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What the Chinese Communist Party wants from the United Kingdom

By Charles Parton OBE

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Foreword

The Council on Geostrategy mobilised earlier this year to provide new ideas to help guide the United Kingdom (UK), as well as other free and open nations, in the twenty-first century. Our focus is on the intersection between Britain's global role, the intensification of geopolitical competition, and environmental security. One of the defining problems, which cuts across all of these issues, is the growing power of a China under the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

Only last week, China's authoritarian government slapped sanctions on several British parliamentarians who had done nothing more than to shine light on its actions and policies. A blatant display of the CCP's repressive tendencies, this move may be the first of several diplomatic incidents following the Integrated Review's designation of China as a 'systemic competitor'.

More, now than ever, a (specific) strategy for dealing with China is required. An integral part of that is the need for a greater understanding of what the CCP thinks about and wants from the UK. Britain must of course pursue its own interests in relation to China, but if the government is to produce a carefully delineated strategy, an in-depth understanding of the CCP's objectives is critical.

For this reason, the Council on Geostrategy is delighted to publish this Policy Paper by renowned China-expert Charles Parton. In it, he identifies what China's government has wanted from Britain in the recent past, what it wants now, and what it might want in the near future. The paper also explains how the CCP might react if it does not get what it wants. It is therefore a must-read for anyone interested in British-Chinese relations, as well as in China's global posture more generally.

James Rogers

*Co-founder and Director of Research,
Council on Geostrategy*



Executive summary

1. The recent ‘Integrated Review’ described China’s increasing power and international assertiveness as ‘likely to be the most significant geopolitical factor of the 2020s.’ That underlines the lack of a British strategy for China. A prerequisite for a strategy is a clear idea not just of one’s own interests, but also of those of the other side. This paper sets out the approach of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) towards the United Kingdom (UK).
2. For the CCP, foreign policy must closely serve its main interest, which is to stay in power. To promote that, broadly it relies on two strategies, the use of its economic heft in a ‘stick and carrot’ approach and the application of a ‘united front strategy’, which divides others into the enemy, the neutral and the friendly, and seeks to isolate the main enemy (America), and to move other potentially hostile entities (such as the UK) to a neutral, or preferably a friendly, position. These strategies are supported by well-funded external propaganda which promotes a narrative of the inevitable and irresistible rise of China.
3. While by size, geography, or natural resources Britain is not of first rank importance to the CCP, nevertheless the CCP recognises its geopolitical weight as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, supporter of open trade and investment, repository of financial expertise, centre of educational excellence and scientific research, leader of innovation, and one of the biggest economies in the world.
4. The CCP would like to see a Britain which supports China’s view of globalisation, is open, innovative and sharing. It recognises Britain’s close ties with the US, but seeks to dilute them. Thus when Britain joined the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, that was a triumph; when it – eventually – rejected Huawei as a 5G telecoms provider, that was a setback.
5. The CCP seeks to accentuate the positive and minimise the negative:



- a. The positive include: Britain being a showcase for establishing China as a world leader in important industries (eg nuclear), access to British innovation and science and technology research, maintaining easy access for Chinese investment, using cooperation with the City of London to develop China's own financial expertise and to promote greater use of the Chinese currency, supporting China in maintaining an open, non-protectionist economic global governance system, sharing expertise and experience useful for the Party's reforms in urbanisation, health, and social security.
 - b. The negative include the denial of the above as well as: divergent positions on Hong Kong; British reactions to genocide and crimes against humanity involving the Uyghurs in Xinjiang; the passage of Royal Navy ships through the South China Sea; differences over media freedoms and governance; pushback against perceived CCP interference in the UK's academia, politics and media; and increasing concern in the security services about Chinese intelligence activity, both cyber and human operations.
 6. While the CCP has talked of a deteriorating relationship, it has yet to apply to the UK the sort of treatment meted out to Australia. That may come and will be heralded by an increase in references to Britain's decline, colonial history, the Opium War, and 'Cold War mentality'.
 7. The standard CCP toolkit of opprobrium contains assertions of failing to observe the norms of international relations, international obligations or commitments; being responsible for deviating from the correct path; disregarding China's 'core interests'; interfering in the internal affairs of China; and politicising things which the CCP thinks should not be politicised.
 8. If the UK is put in the 'diplomatic doghouse', there are reasons to believe that the CCP's bark is worse than its bite, whether in relation to exports, investment, the City of London, tourism and student numbers.
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9. The likelihood is that the CCP will degrade relations with Britain, applying more stick and offering less carrot. Steps in response include:
 - a. Increasing understanding of the nature of the CCP and its thinking;
 - b. Carrying out an urgent assessment on how damaging CCP threats to exports, investment, services and the City of London, tourism and study in the UK are, in the light of the past, other countries' experience and likely future developments;
 - c. Preparing for some turbulence, including giving support to certain areas of business targeted by the CCP;
 - d. Putting in place the structures necessary to improve work with China on positive areas, while protecting UK interests in others, notably guidance and enforcement to both universities and companies on S&T cooperation and the establishment of an equivalent to the Australian National Counter Foreign Interference Coordinator's Office;
 - e. Speeding up and deepening consultation and adopting unified policies towards China with like-minded countries, not least in the Indo-Pacific region.

