union, the UK encouraged the adoption of the aligned layout for trade documents, the Common Veterinary Entry Document being a perfect example. The trade facilitation measures developed and introduced by the UK Customs administration have often acted as the model for more efficient and effective control methods while facilitating legitimate traders and economic operators.
17. Within UN/CEFACT (the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business), the UK has effectively used soft power to develop recommendations, standards and other instruments for better international trade and supply chain performance and management. The committee operates under the aegis of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe that has responsibility for the promotion of trade facilitation throughout the UN family of economic and social commissions.
18. In the recent past the UK chaired the International Trade Procedures Group which produced the suite of UN Recommendations on the design, development and operation of a national Single Window for the exchange of trade related information between government and the business community. The suite of products is now being extended to include a Recommendation on Interoperability of Single Windows. This issue will become increasingly important as the world economic powers look to establish inter-regional trade agreements (the Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership for example) in the absence of rules-based global trade facilitation arrangements under the Doha Round of Trade Negotiations.
19. For the future, the International Trade Procedures Group is developing a recommendation on the various and varied methodologies for the consultation process between government and the trading community. Here the UK has significant experience and is using Soft Power to encourage the adoption of a genuine partnership approach to consultation for the mutual of public and private sectors.
20. The Group is also researching mobile business - the ability to conduct trade using a mobile device such as a smartphone or hand-held tablet computer. The information and communication technology sector is very important to the British economy. Therefore UK influence in developing the guiding principles, measures and good practice for the implementation and operation of Mobile Business is essential and paramount. This influencing of the debate and informing its decisions is best pursued using soft power.
21. International trade is the life blood that pumps through the arteries of the British economy. The imposition of any new regulation or administrative procedure, or changes to the existing process in international trade impacts on the ability of British companies to do business in the global marketplace. Developing measures to facilitate international trade through simplification standardisation and harmonisation can only have a beneficial effect on British trading performance. Participation in the discussions of such trade facilitation measures can bring even greater advantages to the architects of the design and early adopters of development. Here the UK should use

soft power to be seated at the table where the decisions are agreed that will enhance or damage the ability to grow our economy, create jobs and increase wealth.

Learning from others

22. There are always opportunities to learn from others. The European Institutions are a prime example where diplomacy wins over hard power. The concept of majority voting has many beneficial outcomes in this respect. As more issues are determined within trading areas or by groupings of governments, the UK is able to influence others and to learn from the successes of other governments. This should help to advance the causes of justice and peace.
23. In international trade facilitation, while the UK is still one of the most respected countries in the world, new rules and procedures need to be influenced by the views of other nations with which we are trading and their national authorities. One example is EUROPRO, the European federation of national trade facilitation bodies which has the authority to negotiate on their behalf through the Trade Contact Group of DG TAXUD on all matters relating to European customs, including the Uniform Customs Code.
24. Within the UNECE and WCO the role of the UK is enhanced by inter-governmental discussion and also by the work undertaken in specialist areas by representatives from many countries who seek to establish international policies. Here, the UK is a leading player but has to use its Soft Power to influence the direction of decision-making.

Aspects of Soft Power

25. The work undertaken by UK Trade and Investment is fundamental to the overseas expansion of UK companies. Like other government agencies, however, its resources have been slashed and its effectiveness blunted.
26. In respect of international trade facilitation, the UK has led the field for over 40 years. It is unfortunate, therefore, that with reduced resources, the new emphasis on the EU/US Trade Agreement and the closure of SITPRO in 2012 there is no longer a strong UK voice to continue this valuable work. UK Trade Facilitation is trying to pick up where SITPRO left off but in a different context – funded by traders for traders. There remains a vast amount of work to be done if unnecessary trade barriers are to be demolished and UK traders assisted not just to identify new markets but to be helped to identify and negotiate the national barriers which exist.

Norman Rose (Executive Chairman) and Gordon Cragge (Trade Advisor)

September 2013

University of Edinburgh – Written evidence

Author: Stuart MacDonald, Centre for Cultural Relations, University of Edinburgh

1. Following the Edinburgh Culture Summit in 2012, the Scottish Government’s Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop, announced that the Scottish Government would explore with the University and the British Council the feasibility of the creation of a Centre for Cultural Diplomacy to be based at the University of Edinburgh. She said:

“We will be working with the University of Edinburgh and the British Council to further explore this proposal. A centre of excellence for cultural diplomacy based in Scotland would undoubtedly enhance Scotland’s international reputation.”

2. Following the completion of a feasibility study which carried out extensive research to establish whether such a Centre would meet a real need, the University agreed with the Scottish Government and the British Council to establish a research-led centre of expertise. The Centre for Cultural Relations will be formally launched by the University later this autumn.
3. This submission reflects the work undertaken by the University with its partners over the last year, specifically the understandings gained from extensive market research and a large scale consultation exercise which gathered evidence from over 100 consultees in academia, governments in the UK and overseas, international organisations, public bodies, economic development bodies and cultural practitioners.

Soft power or cultural relations?

4. Terminology matters. As our research progressed, it became clear that the question of terminology was central to any consideration of soft power. The original proposal for the Centre had used the term “cultural diplomacy”. The study concluded that a better term would be “cultural relations”. Why was this important?
5. Our conclusion was that research was needed on the full range of exchanges between societies. After considerable discussion, it was agreed that the terms “cultural diplomacy”; “public diplomacy” and “soft power” should not be used as they would narrow the scope to state-directed transactions. This did not reflect the nature of the field, where the role of non-state actors, informal groups and individuals is increasingly important. We therefore settled on cultural relations as the term which best reflected the wide-ranging and fast changing nature of the field.
6. This submission accordingly mostly refers to cultural relations throughout, rather than soft power. It was also relevant that the British Council used the term to communicate the Council’s role. “The British Council creates international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and builds trust between them worldwide. We call this work cultural relations.”

Are cultural relations important?

7. We reviewed existing evidence which indicated that cultural relations were seen as increasingly important in a range of fields:
 - There was a perceived need for both a new theory and strategies for international engagement;

- The role of cultural factors such as beliefs, values and contexts for developing and sustaining international relations and international exchange was seen as increasingly important. Political researchers as well as think-tank practitioners suggested that due to processes of ongoing globalisation and decentralisation of governance this was more important than ever;
- Cultural relations was a major focus of attention and effort in an era of global, digital communications. This was true for those involved in states, other public bodies, NGOs and businesses;
- There was a well documented trend for emerging economies to invest heavily in cultural relations;
- Cultural factors play an increasing part in international business, for example where companies work beyond the firm in international multicultural project teams, or where they are engaged in innovative international collaborations;
- Cultural relations and dialogue are increasingly recognised as important in security and conflict resolution. They are also key to international development efforts and to tackling global challenges. These are all areas where engagement beyond the state can be vital to success;
- Finally, in relation again to terminology, a cultural relations perspective was seen as being able to succeed in grasping the multiplicity of actions and practitioners consciously and unconsciously engaged in the dynamic field of contemporary international relations.

Understanding cultural relations

8. The assumption at the heart of the original proposal to establish a Centre at the University of Edinburgh was that there was a need for academically rigorous interdisciplinary research in cultural relations. We accordingly reviewed the existing research base.
9. Our main finding was that there was a considerable amount of applied research and there were a number of private research initiatives, but university research projects (mainly US-American) on cultural relations were minor in number and scale compared to private research initiatives. For this reason, contemporary cultural relations issues such as e-diplomacy remained under-theorised.
10. This had practical consequences. For example, while practitioners were often passionately committed to the idea of cultural relations, they could struggle to persuade others that they mattered. This was due to the lack of a shared understanding of what constituted the field and the tendency for soft power or cultural relations to be seen in opposition to the traditional focus on hard power in international relations.
11. Our research confirmed the need for research which was both scholarly and focused on practice. This research needed to be interdisciplinary to reflect the changing nature of the field. This view was shared unanimously by academic and practitioner consultees. The general view was that the field was under-researched, the quality of current research was poor, and there was a need for a Centre with the necessary interdisciplinary strength, reputation and ability to collaborate at the highest level.
12. Academic consultees stressed that scholarly research was essential. They argued that traditional disciplinary boundaries needed to be rethought in order to research a fast

changing and fluid field of study. They were also strongly aware of the need for scholarly research to contribute to practice through knowledge transfer.

13. Practitioner consultees from all sectors (governments; public bodies; business; cultural organisations) felt strongly that current research was not meeting their needs and that a major cause of this was the lack of a coherent academic approach. There was a universal appetite from practitioners for research which would provide an evidence base both for existing activity and for “what worked”.
14. There was a feeling among practitioners that culture was probably more important than ever in affecting international developments, but that it was harder than ever to make a case for culture in competition with other “harder” areas of activity whose impact was more actually or apparently measurable.
15. These insights persuaded the University that there was a major opportunity to establish a new Centre dedicated to research in cultural relations. Supporting this was the lack of any other comparable centre in the UK or indeed, internationally. Existing provision reflected traditional academic boundaries. Universities and other institutes focused on eg International Relations; Cultural Studies; the practice of diplomacy; intercultural communication for business; communications or new technology. Cultural Relations were researched, but in the great majority of cases within the terms of the parent discipline.

Soft power, foreign policy development, diplomacy and the role of the state

16. Soft power as defined by Nye was an instrument of foreign policy. On this view, the role of the state was central and soft power (whatever non-state resources were deployed) was used because the state had a responsibility to use all means at its disposal, including those of soft power, to achieve its international policy goals.
17. Nye also acknowledged that some goals were impossible to achieve with soft power, as some were impossible to achieve with hard power alone. He relied on the distinction drawn by Arnold Wolfers between “possession goals” (tangible, specific objectives) and “milieu goals” (structural and intangible).
18. Nye’s view suggested that soft power (or “smart power” – the use of both hard and soft) was an essential part of foreign policy formation and therefore should be a responsibility of the state. This approach appeared to be endorsed by the Foreign Secretary in his foreword to the British Council publication “Influence and Attraction – Culture and the race for soft power in the 21st century”. *“Britain remains a modern day cultural superpower. Staying competitive in ‘soft power’ for decades to come means nurturing these assets and valuing them as much as our military, economic and diplomatic advantages.”*
19. Whether or not Nye’s doctrine of soft or smart power was accepted, there was no doubt that there was an urgent need to understand what soft power meant for the conduct of international relations. What part did cultural understanding play in foreign policy development, as the basis for peace and conflict, making and implementing policy and living and working in a globalised world?
20. This requires a novel interdisciplinary approach to international relations. It is important for states and diplomats, if they are to work successfully in the 21st century, to have access to understandings of the role of culture in international interactions across the whole spectrum of activity from that of states and diplomats

through to individuals able to exercise influence and mobilise resources across borders through the use of social media.

Soft power in the UK

21. If the UK is to rise to the Foreign Secretary's challenge, we need to understand what our soft power assets are and know how to value them. At present, in our view, that overview of how soft power is used by the UK at all levels – including the activities of the state, sub-national structures (devolved administrations, cities, local initiatives), commercial, cultural and non-state actors – does not exist.
22. We also need tools and techniques to understand what the impact of those activities are. We need to ensure that we have evidence as to what works, where, when and in which contexts. That requires a rigorous focus on assessment of practice.
23. We also need to understand how our soft power relates in terms of our international reputation to the practice of hard power – it makes little sense to consider one without the other.
24. We need to understand the instruments, tools and techniques of UK soft power and how domestic policies relating to soft power (eg on culture and education) relate to our international reputation.
25. Finally, we need to situate the UK as a soft power practitioner alongside others. There are various benchmarks and indices of comparison. Knowing how relatively effective we are, in relation to our investments, means learning from others' innovation.
26. The question of definition arises here. Our emerging view is that we need to work both with Nye's definition (culture, political ideals and policies) and with the definition of cultural relations (arts, education, English language) used by the British Council.