1.0 Introduction

In its April 2019 report ‘China and the Rules-Based International System’, the Foreign Affairs Committee in the House of Commons called on the United Kingdom (UK) government to produce a strategy on China.¹ Since then, concern and interest in how to deal with China has risen exponentially, in the government, Parliament, the press, and in wider society. The recently published ‘Integrated Review’ highlights the importance of the challenges and opportunities which China will present to the UK in the next decade but does not articulate a strategy for dealing with them.²

Only a very few reports have recently been produced to suggest policies and strategies for dealing with China.³ Although they give some consideration to the question of what China, or rather, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP or the Party) (see Box 1 on the importance of distinguishing between them), wants from its relations with the UK, the subject deserves a more in-depth analysis. If it takes two to tango, then it requires a close understanding of how both approach the dance.

Box 1: Distinguishing between the CCP and China

It is important to distinguish between the CCP and China or the Chinese people. Not only, as Xi Jinping continuously emphasises, does the CCP ‘lead everything’, but also Party interests can differ from those of the Chinese people. It is a distinction causing considerable annoyance to the Party, which likes to characterise any opposition to itself as directed against the Chinese people and thereby as racist. Yet, while Xi seeks to ensure that ‘politics is everything’, many Chinese businesses, investors, and ordinary people simply wish to deal with the UK as it is and to get on with normal professional or personal relations. Those relations continue, although they may become more complicated as Xi pushes to

¹ *China and the Rules-Based International System*, Foreign Affairs Select Committee, 04/04/2019, <http://bit.ly/catrbis> (found: 24/03/2021).

² ‘Global Britain in a Competitive Age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy’, Cabinet Office, 16/03/2021, <https://bit.ly/3vX8RGY> (found: 24/03/2021).

³ See: Charles Parton, ‘Towards a UK strategy and policies for relations with China’, Policy Unit, King’s College, London, 06/2020, <http://bit.ly/tausapfrwc> (found: 24/03/2021) and Sophia Gaston and Rana Mitter, ‘After the Golden Age: Resetting UK-China Engagement’, British Foreign Policy Group, 07/2020, <http://bit.ly/atgaruce> (found: 23/03/2021).



augment the role of the CCP in state-owned and private companies, and to guide the private, as well as public behaviour of Party members and even of the people.

This Policy Paper looks at the degree to which the UK matters to the CCP, and in what areas. While Britain should prioritise its own national security, interests and values, the process of doing so requires a clear understanding of how they intersect with or contradict the Party's definition of China's own security, interests and values in dealing with the UK. After explaining the nature of the CCP and its overall foreign policy methods and objectives, the paper looks at how they are refined and applied to Britain. The final section considers what British policymakers and strategists might expect in the near future from the CCP.

The focus is on politics and the CCP, in line with the view that 'people to people' relations matter to the CCP more for their propaganda value than for their importance in determining foreign policy. In general, the Chinese people have a favourable view of the UK – a new British Council study shows an overall 'attractiveness' rate of 81%, second only to France⁴ – but, as Xi Jinping frequently says, the Party leads everything and politics is number one.⁵ In sum, what the CCP wants, the CCP ordains as policy; people to people contacts go on under that umbrella, even if sometimes they quietly ignore it.