Suggestions for Government action

27. We suggest that the Government:
 - Builds on the Foreign Secretary's comments to ensure that our cultural relations assets are valued and contribute to foreign policy development;
 - Prioritises support for research to support that approach, in the areas identified above;
 - Takes steps to establish the UK as the world's leading centre for cultural relations expertise and reputation;
 - Builds on this inquiry to ensure that cultural relations are a feature of future Parliamentary debate and scrutiny.

Universities UK and the UK Higher Education International Unit – Written evidence

Introduction

1. Universities UK and the Higher Education International Unit ('the International Unit') support the committee's inquiry into the UK's soft power and influence. As is suggested by some of the questions to which the committee invited responses, the concept of 'soft power' is not easy to clearly define. For the purpose of this submission, we understand soft power to be the influence enjoyed by a nation or state from sources other than its economic, military, or formal diplomatic strengths. This includes influence gained through the strength and reputation of that country's educational and cultural sectors.
2. Universities are significant beneficiaries of the UK's soft power. Their teaching and research capabilities are significantly enhanced by the UK's reputation for excellence in these areas, by strong cultural links between the UK and other countries, and by the *lingua franca* status of the English language.
3. UK higher education is also a major contributor to this soft power, both directly and indirectly. The strength and international reputation of the UK's higher education sector is a major direct contributor to the reputation of the UK's education and culture, and so a significant contributor to – or perhaps more accurately a *constituent part of* – the UK's soft power.
4. Our higher education institutions' research and teaching excellence also contributes indirectly to the UK's soft power, and underpins all of the other examples in this submission of the soft power benefits granted by higher education. This excellence and can only be maintained through sufficient and ongoing investment in the sector.
5. However, the UK spends significantly less as a proportion of its GDP on tertiary education (including research) than the average for the OECD.²⁹⁸ While the UK punches above its weight in terms of research quality (as measured by citation rate) relative to expenditure²⁹⁹, the soft power benefits of our world-leading higher education sector cannot be guaranteed for the future without continued investment and policymaking that supports the international activities of UK universities.

International students at UK institutions

6. The UK is second only to the USA in terms of its market share of internationally-mobile higher education students.³⁰⁰ This is partially the result of the UK's soft power (in particular the reputation of the UK's education sector, and the value to students of being taught in the English language), but is also an important *source* of soft power. In September 2013 the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) published a report on the wider benefits of international higher education in the UK³⁰¹. A

²⁹⁸Education at a Glance, OECD, 2013

²⁹⁹International Comparative Performance of the UK Research Base, BIS, 2011

³⁰⁰Education at a Glance, OECD, 2013

³⁰¹The Wider Benefits of International Higher Education in the UK, BIS, 2013

number of the benefits set out in this report could be considered as contributing to the UK's soft power.

7. We will not repeat in detail the numerous examples of indirect benefits to the UK set out in the BIS report, but recommend the committee considers the report in full. However, it is worth broadly summarising the key ways in which international students are beneficial to the UK's soft power.
8. Most international students who leave the UK after study retain professional and/or personal links and networks here. Out of those interviewed as part of the BIS study, 84% retained either personal or professional links. Aside from the obvious indirect economic benefits of fostering professional networks between overseas graduates of UK universities and home graduates (and others), there are wider benefits to fostering both professional and personal networks that could be classified as contributing to soft power. Out of those interviewed for the study, 90% agreed that their perception of the UK had changed – all in a positive direction – as a result of studying here.³⁰² Those who have studied in the UK have an increased appreciation for, and trust of, the UK, its culture and its population. This is an important contributor to soft power.
9. As well as international graduates of UK institutions obtaining networks in the UK, UK graduates also develop international networks and a more international outlook as a result of studying and living alongside peers from around the globe.
10. The benefits outlined above are all the more important given that many internationally mobile students studying at UK institutions are likely to go on to take up influential positions in their home countries and elsewhere. As an example, a report by the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee³⁰³ published in March 2011 listed 27 international heads of state at that time who had studied in the UK, many in UK universities, and the *Times Higher Education* published an article in September 2013 highlighting 12 world leaders that had been educated at UK universities³⁰⁴.
11. One of the many striking examples detailed in the BIS report referred to above is that of a PhD graduate from the University of Cambridge who now holds a director-level post in the central bank of the People's Republic of China. After describing himself as a 'friend' of the UK, he explains that when he is involved in negotiations with the Bank of England, he goes into these negotiations 'emotionally bonded' to the UK.³⁰⁵
12. Other prominent alumni are world leaders in other areas which exemplify the UK's philosophies of global citizenship, democracy and aid. For example, Cambridge graduate Mohan Munasinghe is Vice Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize; Aung San Suu Kyi, Oxford graduate and chairperson of the National League for Democracy in Burma received the [Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought](#) in 1990 and the [Nobel Peace Prize](#) in

³⁰² Ibid

³⁰³ *Student Visas: Seventh report of session 2010–11*, Home Affairs House of Commons Select Committee, 2011

³⁰⁴ '12 world leaders who attended UK universities', *Times Higher Education*, 2013

³⁰⁵ *The Wider Benefits of International Higher Education in the UK*, BIS, 2013

1991. These accolades show the influence of UK values, shared through higher education experience, on politics worldwide.

Immigration policy and international students

13. In order that the potential benefits of international students attending UK institutions are realised, we must build on the current strength of the sector in attracting international students. However, we are concerned that the government's immigration policy, and some of the ways in which this has been communicated, is having a negative impact on the ability of the sector to attract international students. The latest figures published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) show that the number of first year non-EU students at higher education institutions decreased by 0.4% in 2011–12. While this decrease appears small, it follows years of strong growth. This decline is largely the result of a decrease among taught postgraduates. Non-EU entrants to taught postgraduate (eg Masters) degrees fell by 2.6% between 2010–11 and 2011–12.
14. This trend is significantly below that which would be required for the 15–20% increase in numbers over the next five years that the government's industrial strategy for international education considers 'realistic'.³⁰⁶ Even this level of growth is likely to represent a decrease in market share, given the rate of growth internationally of students studying outside of their home nations has been estimated at 7% per annum by the European Commission³⁰⁷, and rose from 2.1 million in 2000 to 4.3 million in 2011.³⁰⁸
15. Changes to visa policy to date have produced an overall reduction in net migration. However, further considerable reductions will be necessary to meet the government target of reducing net migration to the 'tens of thousands'. In order to meet the target the government will need to continue to bear down on immigration. Students are the largest category of migrant (despite the fact that the majority leave on completion of their studies). The Migration Advisory Committee has calculated that a reduction in non-EU student numbers of 87,600 over the three years 2012 to 2015 would be required to meet the government's net migration target.
16. International university 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% increase over the next five years. The government should stand by its commitment to 'a period of stability in the student visa route' by not introducing further restrictions to student visas, and should continue to explore the potential value of extending the more generous post-study visa regime currently afforded to PhD graduates to a wider range of international graduates.
17. Universities UK and many others in the sector have worked to rectify some of the damaging, and often misleading, international headlines about the UK student visa system. In particular, we note that with growing use of the internet and in particular social media, it is increasingly difficult for the government (or any other agency) to 'segment' its messages on a particular issue for different audiences. A message that

³⁰⁶*International Education: Global growth and prosperity*, HM Government, 2013

³⁰⁷*European Higher Education in the World*, European Commission, 2013

³⁰⁸*Education at a Glance*, OECD, 2013

may have been intended for a domestic audience can now more easily be seen and shared worldwide, with perhaps unintended consequences for international perceptions of the UK.

18. We welcome the public statements made by the prime minister while in India in February 2013, encouraging Indian students to study at UK universities. The government should ensure that the UK's student visa rules are understood internationally, and continue to work to promote UK higher education.

Outward student mobility

19. We know that the UK is a destination of choice for international students, but cultural exchanges benefit from being outward looking as well as inward. In 2012, the higher education sector reported to the International Unit's Joint Steering Group on Outward Mobility that outward student mobility raises the profile and reputation of UK education overseas, as well as the profile of individual institutions. Likely soft power benefits of outward student mobility, aside from the further improving the reputation of UK education, include the promotion of an international outlook among UK graduates and the opportunity for such students to engage in 'citizen diplomacy'.
20. In 2010, around 23,000 UK students were studying for a degree abroad.³⁰⁹ This is an outward mobility rate of just 0.9%³¹⁰, though this does not include those studying overseas for periods of less than one academic year, such as the 12,833 UK students taking part in an Erasmus study or work placement³¹¹. The government's recent industrial strategy on international education recognised the need to encourage such interactions through the development of an Outward Mobility Strategy³¹² 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.

Transnational education

21. Transnational education (TNE) is the delivery of education in a country other than the one in which the awarding body is based. The UK is a leading TNE exporter: in 2011–12 some 570,000 higher education students were engaged in UK TNE³¹³. The British Council has recently estimated that there are 1,395 different TNE programmes provided by UK higher education institutions around the world, as well as a growing number of overseas campuses.³¹⁴ It is generally recognised that the popularity of UK TNE among students is derived from the perceived quality of UK higher education overseas.
22. UK institutions report the impact of joint and dual degrees, one of the modes of TNE, as including: greater collaboration between faculties; increased international visibility; greater collaboration between administrative staff; developing strategic

³⁰⁹Higher education data, UNESCO, 2013: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/tertiary-education.aspx>

³¹⁰Higher education data, UNESCO, 2013: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/tertiary-education.aspx>

³¹¹See: http://www.britishcouncil.org/outgoing_uk_erasmus_student_mobility_by_host_country_-_2007_to_2011.pdf, British Council, retrieved on 18 September 2013

³¹²The Outward Mobility Strategy is due to be published by the International Unit in autumn 2013.

³¹³Aggregate offshore record, HESA 2013

³¹⁴*The shape of things to come: The evolution of transnational education: data, definitions, opportunities and impacts analysis*, British Council, 2013

partnerships; and further programmes and cooperation.³¹⁵ The relationship between soft power and TNE goes both ways: it can flow from established TNE as well as create TNE opportunities. TNE bears out the British Council's argument³¹⁶ that cultural and educational interactions translate into significant soft power.

23. The recently published British Council report *The shape of things to come 2*³¹⁷ identified that there remain substantial market opportunities for UK TNE expansion. Host countries are particularly interested in TNE partnerships with the UK to fill skills gaps and meet education needs. It is anticipated that TNE growth will outstrip international student growth in the coming years; the UK is well positioned to lead on this.

International research collaboration

24. The UK is a world leader in international research collaboration. Forty-six per cent of UK-authored academic papers are co-authored with at least one non-UK researcher.³¹⁸ This figure is higher than any of our major international competitors, bar France.
25. 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.³¹⁹
26. This suggests that international links and networks between researchers are likely to have positive results for the impact of their research. Such collaboration therefore forms part of a virtuous circle that benefits the reputation and influence of UK research: improvements in our research reputation encourage collaboration from researchers overseas; and such collaboration improves our research reputation.

Mobility of academic staff

27. UK universities benefit from the international reputation of the sector through being able to attract academic staff from overseas. As well as increasing the potential pool of talented researchers and teachers from which appointees can be drawn, it is likely that such overseas appointments facilitate international research collaboration, the benefits of which are outlined above.
28. Higher education is becoming increasingly internationalised, with institutions competing with others around the world for research and teaching talent. Such appointees, if from outside the EU, count towards the government's cap on skilled worker migrants, though we note that this cap has not yet been reached in any year since its introduction.

³¹⁵*Joint and Double Degree Programmes in the Global Context*, Obst, Kuder and Banks, 2011

³¹⁶*Trust pays*, British Council, 2012

³¹⁷*The shape of things to come: The evolution of transnational education: data, definitions, opportunities and impacts analysis*, British Council, 2013

³¹⁸*International Comparative Performance of the UK Research Base*, BIS, 2011

³¹⁹ *Ibid*

29. It is important that UK institutions are not put at a competitive disadvantage through a visa system that makes it more difficult to hire academic staff from overseas, or through the *perception* that the UK's visa system is overly restrictive. Such appointees are (by definition) internationally mobile and highly sought after, and are less likely to choose to work in the UK if they feel that they would be unwelcome.

Information exchanges

30. The International Unit works closely with government departments and university leaders to facilitate international delegations. The appeal of the UK's higher education sector is apparent in the high demand from international leaders to participate in mutual exchange and information sharing visits. Ministerial engagement with the International Unit's work in spearheading outgoing missions is a clear indicator of the priority that government accords the higher education sector.
31. Student exchanges are not a new concept, but the popularity of the UK within recent innovative programmes shows its influence and appeal to other nations. A key example of this is Science without Borders, through which up to 10,000 Brazilian students will study in the UK over four years, funded by the Brazilian government. 1,700 Brazilian students were placed in UK institutions in September 2013, treble the previous two cohorts, and demand for places at UK institutions has exceeded expectations for the January 2014 intake. On a practical level, the UK's higher education sector has a significant draw for international students; on a political level, Science without Borders is raising and cementing the UK's profile across the BRICS nations.

Conclusion

32. The strength of the UK higher education sector, through the excellence of its research and teaching and its international reputation, is itself a significant constituent part of the UK's soft power. It also makes a significant indirect contribution, in particular through attracting international students, staff and research collaborators. Both direct and indirect contributions rely on continued investment in our universities.

About Universities UK and the UK Higher Education International Unit

33. Universities UK is the representative organisation for the UK's universities. Founded in 1918, its mission is to be the definitive voice for all universities in the UK, providing high quality leadership and support to its members to promote a successful and diverse higher education sector. With 133 members and offices in London, Cardiff and Edinburgh, it promotes the strength and success of UK universities nationally and internationally.
34. The UK Higher Education International Unit (IU) represents all UK higher education institutions internationally and delivers a number of programmes and initiatives to support the development and sustainability of the UK HE sector's influence and competitiveness in a global environment. It supports the sector's engagement in European Union and Bologna Process policy debates. The IU is funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, Scottish Funding Council, Department for Employment and Learning (Northern

Universities UK and the UK Higher Education International Unit – Written evidence

Ireland), GuildHE, Universities UK, the Higher Education Academy and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. It is located at Universities UK.

September 2013

Dr Peter van Ham, Netherlands Institute of International Relations – Written evidence

Only Two Cheers for Soft Power

Soft power is the postmodern version of propaganda and strategic communication. It has always existed in international politics, but has become more important over the last few decades.

Three reasons present themselves.

First, the post-Cold War faith in an “end of history” has lured us into believing that the world has become normatively harmonious – no more big ideological clashes, but growing convergence on what’s good and proper. In such a world (if it exists, of course), hard power is frowned upon, and differences of opinion and interests require “soft” strategies forging compromise. The logic is straightforward: if differences between major actors in global politics are minor (and manageable), coercion and the use of hard power are not just uncalled-for, but could even be counter-productive, and spoil the dream of the inevitable global normative convergence.

Second, since soft power deals with “attraction rather than coercion and payments”, societal players without military and financial means can play a role, if they are active and smart. Taken together with contemporary technological revolutions (Internet, satellite TV, social media) and the growing “complex interdependence” of economic, political and societal issues (see Nye’s earlier work, from the 1980s), soft power has become the favorite approach of all actors keen on influencing policy-agendas, public opinions, and (ultimately) policy decisions. In today’s media-drenched environment, the scarce resource is not information, but attention. Soft power is a cheap and smart way to get attention, often using inexpensive, new electronic media. This explains the rise of phenomena like celebrity diplomacy, place branding, public diplomacy, as well as Twitter/Facebook revolutions.

Third, the attention to soft power reflects the complacency and decadence of (mainly) Western analysts and policy-makers. Acquiring hard (military) power is not just costly, but has become hard to sell to a Western public that has grown detached from the military and no longer grasps geostrategic problems. Instead, the Western public has been raised to prefer altruistic foreign policy goals, often using a left-liberal agenda focused on humanitarian, global poverty and climate change issues. Rather than investing in costly defense projects and army units, funds are allocated to “international cultural cooperation”, and “inter-faith dialogue” at worst, and “public diplomacy” at best. By doing so, many Western states hope that Kishore Mahbubani will be right, and that we stand at the dawn of a new global governance system uniting regions, civilizations and great powers. The budding “great convergence”, this Singaporean diplomat claims, will be unlocked by the transformative

power of economic modernization and the emergence of a global middle class. For the West, believing in Mahbubani's prophecies is a tremendous leap of fate, and a misguided triumph of imagination over intelligence. By privileging soft over hard power, the West takes the easy (and cheap) way out.

The background sketched above may give the impression that I underestimate the value of soft power as a mode of influence. This is not the case. Thinking strategically about soft power is essential for all responsible states. The US (with its US\$ 800 bn. defense budget) developed a Quadrennial Diplomacy and Defense Review (QDDR, in 2010) to "elevate its civilian power". The UK launched an equally sophisticated approach to public diplomacy in 2008. China as well as Russia now work on public diplomacy as well, acknowledging that image-building and networking are integral aspects of the foreign policies of all states, regardless of their size and capabilities.

The fundamental problem with the debate about soft power is therefore NOT that it might be frivolous in nature, or ambiguous in outcome (although these issues are also tricky – see below). Thinking strategically about soft power is a prerequisite of responsible statecraft. The key problems are of a different nature, and are reflected in the conceptual ambiguity of what power is, and how it can be used in contemporary international politics. To be frank, this vagueness can also be found in the House of Lords Select Committee's Call For Evidence on this matter.

Let me clarify my concerns by pointing out three conceptual and practical problems inherent in most of the thinking about soft power, and its "execution" by (Western) policy-makers.

First, in the Background Brief to this Call for Evidence, reference is made to "the UK's soft power resources", the question of the "possession and deployment of soft power", as well as the "use of soft power". These questions follow from Nye's assumption that soft power is agent-centered, assuming that it is based in resources, which can be used and wielded. This is a serious mistake. Clearly, the UK is the envy of the world in terms of the benefits it can draw from its rich and glorious history, its vibrant and attractive culture (from the English language, to music and the Premier League). Only the US does a bit better. So how can the UK Government use this "soft power", how can it *wield* it, if the need arises? Here the answers are few and far between, and never convincing. The fallacy of soft power is that it prompts a similar vocabulary and mind-set as hard power (based on "resources", which we can "use", or even "deploy"). This is dangerously wrong, leading not only to confusion (which is forgivable), but to major foreign policy mistakes (always inexcusable). Soft power is based on the perceptions of others, and – perhaps counter-intuitively – not a resource we can use, but a relationship we can activate. It gives our Governments voice (attention), and it gives their actions (if we're lucky) credibility, legitimacy and support.

Second, soft power is frequently juxtaposed to hard power. Robert Kagan's famous "Venus vs. Mars" (i.e., Europe vs. US) metaphor comes to mind. This ostensible antagonism suggests

that using hard power would imply losing (or undermining) soft power. The UK, due to its robust strategic culture and remaining military capabilities, has not fully succumbed to this fallacy, in contrast to most of continental Europe. It is important to recognize that the use of hard power often contributes to (rather than detracts from) the credibility and overall impact of one's policies. In most parts of the world (Balkans, Russia, Middle East), words are considered cheap, and the only real measure of one's sincerity and determination is the use (or threat) of hard power. This is why the EU's reputation in, for example, the Middle East is miserable (despite all its ostensible efforts to "wield" soft power), and why the US is respected (despite its track record of military intervention). This is also why the notion of *smart power* (suggested first by the CSIS, in 2012) is important, since it underscores the complex dynamic between hard and soft power.

Third, soft power reflects the societal model we have grown accustomed to in Europe, based on compromise and caring. The EU has been 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 that have led to war. In a way, soft power is the EU's main, if not only currency and unique selling point. The EU prides itself for its normative power, based on leading by example (e.g., on combating climate change). This choice is hardly surprising, since most international actors consider their own societal model superior to others, and hence tend to upload this model to the international system (often by hegemony). By privileging and even (in the case of some countries) rescinding hard power, Europe has intentionally made itself vulnerable to bullying and intimidation of hard-nosed competitors who still value the uses of hard power (China, Russia, etc.). The result is that most of Europe now only accepts as much external threat as it can deal with, and that security is redefined to fit the privileged soft power paradigm and its tool box of dialogue and diplomacy.

This leaves the usual, and ultimately crucial question of What to do? And particularly: How should the UK develop a strategic approach to soft power? Again, let me give three pointers.

First, 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. It is up to the UK to develop a strategy of smart power, and imbuing the EU with a much-needed dose of *Realpolitik* and pragmatism. The UK has to buck the trend of leading by example and reifying multilateralism. Instead, 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 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 – brought together in a smart power strategy – will add to the UK's global influence, and will be the most valuable contribution the UK can make to building a credible EU security culture.

Second, the UK should realize that whatever soft power strategy it adopts and implements, it will always make both friends and enemies. Understanding that soft power cannot be “wielded”, implies that it is created by relationships that are always idiosyncratic. The UK should appreciate that whatever policies it adopts, the reactions of outsiders will be colored by their experiences and prejudices. What is appreciated and loved in one part of the world, will raise suspicion and loathing in other parts. The effective “use” of soft power requires historical and sociological knowledge. It also assumes that policy-makers set priorities in a sophisticated way: which countries/actors/audiences do we want to get on our side, and what is the acceptable amount of blowback? In all soft power strategies, it will be important to assure that the essential “audience” to keep on one’s side should never be forgotten: the UK’s own citizens. This is all the more important since soft power strategies tend to be devised and implemented by professional “internationalists” (diplomats, NGOs), whose tendency to “go native” (and lose touch with national needs and attitudes) undermines a solid domestic base.

Third (and last), soft power needs to be operationalized. All too often, government agencies who claim responsibility (and hence a budget) for managing the country’s soft power (usually under the lofty heading of “international cooperation”), are free to do as they please. Since soft power cannot be measured, evaluation is equally hard. The focus should therefore be on two aspects: public diplomacy and place (or nation) branding. These are two established practices with a growing body of academic knowledge. The rest of the UK’s soft power base should be developed by the country’s vibrant society. The money saved should be spent on developing the hard power resources that are now the victim of austerity measures.

27 September 2013

VICTUS – Written evidence

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1. The UK possesses a unique cultural history that greatly enhances our performance and presence on the global stage; however we can do more to take advantage of our national characteristics to improve our soft power and influence capacity by paying closer attention to the cultures of other nations. Our ability to work cross-culturally is limited at best and damaging at worst. Failure to move with current trends capitalizing on our wealth of past experiences means that we are in danger of being left behind and of being considered ignorant of the importance of cultures beyond our own horizons. Advances in both the UK education system and the defence and security industries could yield enormous benefits in the projection of UK soft power, not only in terms of additional trade and commerce for the UK, but also for the perceptions of our nation as a figure in the International Community.**

INTRODUCTION

- 2. Victus was formed in 2012 to offer language and cultural intelligence capability to both public and private sector companies, and also to individuals involved in international trade and business. Our services are built around the work of our highly trained language and cultural intelligence specialists who are able to deploy in all manner of working environments around the world, in order to assist our clients with their liaison and cultural discourse requirements and to help them establish links with international counterparts that will lead to further opportunities. By providing an enhanced level of cultural intelligence across international boundaries, we are able to support the working cultural dynamic in a manner that is of mutual benefit to both our clients and their partners overseas. Victus is currently involved in projects with government agencies, private and commercial clients, charities and NGOs.**
- 3. We believe that our business aims and ethos correlate closely with the agenda of the House of Lords Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's influence, and we welcome the opportunity to provide evidence to the House.**
- 4. This submission is offered for consideration by the Managing Director of Victus, Benjamin Clayson and the Director of Research, Andrew Gregory. Our evidence demonstrates our position and opinions on soft power and influence in their broadest terms and specifically considers the impact of Cultural Intelligence on both UK defence and security, and education.**

THE VALUE OF SOFT POWER AND INFLUENCE

- 5. Despite the high level of value attributed to soft power and influence as a facet of international discourse, many UK institutions have a considerable shortage of corporate cultural intelligence and a chronic lack of understanding of the practical**

systems and methods that can be incorporated into their operations in order to increase their soft power and influence quotient.

6. One way in which the government can help to consolidate and develop the soft power and cultural appeal that the UK already possesses, is by facilitating and promoting an enhanced interest in other, diverse cultures from around the world. It is not enough for foreign nationals to know that we are worth cooperating with simply because of our values and assets, we must be equally interested in and aware of the cultures of the other peoples with whom we wish to engage. In the first of the Committee's oral hearings³²⁰ Hugh Elliot stated that Nye's definition of soft power and influence is essentially the work of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office writ large. Whilst we encourage this wholeheartedly as a mantra for the FCO, we also believe that if the UK is to capitalise fully on its soft power assets it must not unfairly place the majority of the required workload on the shoulders of one government department. As Rory Stewart MP explained to the Conservative Middle East Council³²¹, with a budget of only £ 2 billion spread across the resources of every British embassy around the globe, the FCO faces a monumental task in providing all the services currently required of it, and clearly any further demands must attract the appropriate levels of additional funding in order to be successful.
7. The defining characteristics of soft power and influence, that are both difficult to quantify and informed by the very situation they are designed to affect, mean that it is often easier to overlook these troublesome attributes rather than taking the time to examine them more thoroughly. As a consequence, we believe that this leads to situations wherein the value of soft power is overlooked and as a consequence opportunities for enhanced understanding and cooperation are missed. Perhaps the greatest value of paying closer attention to the hopes and desires and cultural legacies of other nations lies in the development of a reputation as a nation that listens before it acts. In terms of enhancing UK credibility in all areas of global trade and commerce, few things could have such a significant effect in return for such a seemingly small investment.

IMPROVING PROJECTIONS OF UK SOFT POWER

8. The UK already invests significantly in the development of these capabilities, and both individuals and corporate bodies are keen to investigate any readily accessible thesis that may assist them in achieving their goals in relation to intercultural communications.
9. Individuals tasked with working on issues of soft-power and influence including Linguists, Cultural Advisors and media representatives to name but a few, need to be afforded the appropriate levels of professional trust and acumen that will allow them to have maximum effect within their area of work. There is a tendency to regard soft power and influence as intrinsically vague and difficult to quantify, and as a consequence of the problems in pigeon-holing influence due to the effects being perceived rather than directly observed, the value of work in these areas is often regarded by others as questionable.

³²⁰ Evidence Session No.1, 10 June 2013.

³²¹ CMEC Policy Forum, 14 March 2012.

10. The efforts of subject matter experts (SMEs) in soft power, influence and language and cultural intelligence, need to be relied upon and embraced in order to be effective. This can be affected by the personal skillset of the individual involved as much as the nature of their task, however we believe that a lack of appreciation and understanding of the value of the work of experts in this field is one of the defining and limiting characteristics of current UK international policy and business.
11. In order to improve UK projections of soft power we must encourage the development of careers that incorporate the use of soft power and influence, both within the diplomatic service and also externally. Greater intrinsic value must be attributed to the field in the psyches of our nation's people, with an increased awareness of the world beyond our borders and a more outwardly-looking national attitude.

DEFENCE AND SECURITY AND SOFT POWER

12. When looking at the work of HM Armed Forces in contemporary operational environments, it is increasingly the case that hard power alone in the form of physical force and intervention does not lead to the resolution of conflict. Though it is an oversimplification to state that more soft power would have translated into greater success in the recent operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, one can't help believing that a soft or 'smart' power approach would have at least deflected some of the criticisms levelled at the UK and our coalition partners of being culturally ignorant. The UK government in common with many others around the world has recognised that gaining 'hearts and minds' is of fundamental importance on the modern battlefield. However the phrase has become hackneyed and over used to such an extent that it is often rendered meaningless and is regarded by many as being a weaker, more emotional facet of operations. Lip service is paid to a concept that should form a core element of all levels of planning and operations.
13. When preparation for the deployment of troops into a counterinsurgency environment is heavily biased towards identifying and destroying an enemy who dress, speak and live differently to ourselves, it is hardly surprising that a soldier will regard all local nationals as the same potential threat. In a counterinsurgency theatre, influence takes primacy over direct action. Yet current UK defence spending directs a negligible proportion towards generating language and cultural intelligence capability, and supporting media and psychological operations.
14. Looking specifically at the UK military approach to using language assets to improve soft power capabilities in Iraq and Afghanistan; following the end of operation TELIC in Iraq in May 2009, HM Forces cut almost all investment in the maintenance and generation of Arabic language capability. As a consequence, many service personnel who had invested years of their careers in developing what they believed was a highly regarded specialist skill that would greatly increase their operational effectiveness, were returned to their units to work in roles that neither capitalised on their experiences and training nor gave them the opportunity to maintain their skills in preparation for any future operations in Arabic speaking countries. As an example, one bi-lingual, native Arabic speaker who had been involved in intelligence operations in Iraq in 2008 was returned to his service to take up a junior position as a store man.

15. A 2013 study conducted by DOLSU (Defence Operational Language Support Unit) concluded that emergency measures must be implemented in order to meet the current defence requirement for Arabic linguists. This is hardly surprising given the short-sightedness of previous policy and the treatment of key language assets. Whilst no military can be expected to invest in a speculative, permanent, full-time language capability generation programme in preparation for a hypothetical situation in multiple operational environments, it may be reasonable to suggest that a language as important to UK foreign policy as Arabic historically has been, should be considered an enduring priority.
16. In 2010 the Army established the DCSU (Defence Cultural Specialist Unit) in an attempt to create a conduit for senior commanders in Afghanistan to receive and incorporate language and cultural intelligence into their operational planning. Whilst this is clearly a move in the right direction, the decision to restrict the opportunities to serve with DCSU to personnel holding rank as Senior Non-Commissioned Officers and above creates a situation wherein the valuable insights offered by DCSU personnel will be heard and noticed only at a command level. What this fails to provide is an approach that incorporates bottom-up development of institutional cultural intelligence that relies on and encourages all levels of seniority, from the most junior soldier upwards, to engage with local nationals.
17. The net effect of increased cultural awareness and appreciation of the value of soft power and influence in the military context is of enormous benefit as an addition to traditional military hard power. In combination, and with sensitivity to the specific requirements of the operation or campaign, a balance can be struck that has proved throughout history to be the most effective means to progress beyond the immediate situation when guided by a well-informed grand strategy. The UK military continues to operate in extremely difficult circumstances around the world and must be applauded for what it achieves. It is because of their willingness to learn, adaptability and not least the levels of exposure that HM Forces receive in front of international partners, that make this one of the most critical areas in which to invest in the development of cultural intelligence for the benefit of UK soft power and influence.

ENCOURAGING SOFT POWER AND INFLUENCE THROUGH EDUCATION

18. Through the active promotion and incorporation of support and influence work and taking practical steps to encourage the development of individual and corporate cultural intelligence throughout the UK, we can take quantifiable, practical steps towards improving our soft power capability.
19. Education is critical to this process. It is essential that efforts are made to alter the perceptions of intercultural discourse and integration as well-meaning and naïve, towards an appreciation of the power of soft power. The UK should take a progressive approach that openly demonstrates an eagerness to understand and embrace other cultural ideologies and practices, that no longer relies on romanticised stereotypes that rely too heavily on the appeal of the days of the empire, and that acknowledges without shame or fear, that the position of our country on the world stage has changed.
20. Soft Power germinates in the many small interactions that take place between individuals hundreds of times over in a single day rather than the large symbolic

interactions between national institutions. The interactions of tourists and locals often do more to effect perceptions of a culture than meetings between diplomats. We believe that not only does increased knowledge and understanding of other cultures assist the UK as a nation, but also the individual through increased job prospects and better appreciation of their standing in the global community.

21. The teaching of Religious Education and Citizenship Education in schools are excellent vehicles to foster an understanding of the importance of countries and cultures. Too often these subjects are given minimum classroom time, and as a consequence many young people leave education with little or no interest in cultures other than their own. In common with the military example, these are seen as soft rather than hard subjects and as a consequence are often overlooked or side-lined.
22. The decision not to include RE within the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects has proven disastrous for the subject in many schools and is something that could very easily be rectified by classifying it as a humanities subject alongside Geography and History. We do however commend the policy ensuring the continuation of Citizenship Education as part of the National Curriculum.
23. The study of languages has been in steady decline since the decision was taken to change the statutory requirement for a language to be studied until the age of 16. The requirement for teenagers to take a language at GCSE was ended by the last Labour government in 2004 which led to a significant decrease in the numbers of students studying languages. An uptake in those opting to study languages at age 14 has been seen through the introduction of the EBacc measure; however this is still not enough to ensure that the UK has a ready supply of individuals with the necessary language skills to promote our national interests successfully abroad in international markets.
24. It is essential that as well as promoting the value of learning about other cultures and developing language skills at secondary level, we encourage a general rise in the level of cultural intelligence across those leaving our education system. Cultural intelligence is not culture specific but is rather a way of thinking that encourages interest in others, and a manner of regarding the world that promotes cooperation and integration without losing one's own culture. Improving cultural intelligence at an individual level has benefits for both the individual and ultimately for the UK.

CONCLUSIONS

25. In conclusion, the UK is in a very fortunate position due to our history and our domestic cultural and ethnic diversity. We must capitalise on this if we are to make the most of our future in the International Community and the global marketplace. In light of the points discussed in this submission and the continuing requirement for development of UK influence capability, we respectfully offer the following recommendations to the House:
 - Incentives should be given for public servants to specialise within cultural or linguistic fields in order that they may make careers through gaining and developing advanced knowledge of other cultures. This proposal may be unpalatable during a period of

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austerity and continued spending cuts, however an investment in the enduring international trade capability of the UK may warrant a degree of protection from this.

- Government should improve the recruitment and retention of language and cultural specialists in the Armed Forces by implementing practical measures such as career and financial benefits. These cannot be false promises and must reward service personnel for their commitments to this field.
- Religious Education should form part of any English Baccalaureate measures in UK Secondary schools. This will raise the status of the subject, encourage more students to study it at GCSE level and thereby raise the quality of teaching at Key Stage 3 which would impact upon all students.
- Government should invest in the teaching of Cultural Intelligence in educational institutions as a means of ensuring future generations are better prepared for a world of greater international connectedness and to improve their individual standing as ambassadors for the UK

September 2013

VisitBritain – Written evidence

About VisitBritain

VisitBritain is the strategic body for inbound tourism. A non-departmental public body, funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, it is responsible for promoting Britain worldwide and developing its visitor economy.

VisitBritain has been directed by Government to run a £100 million marketing programme across a four year period (2010/11-2014/15). VisitBritain also plays a unique role in the cross-Government global GREAT campaign by promoting Britain direct to consumers. Together these campaigns aim to attract 4.6 million additional visitors, spending £2.6 billion, sustaining jobs and supporting economic growth across the UK.

Tourism is a massive invisible export, earning £18bn in foreign exchange for the UK. Independent analysis shows that, with the right marketing and policy, Britain could attract 40 million visitors a year by 2020 (a 9 million increase on today). This would deliver £8.7 billion in additional spend by overseas visitors annually (at today's prices) and support an additional 200,000 additional jobs across the UK. VisitBritain has developed a clear strategy to deliver this ambition.

In this response tourism refers to all inbound travel to Britain encompassing people visiting Britain for a holiday, for business, short term study or to visit friends and family.

Summary of VisitBritain's Response

1. Tourism is one of the UK's strongest assets for creating soft power and turning it into hard economic benefit.
2. As digital advances and globalisation have made soft power more important, so too has tourism's ability to contribute to soft power.
3. As the national tourism agency and strategic body for inbound tourism, VisitBritain is one of the UK's most important soft power instruments. VisitBritain also works closely with other soft power instruments including cultural institutions such as the Royal Shakespeare Company and British Museum, the English Premier League and BBC.
4. Government has an important role in supporting soft power through creating and funding instruments of soft power and creating the environment and conditions within which soft power can be operated.
5. In spite of its size, the UK remains a world leader in soft power, thanks largely to its competitive tourism industry, successes like the Olympics, strong education sector and institutions with global renown such as the BBC, British Museum and English Premier League. As other nations turn their focus to soft power we need to continue to raise our game to ensure that we remain a leader in the sphere.

The meaning and importance of soft power

What is your understanding of ‘soft power’?

1.0 If power is the ability to influence the behaviour of others to get the outcomes you want, soft power is the ability to get what you want through attraction, rather than through coercion or payment (‘hard’ power). Simply put, it is the ability to achieve your objectives through winning hearts and minds, rather than through fear or money.

1.1 ‘Soft’ can imply ‘less effective’ and ‘less important’ but well deployed, soft power is a potent force in international relations and can prevent other, more costly, forms of intervention. It is most effective in building trust and relationships, and can be valuable in creating or maintaining ties between countries in periods when diplomatic relations are strained. At a time when Sino-UK relations at government level for example have been cool, VisitBritain has increased its promotional effort and visits from China to the UK have grown significantly, preserving and building the relationship.

1.2 Our soft power assets are significant in developed countries such as Germany and the USA, but soft power is also valuable in countries in which our historic, cultural and diplomatic ties are less developed and knowledge of Britain is weaker. Broadly speaking these are emerging powers, countries like South Korea, Mexico and Indonesia whose economies are growing fast.

1.3 In addition, it is clear that sustainable economic growth in the UK will be export led, and soft power helps create the conditions for and facilitates international trade. Soft power is therefore an important asset in the context of the current economic recession.

1.4 Soft power tends to be exercised through connections outside of government; indeed Government-sponsored influencing can be treated with suspicion or dismissed as propaganda such as individuals talking through social media. The rapid increase in the use of social media across the globe – Facebook has over 1.15 billion active monthly users – has meant that the reach and potency of soft power has grown.

What does it mean for the work that you do?

2.0 VisitBritain is the strategic body for inbound tourism. A non-departmental public body, funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, it is responsible for promoting Britain worldwide and developing its visitor economy.

2.1 Tourism is one of Britain’s strongest sectors for creating soft power, as by definition it showcases the most attractive side of the UK and its people. Britain’s tourism offer and marketing is an integral part of its image building and brand, which in turn influences not just whether people come for a holiday, but whether they choose to trade with and invest in British companies or relocate their businesses here.

2.2 Personal experience of a country has a profound and lasting influence on people’s views about that country, and typically increases their interest, understanding and empathy for that country’s people and values. Visitors to Britain return home with far more than a passport stamp and some holiday snaps. They return with an enhanced knowledge and appreciation of Britain and this carries through to other spheres of life – including politics and business.

Research shows that people who have visited Britain are more positive than those who have not.

2.3 Visitors also connect with friends and family while they are here through sites like Flickr which allows them to share photos and Facebook where visitors can ‘check in’ to attractions, hotels and restaurants – providing instant and direct feedback and recommendations. It is important for us to operate in this sphere and we have a strong presence across all the major social media sites. We also recently launched an inspirational image-based website ‘Love Wall’ which allows users to build and share their own travel itinerary.

2.4 While this long term tourism impact is difficult to quantify, comparing the views of those who have visited Britain collated through the Nations Brand Index with those who have not gives some indication of this soft power effect.³²² As Figure 1 demonstrates, not only are those who have visited the UK more likely to be willing to live and work in the UK, think of it as a good place to study and do business but they are more positive about other key export, governance and cultural attributes. They are more likely to think of the UK as a country that cares about equality in society, that makes a major contribution to innovation in science and technology and that behaves responsibly in the areas of international peace and security.

Figure 1: Affinity with the UK

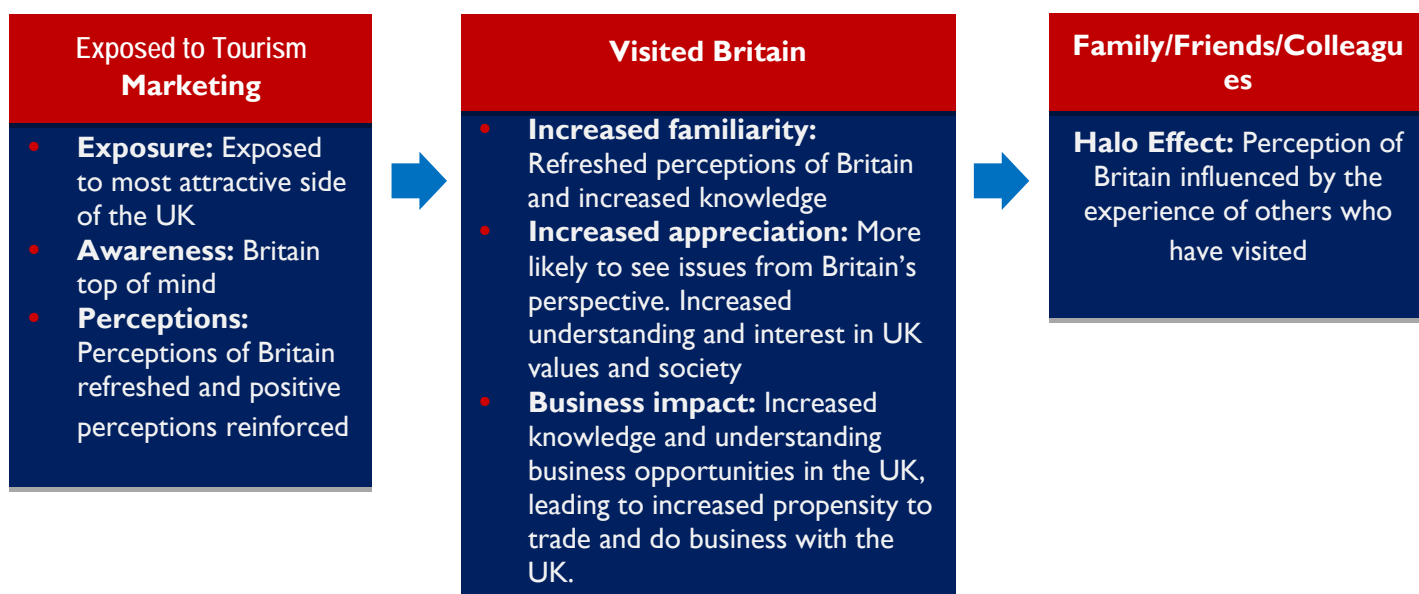


Source: Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index, 2012 Report

2.5 There is also a wider ‘halo’ effect, as visitors to Britain also act as ambassadors for the UK, telling their family, friends and colleagues about their visit and influencing their perceptions. This first takes place while they are in Britain through social media and the internet and is reinforced when they return home.

³²² The Nations Brand Index (NBI) is an annual independent online survey, run by GfK in partnership with Simon Anholt, looking at the views of people in 20 countries around the world about 50 nations. The survey is carried out annually, enabling long term changes to be tracked, and provides a stable measure of the power and appeal of each country’s ‘brand image’ by examining six dimensions of national competence: Exports, Governance, Culture, People, Tourism and Immigration and Investment. Each year, approximately 20,000 adults ages 18 and up are interviewed.

Figure 2: Tourism’s contribution to the UK’s soft power



2.6 Tourism directly translates soft power into hard economic benefit:

- Tourism is a significant export. Overseas visitors spent a record £18.7 billion in the UK in 2012, contributing £3.2 billion to the nation’s coffers directly in taxation.
- Tourism is a key economic sector which is delivering growth and employment. It contributes £115 billion to UK GDP and employs 2.6 million people; 9% of the UK economy on both measures. 44% of those employed in tourism are under the age of thirty.
- Independent analysis by Oxford Economics shows that by 2020, with the right marketing actions and tourism policy, Britain could reasonably expect to attract 40 million overseas visitors a year. Critically, this could deliver £8.7 billion additional foreign exchange earnings at today's prices and support more than 200,000 additional jobs.

In this digitally connected world, is soft power becoming more important? If so, why, and will this trend continue?

3.0 Digital advances, particularly the exponential rise in mobile technology and social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, have extended the reach of soft power as they provide a means of direct and instant peer to peer communication across different nation states. There is every reason to suppose that mobile technology and digital innovation will continue, and that an ever greater proportion of the global population will become digitally connected.

3.1 This is reflected in our use of digital media to reach potential visitors, which is at the centre of our international marketing. We are a leading tourist board in social and digital media and have merged with No 10’s suite of pages ‘This is GREAT Britain’. We now have 2.2 million highly-engaged Facebook

VisitBritain’s Digital Reach
Twitter followers: 144,000
Facebook fans: 1.9 million
Weibo followers in China: over 245,000
VisitBritain TV: 20 million views a year
VisitBritain.com: 800,000 views per month

and Weibo fans and have been acclaimed as one of the most influential tourist board on Twitter. We also use e-CRM to communicate with nearly 2 million potential visitors and our international reach has been strengthened by our global partnership with Yahoo!, one of the world's most visited homepages.

3.2 Digital advances however must be seen against a backdrop of broader advances in transportation, telecommunications and infrastructure which have accelerated the process of international integration and interdependence between nations. In eroding the power of governments, this globalisation has increased the importance of soft power.

3.3 Contact between nations has historically been elite-to-elite (through ambassadors and royal courts), became open to many through cinema and broadcasting in the 20th century and has now entered a phase of people to people, through the internet and travel.

3.4 Traditionally the preserve of elites, open skies agreements, low cost air travel, visa waivers and economic growth have been major drivers of tourism growth. Concurrently, the growth of the middle classes globally has increased aspiration to travel. Initially travel is inter-regional but as markets mature visitors become more adventurous, travelling further and more frequently. Last year the absolute number of global international tourists passed the 1 billion mark. In 1964 when the International Passenger Survey began to measure the number of visitors coming to Britain, the UK welcomed 3.3 million overseas visits: in 2012 it welcomed 31 million.

3.5 Though Joseph Nye first coined the phrase 'soft power' in 1990, soft power has long formed a part of nation states' diplomatic arsenal. Digital advances and globalisation have however made soft power more important, just as tourism's ability to contribute to soft power grown.

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?

4.0 Tourism is one of the UK's strongest soft power assets. As the national tourism agency and strategic body for inbound tourism, VisitBritain is one of the UK's most important soft power instruments. We conduct robust evaluation to gauge the economic contribution of our work to UK plc. In the Financial Year 2011/12:

- The financial value of our work overseas was £503.2 million, against a target of £375 million.
- Our work with commercial partners resulted in bookings worth an additional £89 million.
- Our support of the British trade resulted in £9.9 million export earnings.
- Our PR activities generated more than 28,000 individual pieces of TV, radio, print and online coverage, with the advertising value equivalent of £3.7 billion.

4.1 Figures for the 2012/13 financial year will be available in October 2013.

4.2 Non-tourism brands and partners can play an active role in broadening and deepening interest in and recognition of Britain as a destination. Perceptions of a nation's image and brand are not just influenced by marketing campaigns, but by the products, places and activities associated with that country. Partnership is therefore central to our approach and we work closely with a number of other soft power actors:

GREAT Campaign

4.3 We are a key player in the cross-Government GREAT campaign which aims to highlight why Britain is a GREAT place to visit, and in which to study, do business and invest. In bringing together all the government bodies that operate overseas under a common brand, including the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, UK Trade & Investment and the British Council, GREAT provides a strong platform to leverage Britain's soft power assets.



4.4 We understand what motivates people to travel to Britain and what activities they enjoy while here, and have used this to develop tourism pillars which we use across our markets. Our strengths include our rich heritage and culture, while scenic beauty and welcome are relative weakness.

4.5 Our GREAT tourism campaign promotes Britain directly to consumers through seven broad themes, namely culture, heritage, countryside, music, sport, shopping and food. It directly showcases some of Britain's soft power assets such as the British Museum.

English Premier League

4.6 The Premier League is much more than the UK's most popular sporting competition - it's a powerful economic agent which makes an important contribution to Britain's soft power. Matches are shown in 212 territories and the league has a global audience of 4.8 billion. Interest in football and in the Premier League is growing fastest in markets where our economic interests are growing fastest. A third of residents in China say they have a strong interest in the Premier League and this is even higher in emerging markets like Malaysia (42%) and Indonesia (51%). People around the world do not just watch Premiership football - 900,000 fans come to Britain annually to experience a game first-hand in the home of football, contributing £706 million to UK plc. On average each fan spends nearly £800 per visit, £200 more than the average overseas visitor.

4.7 We have long recognised football's potential to boost inbound tourism and have worked with the Premier League to convert the global interest into a desire to travel to Britain since 2008. Last season alone we generated £4.5 million worth of football themed coverage, reaching over 70 million people across the world, and secured interviews with five top overseas players in which they shared their experiences of living and playing football in Britain. These included an interview with Manchester United's Shinji Kagawa which has already been viewed 1.5 million times. In light of this success, we have renewed our

partnership with the Premier League for another three seasons and will soon launch a new *Football is GREAT* campaign.

BBC

4.8 The BBC is a beacon of soft power. BBC Worldwide has an audience of 100 million, is a trusted source of news and information and communicates British culture and values across the world. We partnered with the BBC international i-player in 2011 and they showed our *Britain You're Invited* advert around the world. More recently, we worked with the BBC Motion Gallery to produce 40 short films covering top attractions and key Olympic sites such as Much Wenlock and Lee Valley that broadcasters could use free of charge (Australian Channel Foxtel aired every single short film).

Monarchy

4.9 Britain's monarchy is an important part of its history and identity. The world's media was won-over when Prince William married Catherine Middleton in 2011 and media interest in the royal couple, particularly in the US, has remained strong since. Our marketing seeks to leverage this coverage, showcasing Britain's royal heritage, sites with royal connections across Britain and, since the birth of Prince George, Britain's family friendly offer.

Olympic Legacy

4.10 Monocle magazine's annual soft power survey placed Britain in the top spot for the first time in 2012, thanks to the Olympics and its opening ceremony.

4.11 Hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games provided an unprecedented opportunity to Britain centre stage, refresh out-dated perceptions and showcase the whole country as an attractive place to visit, country that welcomes international visitors. We did a first class job leveraging the Games which boosted perceptions of Britain. We developed and are now implementing a clear strategy to convert international interest into long term economic benefit for tourism businesses across the UK and the exchequer. Our ambition is to attract 40 million visits by 2020. This year (January-July 2013) the volume of visits has increased by 4% and value of visits by 13%.

*The traditional view of the United Kingdom - bowler hats and umbrellas, royals and high tea - has become tired and clichéd. From sport to design, music to film the UK of the 21st century is rather different than its previous incarnations. **The Britain that the country has become was best summed up in the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games.***

Monocle Soft Power Survey

positioning Britain as a

Are the Government doing enough to help the UK maximize 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?

5.0 There is broad consensus that soft power is most potent when exercised independently of government. It is argued that 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. While it is imperative that government maintain the lightest possible footprint, it does have an important role in supporting soft power:

Creating and funding instruments of soft power

5.1 Government has an important role in creating and funding instruments of soft power, although the accepted wisdom is that these are most effective if arm's length. Government can also help bring together key players, agree key audiences and messages.

5.2 The GREAT campaign is a good example of how this can work in practice. It is funded and is co-ordinated by central government to capitalise on Britain's showcasing during 2012 and deliver the Olympic legacy but delivered by individual government departments and arm's length bodies. Evaluation shows that it has been effective in highlighting why Britain is a GREAT place to visit, and in which to study, do business and invest.

5.3 We estimate that 90 million people had an opportunity to see the first wave of our high impact advertising.

Evaluation by Ipsos MORI suggests that strong intention to visit Britain has increased both within three years and within a year. Those who recall the tourism image campaign are more than twice as likely to strongly intend to visit in the next three years or year than those who do not recall it, and four times as likely to say they have already booked a future trip to Britain.

5.4 Our GREAT tourism activity has generated visits worth £200.25 million, but our core activities also deliver a strong return for Government investment. Between April 2011 and March 2013 we directly contributed £900 million to the UK economy (in spending by overseas visitors) through our four year £100 million marketing programme. This is a return on investment of 18 to 1. In addition, we successfully attracted £24 million in match funding from the private sector – doubling the Government's investment in international marketing.

5.5 While GREAT funding enabled us to harness the Olympic Games full tourism potential by running our largest ever marketing campaign, tourism is fiercely competitive and we have to work hard to keep up with better resourced competitors.

5.6 To change perceptions of a country requires sustained effort, as successful branding campaigns like Incredible India and 100% Pure New Zealand demonstrate. The scale of the global coverage of the Olympics created a step-change in the way people overseas view Britain. Perhaps unsurprisingly given Team GB's performance, the Nations Brand Index showed that perceptions of British sport improved. So too however did perceptions of Britain's culture, natural scenic beauty and 'overall brand', indicating that Games coverage influenced perceptions of Britain more widely. Perhaps most importantly, perceptions of the welcome improved – for the first time Britain was in the top 10 destinations for welcome. Welcome is a key indicator for tourism – visitors who feel welcome in a destination are much more likely to recommend it.

5.7 To really entrench and build on this positioning requires a sustained campaign and sustained investment rather than the uncertainty of an annual funding cycle.

5.8 Competitors like Tourism Australia and Brand USA are extremely well resourced. Tourism Australia for example currently spends AU\$13 million (£8.5 million) per year in China alone, which supports an image campaign with TV and print advertising, as well as promotional films on the metro and in office buildings. Australia has also recently signed a three-year marketing deal with China Eastern Airlines worth almost AU\$9 million (£6

million), as well as a memorandum of understanding with China Union Pay. In comparison, VisitBritain's budget for China in 2013/14 is £2.5 million.

Creating the environment and conditions within which soft power can be operated

5.9 While ensuring that soft power instruments have sufficient resource is important, so too is securing a conducive policy environment.

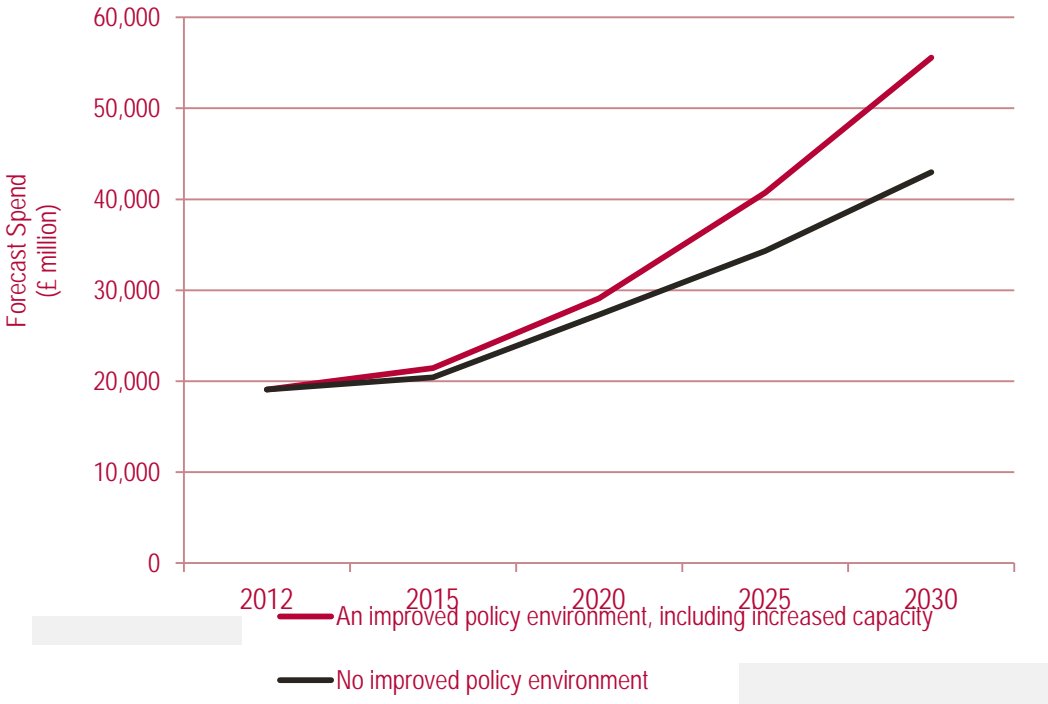
5.10 Tourism Economics has modelled future inbound demand for British tourism under a number of different scenarios. The first assumes that the policy environment becomes more favourable. The second assumes that no policy changes are made. Figure 3 illustrates the extent of the influence that policy decisions exert on visitor spend.

5.11 Total visitor spend is forecast to rise to nearly £43 billion by 2030 should policy remain the same (2012 price). If policy improvements are implemented, this could rise to over £55 billion. This is over £12 billion additional spending, with a resultant potential for more than 315,000 additional jobs, right across the UK.

5.12 The two most important policy areas for inbound tourism are visas and aviation:

- The majority of overseas visitors to the UK do not need a visa but 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.
- Aviation is an essential enabler for inbound tourism to Britain: 73% of visitors to the UK come by air. Capacity at the UK's airports, particularly in the South East, is constrained and new airport capacity is needed to accommodate tourism growth and ensure that Britain remains a competitive destination for airlines and their passengers.

Figure 3: Projected Real Spend by Inbound Visitors (2012 Prices)



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?

6.0 In spite of its size, the UK remains a world leader in soft power, thanks largely to its competitive tourism industry, successes like the Olympics, strong education sector and institutions with global renown such as the BBC, British Museum and English Premier League. Our position is not guaranteed, and we will lose our standing in the world unless we can compete with the established and emerging soft power superpowers.

Britain remains a modern day cultural superpower. Staying competitive in 'soft power' for decades to come means nurturing these assets and valuing them as much as military, economic and diplomatic advantages
 William Hague, Foreign Secretary

6.1 China is investing heavily in soft power instruments and has enjoyed some success, albeit this is undermined by overt government involvement. China has created some 200 Confucius Institutes around the world to teach its language and culture and the number of foreign tourists visiting mainland China has also increased dramatically to 57.6 million in 2012, making it the world's third most visited country.

6.2 Soft power has been employed more successfully in South Korea. Since the late 90s a new wave of South Korean *hallyu* culture, exported through TV dramas such as *Jumong* and K-pop hits, has transformed the country's standing in Asia to such an extent that the foreign

ministry talks of *hallyu* diplomacy. The Korean Tourism Organisation supports hallyu diplomacy through its Buzz Korea campaign. Pop star Psy is working with the organisation through short videos about South Korean culture. According to the New Yorker: “Hallyu has erased South Korea’s regional reputation as a brutish emerging industrial nation where everything smelled of garlic and kimchi, and replaced it with images of prosperous cosmopolitan life”.

6.3 Another way to exert soft power is to give something positive to the world. Norway for instance, a small (but wealth country) awards Nobel prizes every year, and this altruism and recognition of excellence in human endeavour is widely acknowledged and appreciated. Norway is seen and sought after as a nation of conflict resolution and trusted as a broker of conflicts, punching above its weight, due to its exercise of soft power.

6.4 Foreign ministries in developed and developing nations alike increasingly understand the value of cultural exports and diplomatic liveness as military might and financial clout are no longer considered sufficient to maintain influence. It is cliché but nonetheless true that Britain is not simply competing against the traditional industrial economies of Europe and

The Soft Power Competitive Landscape

Large countries with established soft power instruments – Countries like the UK, France, Japan and Spain have a long history of using soft power and have established institutions and structures. As a general rule, their budgets for soft power instruments are under pressure, if not falling.

Large countries with fast emerging soft power profiles – This group consists of the BRIC countries and fast growing economies like South Korea and Taiwan. These are nations that are expanding their cultural relations activities, opening new institutions around the world and increasing budgets. The proliferation of Confucius institutes (China) and Korean Tourist Organisation’s use of rapper Psy (of Gangnam Style fame) in their advertising serve as good examples. The countries in this category see soft power as an important aspect of making their presence felt on the world stage and helping people understand who they are.

Smaller countries with established soft power presence – This group is composed of smaller nations such as Norway with clear well-established soft power instruments and clear identity.

Smaller countries with emerging soft power resources – By far the majority, these countries struggle to make their mark on global consciousness.

North America or the BRIC powerhouses for soft power, but countries such as Indonesia, Vietnam, Turkey, Mexico and South Korea.

6.5 For no soft power vector is this truer than for tourism. The market place for global tourism is getting tougher. Absolute numbers of international visits passed the 1 billion mark in 2012, but Britain’s global position has been in decline. The growth in global travel over the last two decades means that Britain is competing against more destinations, for a larger number of potential visitors.

6.6 We face more and better resourced competitors who are aligning their marketing and policy. We have developed in-depth competitor profiles for each of the most successful tourist boards to identify best practice and closely monitor their activity.

Country / Tourist Board	Overall budget 2011/12
UK / VisitBritain	£51.5m (Including £14m private funding)
Australia / Tourism Australia	£92.6m
France / Atout France	£65.6m (Including £30m raised from subscriptions)
Switzerland / Schweiz Tourismus	£52.2m
Canada / Canadian Tourism Commission	£63.2m
USA / Brand USA	£173.6m
Germany / Deutsche Zentrale für Tourismus	£31.1m
New Zealand / New Zealand Tourism	£60.8m

Further Information:

Thank you for taking our comments into consideration. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss any points raised in our response further with the Select Committee.

September 2013

Walpole British Luxury – Written evidence

How important is a country's soft power? What evidence is there that soft power makes a difference?

Walpole believes that soft power is very important. Our view is it is just as real as the hard variety. Long term, it can be more effective – and is almost completely benign and positive in its impact (not something that can be said about hard power). Of course the problem is that this is hard to prove, the term is used loosely and its definition often elusive.

The reason for this unequivocal stance is that Walpole looks at Soft Power through the lens of the European Luxury Industry and our business model. And in this context we are quite certain that it benefits our sector.

The Luxury market has delivered double-digit growth year on year since 2008 and, despite some uncertainties expects to see continued healthy growth in both sales and margins. The global industry is dominated by European brands and this looks set to continue in the medium term. Despite much talk, very few luxury brands have emerged from fast-growing markets such as China or even the more mature markets such as North America. Europe remains the heartland for luxury. Remarkable given how much the world has changed and how most advantages have been moving eastwards.

The main reason for this is that most affluent consumers still prefer European luxury brands rather than the home-grown variety. Or to put it another way they are only prepared to pay luxury prices for products, which are backed up by brands, which deliver reassurance on **certain key criteria**.

These include what can be loosely called **cultural aspects**, which European brands luckily have in abundance. By cultural we mean the hard-to-define but critical components of a brand's reputation that is fed by a national reputation for certain **craft skills** often related to a country, region or city (for example, leather-working in Florence) or **quality** (English vegetable-tanned bridle leather). This is often reinforced by the **heritage** or length of time that that skill has been practised in that region. However while these values are critical in establishing the 'Respect' that is necessary to sustain success, luxury brands also require sufficient 'Love' from consumers, by which we mean our products have to continue to excite and be seen as fresh, relevant and, above all, stylish. This requires high levels of ongoing **creativity**.

In the context of luxury, creativity consists of two critical components: a) design skills and b) marketing. The former to keep the products exciting and relevant. The latter to keep telling the brand story in a way that engages consumers of different nationalities and generations on an ongoing basis. In most cases this brand story, includes to a greater or lesser extent certain national characteristics. Thus this sort of creativity, which could be described, as **applied or commercial creativity** is also a very important soft power asset. Luckily it is also something the UK has in abundance (see more on this below). Indeed many of our most successful British luxury brands are new (Jimmy Choo, Anya Hindmarch, Mulberry) which rely not on heritage but on design and marketing creativity as well as clever use of a somewhat quirky British identity.

Taken together these **cultural and creative aspects of national and brand reputation are significant soft power assets**. They have long been important to the success of the luxury industry, even if it is only recently that they might be described as Soft Power.

Accordingly Walpole has long held the view that **national soft power is a critical and often overlooked asset for the success of the European luxury sector**, especially in Italy, France, Germany, Spain and the UK. It has therefore worked with other European luxury organisations to get governments and decision-makers to appreciate this more in order than policy-making can take this into account. We were therefore very pleased when the European Commission formally recognised the industry as a Key Driver of the European economy.

We also believe that luxury brands are not just recipients of the benefits of positive national soft power but contribute to their country's positive reputation in a **beneficial cycle**. We also think that they act as **'ambassadors'**, who often communicate contemporary national values more effectively and in a more relevant way (to consumers in key overseas markets) than governments. These thoughts are developed more fully in a paper produced by Walpole's Guy Salter in June 2011 (Diplomacy by Other Means).

In addition to our belief that a soft power approach is key to the luxury industry's continued success, we also believe that aspects of our model are relevant to European nations, as they struggle to find their competitive edge in an ever-flatter world (more of this in the last section).

In a digitally connected world is soft power of increasing importance? If so, why?

Very much so. In many ways the commercial success of British and European Luxury is all about the ability to convey soft power messages through new mediums. For example, for over a hundred years, luxury brands have understood the importance of telling compelling stories and illustrating these with iconic imagery. Both of these are things that (luckily) work very well in a digital world and especially so for success across social media. Our view is that governments could learn much from this.

What are the important soft power assets that the UK has? How can we make the most of these? What is the role for non-state actors?

Our National Assets

Walpole members have found that the UK's reputation for **innovation, creativity, tradition and quality** resonate with global markets and audiences.

Less obvious assets such as the rule of law, our heritage, our still mostly-beautiful countryside plus hard-to-value Soft Power aspects of our national life such as our cultural vitality, irrepressibly cosmopolitan London or even the NHS or Royal Family also play an important role.

The combination of these assets and how they interact to create a national identity that is unique to Britain has helped Walpole members in the following ways:

- The **contribution of national DNA to our member brands** (as described in the first section above).

Walpole British Luxury – Written evidence

- Walpole members and associates have found that when they are in contact with different countries 'Being British' **opens doors and makes doing business easier.**
- London & the UK attract significant numbers of **affluent visitors**, for whom shopping is a key activity. Wealthy investors also often like to make their home in London or have a base there.

Making the most of them.

Our problem is we don't. Walpole's view (captured in more detail in the leader in this year's Walpole Yearbook) is that the following needs to be done to maximize the UK's competitiveness in this area:

The first step is to **appreciate what soft power assets we have, which matter most and concentrate on improving them until we are world class.** This requires more of a debate and getting wider buy-in of the value of soft power. In addition, we need a better understanding of which are the **core skills** which support our soft power assets and so **where we should be investing** (for example in education to foster imagination and innovation in both Arts and Sciences). Walpole does this in a small way through its CRAFTED and BRANDS of TOMORROW programmed.

Secondly, we need to **concentrate on the soft power assets that give us the most competitive advantage and differentiate us from competitor nations.** A thread that runs through much of what we do well nowadays could be described as **creative.** Not just the creative industries but the flair and imaginative edge we, at our best, bring to engineering, technology, finance, retail, life sciences and other traditional business sectors. In other words, we believe that the UK should concentrate on marketing itself as being 'Creative' in the way that Germany is known for Engineering, the French for Food, the Italians for Style. This would provide much needed **focus**, especially for B2B marketing and best use of government funds.

The next step is to make sure **our customers know what we are good at.** The world is far too competitive a place to worry about modesty, especially when much of the time it is false. Deep down we know we are good at lots of things. We just have to get used to celebrating, encouraging and honoring. Or to put it another way, to marketing and selling.

Walpole also believes that the luxury sector can help in terms of the **tangible value of authenticity and exclusivity.** Elitism is a dirty word but **why not aim to be the best?** We try to be an open and fair society, which in itself contributes in no small part to our soft power appeal but that doesn't come cheap. Striving for the highest standards pays in global business but can also engender aspiration and a sense of prosperity at home.

Non-State Actors.

In Walpole we believe **the private sector has an important role in maximizing the soft power opportunity,** especially post the Olympics. It cannot all be left to the Government. This is partly showing leadership but also about being prepared to work together where it makes sense to do so and **not being half-hearted about national pride.** Likewise, we need to partner with government, part of which is persuading policy-

Walpole British Luxury – Written evidence

makers to work on the bits that we can't, such as cherishing and utilizing our soft power assets intelligently or doing away with business-unfriendly policies such as unnecessarily complicated visa systems. This is why we were early enthusiasts for the **GREAT Campaign** and continue to be a key partner, especially in the GREAT Festivals of Creativity.

We also believe that the luxury and fashion industry are **natural standard bearers for a soft power led approach** to improving the UK's competitiveness and prosperity. Creativity is hard-wired into our businesses; we have to be focused on quality; our customers are world-wide and knowledgeable; and we understand how to weave heritage and newness into being relevant and desirable.

Looking more widely than luxury, Walpole believes that many inspirational British brands are beneficiaries of the country's soft power credentials, just as they contribute to them in a beneficial cycle that few of us, in either business or government, understand or value as much as we should.

September 2013

Welsh Government – Written evidence

The Committee's call for evidence asks:

'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?'

We interpret soft power as the way in which the UK engages with the rest of the world with a view to promoting our heritage and values.

Broadly speaking, all parts of the United Kingdom share core values and principles as they are perceived by others. However there can be significant variations of emphasis and interpretation in different parts of the UK. We recognise that for many people outside (and sometimes within) the UK, England and the UK are seen as one and the same, and care must be taken to ensure that where differences exist they are recognised positively.

The image the UK presents to the world should reflect its devolved constitution and its diverse political cultures. The way the UK accommodates political and cultural difference within a unitary state through devolution is a strong message for the rest of the world.

The UK Government and bodies with a UK remit need to ensure, through consultation and practice, that their exercise of soft power reflects all parts of the United Kingdom. Some examples of such organisations with a UK remit include the British Council; UKTI; and Visit Britain.

It is also important to recognise that the Devolved Administrations are able to develop and pursue relationships with countries and regions which can contribute to the UK's overall soft power and influence. Some examples of this include:

Relationships within the European Union: Since devolution, the Welsh Government has worked hard to establish relationships with its regional counterparts in the EU, both bilaterally and through its membership of regional groupings such as the Conference for Peripheral and Maritime Regions and the Regions with Legislative Power. In certain member states, regional governments play a full and active role in drawing up and agreeing their national positions on EU issues. They are also fully involved in negotiations in the various formations of the EU's Council of Ministers. Our relationships with other regional governments means that we can sometimes achieve understandings, or project and amplify agreed UK messages, at the regional level which may then be reflected in national positions. In other Member States, there is also often a degree of movement between the different tiers of government with Ministers moving from the state to national level and vice versa. Often, devolved administration Ministers will have cultivated relationships with regional Ministers who subsequently move up to the national level. Again, these existing relationships can be used to promote and project UK interests.

Similar groupings exist at a global level, such as nrg4SD (network of regional Governments for Sustainable Development) of which Wales is a founding member. Through this network

Welsh Government – Written evidence

we can influence the sustainable development and climate change agenda - important to Nation states but heavily reliant on regions for its delivery.

There are many examples of bilateral relationships at the devolved level which contribute to the soft power and influence of the UK. Examples include:

Wales's long standing cultural relationship with the Chubut Province of Argentina based on the Welsh community established in 1865;

Our relationship with the Mbale region of Uganda where we have worked hard to explain and promote a positive approach to LGBT rights;

Wales's 20+ year relationship with the Lesotho through which we have assisted the UK Government by promoting the understanding of why the UK has withdrawn bilateral aid and a consular presence.

The call for evidence is very wide ranging: while we have not attempted to address every aspect from a specific Welsh / Devolved Administration perspective, we have tried to illustrate some of the ways in which the UK's soft power and influence agenda can draw upon co-operation and strengths at both a UK and devolved level.

September 2013

Lord Williams of Baglan, Chatham House, Professor Michael Cox, London School of Economics (LSE) and John Micklethwait, The Economist – Oral evidence (QQ 23-41)

Lord Williams of Baglan, Chatham House, Professor Michael Cox, London School of Economics (LSE) and John Micklethwait, The Economist – Oral evidence (QQ 23-41)

[Transcript to be found under Professor Michael Cox, London School of Economics \(LSE\)](#)

Derek Wyatt – Written evidence

Derek Wyatt – Written evidence

As a result of the failure to agree policy on Syria by both the UK Govt and its counterpart in America, hard power has failed as a foreign policy objective.

We have some brilliant global soft power players - the British Council, BBC World Service, our great national museums and galleries and four or five world class universities.

There is one area where there is a need for UKplc to step up to the plate. We need the UK Govt to take the lead in creating a single global body for the Internet which puts the citizen at its heart. We do not want a Russia or a China or even an America to occupy this space first. We are a trusted source in this area with a proud legacy which includes Alan Turing, Tim Berners-Lee and Sir Jony Ive and I would urge the committee to make this one of its recommendations.

31 October 2013

Professor Matthias Zachmann, The University of Edinburgh – Written evidence

Prof Urs Matthias Zachmann, Handa Chair in Japanese-Chinese Relations, Asian Studies, The University of Edinburgh

Introduction

1. The Committee has raised among other questions the issue how the UK can learn from other countries' experience with soft power (p. 4 of the Call for Evidence). As my expertise lies in East Asian international relations, with a special focus on Japan's foreign relations and cultural diplomacy, I would like to use Japan's long-term and current soft-power strategy to answer some questions regarding the use and limitations of soft power in international relations.

2. Japan's historical and current experience is especially relevant to these questions, as this country, being the only non-western military and economic great power for most of the twentieth century, has a singular record of using culture and identity politics as a means to foster national interests abroad, but also adopt its policy to meet the demands of maximizing soft power as a leverage in international politics. More than any western power, the Japanese case shows much clearer the efficacy and limitations of the use of soft power on a long-term basis and is therefore relevant not only to the UK to answer these fundamental questions, but also to understand the position of other non-western countries such as China and India in formulating their own soft-power strategy.

Japan's Historical Experience with Soft Power

3. Soft power as a means to foster national interests through persuasive attraction rather than coercion has been at the core of Japan's foreign policy ever since it gave up its isolation policy in the nineteenth century and set its primary foreign policy goal on joining the western powers on an equal footing. In this relation, Japan was as much a generator of soft power as it was on the receiving end of it. The *japonisme* of the late nineteenth as well as the enthusiasm of the American 'beat generation' for Zen Buddhism and haiku poetry, the fascination of the general western public with Japanese high aesthetics and more recently with popular culture, but also the interest of business circles with the underlying philosophy of Japan's postwar economic success since the 1960s (e.g. 'Total Quality Management', kaizen) demonstrate some facets of Japan's capability to develop cultural attraction on its own terms.

4. This intrinsic fascination for Japan's own culture was supplemented with the prestige that Japan gained through rapidly adopting to the 'standard of civilization' and thus proving itself 'trustworthy' towards the western powers. In fact, Japan's foreign as well as domestic policy can be seen as historical proof, as it were, of the relative efficacy of soft power. Starting in the 1870s, Japan's domestic modernization and its foreign policy were geared towards selectively adopting institutions of soft power (material culture, education, political thought and institutions such as the constitution, western literature and arts etc.) from the west and thus demonstrating co-operation and trustworthiness. Japan then used this prestige in turn as leverage to improve its standing in international politics with considerable success. The ability to re-negotiate equal treaties with the western powers in the 1890s (50 years earlier than China), Japan's inclusion as 'great power' in 1919, the western powers' acquiescence

with Japan's position as hegemon in East Asia before 1940, the relatively lenient treatment of Japan during the American occupation and speedy re-integration into the western community in the postwar years all are attributable in part to the enduring sympathies of western audiences and political leaders for Japan due to its soft power and 'soft prestige'.

5. At the same time, Japan's historical experience also gives ample proof of the limitations of soft power as a precise political 'tool' to influence foreign relations. Neither Japan's soft power nor its prestige among western powers eventually prevented war with Russia, Germany and the US. Nor did Japan follow the cultural model of one single western country and was therefore more likely to follow its lead, but, as all countries which have the sovereignty to do so, adopted *selectively* from multiple sources. Even though it adopted many institutions from Britain (and ultimately formed a military alliance with it), it considered alternatives as well, and in real politics often acted independently from British interests. The same could be said for the impact which US soft power had on Japan in postwar years, although the close military alliance between both countries makes any causal attribution of their coordinated foreign policy to either soft or hard power virtually impossible.

6. Finally, Japan's historical relations with China and Korea give testimony to the limitations of using soft power as a political instrument. Japan at various stages of its modern East Asia policy tried to use 'culture' as a means to foster its interests on the continent, either by inviting Chinese and Korean students to study in Japan, by propagating a 'pan-Asian' or 'new culture' (a hybrid of eastern and western) culture among the East Asian peoples, or by literally forcing a uniform Japanese culture on its Taiwanese and Korean colonial subjects. Not only did the latter, as a matter of course, generate ill-will and resistance, but the culture strategy in general backfired for the same reasons it did not work on Japan, either: ultimately, Chinese students went to Japan to study *selectively* and for purely pragmatic reasons to foster their *own* ends, not because of an intrinsic attraction to Japan. It is therefore not necessarily ironic that these ends later turned out to be to fight all the more effectively against Japan itself.

Japan's Soft Power Today

7. The situation of Japan's soft power (and prestige) today reflects a similar ambivalence as described in its historical development, although new aspects have come to the forefront, due to Japan's changed economic and strategic environment. Today, Japan's soft power in the global perception largely has come to be defined by popular culture or, as the journalist Douglas McGray famously called it in 2002, by "Japan's Gross National Cool", i.e. manga, Japanese animation, films and mini series, video games and cute 'characters'. The dominance of pop culture in the global perception and in soft power discourse is attributable to several factors: While Japan's economy (by GDP) still ranks third worldwide, the long post-1990 recession and China's spectacular rise as another non-western economic power during the same time has much helped to destroy Japan's myth of uniqueness and economic allure. The dominance of pop culture over Japan's high culture may be also in part due to the ascendancy of youth culture in the globalized culture discourse in general. Notwithstanding, the prominence is also a true reflection of the sheer dominance or strong presence of Japanese products in markets. Thus, it is said for example that Japanese anime constitutes 60 percent of the world's animated television programming.

8. However, for a more differentiated discussion of soft power, we should also consider other means of Japan's soft power strategy in current times. Thus, it has been argued that Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) within the OECD framework constitutes a

means of soft power (a ‘power instrument’), as Japan was the world’s largest donor of ODA in the 1990s, with a focus on East and Southeast Asia, and thereby most likely influenced these target countries’ economic planning and thinking, with Japan as developmental model. The Japanese Exchange and Teacher Program (JET) is another measure which familiarizes succeeding cohorts of young foreigners with the Japan. Moreover, the Japanese government since early 2000 has promoted several initiatives to ‘monetize’ Japan’s cultural and intellectual value, such as successive campaigns to promote Japan as a tourist destination (and thereby soften the stark imbalance between outbound and inbound tourism) or Prime Minister Jun’ichirō Koizumi’s declaration of Japan as an ‘IP nation’ and the launch of a national strategy to protect Japan’s intellectual property (this in itself being an acknowledgement of the increased value of Japan’s aggregated soft power). Finally, the recent successful bid in hosting the Olympic Games in 2020 must be seen as a means to increase Japan’s ‘soft prestige’ and, again, the decision in itself an acknowledgment of Japan’s relative ‘trustworthiness’ and, ultimately, of Japan’s soft power.

9. The motivation for all these initiatives mentioned above can be subsumed under the two strategic goals of public diplomacy and economic development. Thus, it is no coincidence that the primary ministerial drivers of many of these initiatives are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). It is quite natural to assume that Japan in times of prolonged economic recession would want to ‘monetize’ every forms of capital it has and promote the creative industries which generate it. However, the involvement of METI (and Japan’s recent IP strategy) may be also a reflection of the fact that Japanese industries, in fact, have difficulties to market their products because of licensing and piracy problems. Moreover, it is not always easy to decide whether an initiative pursues either diplomatic or economic objectives or, in fact, both in combination with other, less obvious aims. Thus, it has been argued that Japan’s renewed thrust of soft power-initiatives, including those of ‘Cool Japan’ also serves security purposes: Due to constitutional provisions (Art. 9), 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 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.

10. The soft power balance of these initiatives is hard to measure and elusive. Surveys among Korean and Chinese youths who consume Japanese media culture seem to indicate that they are more sympathetic to Japan. However, this does not prevent the same youths from vociferously criticizing Japan for its stance towards its colonial and wartime past and its claims to historically contested territory. Thus, it could be argued that under strained relationships, soft power can at best soften an otherwise uncompromising antagonism and render attitudes more ambivalent, which, on the whole, could be seen as success of a particular soft power strategy.

11. However, it is the general consensus among discussants of Japan’s soft power that above and beyond such a general softening and ‘muddling’ of attitudes, soft power does not work as a ‘power instrument’ to promote clearly defined policy goals. This is due to a number of reasons, some of which are more specific to popular culture as soft power, but on a more abstract level could be given for the concept of soft power in general: Thus, fundamentally speaking, Japanese ‘pop culture’ which is the most successful today, has its origin in youth

subculture. Although it has by now moved into the mainstream, there seems to be an inherent contradiction when Japanese elite bureaucrats appropriate these contents to gear them to official national interests. Pop culture thus loses its claims to the subcultural and, thus, its allure and power. 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.

12. However, the real problem of 'soft power' is seen in the intrinsic difficulty to tie it to a specific *national* goal, a difficulty which increases the more successful and pervasive the content carrier of soft power becomes. In his seminal article on the 'clash of civilization' of 1993, Samuel Huntington once famously claimed that Japan's radius of action was restricted due to its 'uniqueness' of its civilization. Although Huntington's assessment of Japan's civilization is largely based on a Japanese postwar myth and does injustice to the hybridity of its soft power (see above), it indirectly points towards the observation that popular culture originating in Japan is all the more successful and pervasive abroad, the less distinctly 'Japanese' it is. This phenomenon has been described as the 'non-nationality' (*mu-kokuseki*) of globalized Japanese pop culture or, as Koichi Iwabuchi's called it, its 'cultural odorless-ness'. Thus, to give a simple example, the pervasiveness of Japanese characters and anime series 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. Or it could be argued that the overseas success of Japan's department store *Muji* is attributable to the fact that it is what the name literally says, a brand with 'no brand' (*mujirushi*). However, soft power which is successful *because* it is 'universal' is self-defeating in its purpose to promote specific national interest.

13. Finally, even if we assume a general consciousness in the recipients' minds of Japan as the country of origin and a certain sympathy generated thereby (see par. 10.), this still leaves the agency of the recipients who ultimately will interpret Japan's soft power on their own terms and use it selectively to foster their own ends. Thus, it is generally argued that even if Chinese or Korean audiences appreciate Japanese cultural products, the attraction it holds for them lies ultimately not in the fact that it is 'Japanese', but that it represents a standard of contemporaneity and consumerism which they aspire to themselves. Japanese ODA may be an example in case: recipients will gratefully accept it, but will use it to foster their own agenda which, as happened in the case of China, could ultimately result in turning the competition against Japan itself. However, in the sense that soft power thereby induces the recipient to aspire to common societal standards or economic concepts, it does have a valuable, if very general effect.

Conclusion

The case study of Japan's historical and current experience with soft power demonstrates that soft power can be effective and induce a substantial change in national and collective behavior. However, this change is of a largely general nature in that it promotes a certain cohesion of motives and values among the originator and recipient which is still very much open to particular interpretations in national policy or collective perception. Thus, soft power is inadequate as a 'power instrument' to pursue specific policy goals or a narrowly defined agenda of national interests, but at its best is beneficial and constructive to create a 'mood' of co-operation and a tendency towards shared values.

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