⁴ The British Council's paper – *People to people: what the UK and China think of one another* – will be published shortly.

⁵ Nectar Gan, 'Xi Jinping Thought – the Communist Party's tighter grip on China in 16 characters', *South China Morning Post*, 25/10/2017, <https://bit.ly/3w2UiSo> (found: 23/03/2021).



2.0 What the nature of the CCP means for its foreign policy

Maintaining its hold on power is the CCP's supreme concern. In authoritarian or autocratic systems losing power comes at a very high cost. Therefore anything which threatens stability or encourages protest must be ruthlessly suppressed. Every issue, domestic or foreign, is seen in terms of how it strengthens or weakens the Party's legitimacy. That legitimacy is buttressed by a narrative which states that only the CCP can:

- Guarantee economic prosperity;
- Regain China's place at the centre of the world;
- Wipe away the stain of 'the century of foreign humiliation';
- Gain global respect for China's culture;
- Provide effective governance (unlike western democracy);
- Tackle inequality and environmental degradation.

The CCP is solipsistic. It does not seek foreign alliances (its only formal alliance is with North Korea). It lauds its own 'Socialism with Chinese Characteristics', but does not seek to export it. Indeed it acknowledges that other countries' circumstances prevent the adoption of China's form of governance. However, the Party wants others to remove any let or hindrance to its interests and to become more sympathetic to its authoritarian values.

For all its rhetoric of 'win-win' and 'a community of shared future for mankind', the CCP views relations with most developed countries in terms of 'struggle' (斗争/ douzheng) – a strong word. In his first Politburo speech in January 2013, Xi Jinping talked of:

...building a socialism that is superior to capitalism, and laying the foundation for a future where we will win the initiative and have the superior position.⁶

⁶ Xi Jinping speech translated by Tanner Greer, 'Uphold and Develop Socialism with Chinese Characteristics', *Palladium*, 31/05/2019, <http://bit.ly/xjitcgi> (found: 24/03/2021).



The refrain ‘the east (China) is rising, the West is declining’ (‘东升西降’ / ‘dong sheng xi jiang’) – it was used a decade ago, but has become a leitmotiv of CCP discourse since 2019 – is a declaration aimed not least at the domestic audience; for foreigners, the intent is to convince that the rise of China is inevitable and irresistible.

2.1 The CCP’s approach to foreign relations

Within China, President Xi Jinping seeks to forge ‘New China Man’ (he uses Lenin’s phrase about engineering souls); abroad, he could be said to be promoting a ‘new China-compliant world’. In another linguistic parallel, just as Party members ‘do not dare, are not able, do not wish’ to be corrupt, so similarly inducements and pressures should ensure that countries such as the UK ‘do not dare, are not able, do not wish’ to go against CPP interests. To achieve this, three important elements stand out.

Overall, foreign policy is based upon a ‘stick and carrot’ approach: if a country aligns itself with the Party’s wishes, it is promised a share in the economic benefits of China’s globalisation; but if it kicks against the pricks, it receives the cold shoulder, both economically and politically (particularly the cancellation of high-level or leadership visits and contacts). Despite much talk at the 5th October Plenum about the importance of ‘soft power’, the CCP possesses and deploys a minimal amount. Instead, it relies on ‘firm’, if not ‘hard’, power. Areas threatened by the Party include: exports, investment, services such as finance, education, and tourism.

The united front strategy: the United Front Work Department (UFD) was described by Mao Zedong as one of ‘three magic weapons’, along with the CCP itself and the People’s Liberation Army. Although mainly a domestic facing department aimed at ensuring the support of non-CCP elements of society, with the advent of globalisation, it plays an increasingly active role abroad. Essentially, the united front strategy divides others into the enemy, the neutral and the friendly. It seeks to isolate the main enemy, and to move other potentially hostile entities to a neutral, or preferably a friendly, state. The main enemy is the United States (US); the UK is to be rendered neutral, if not friendly. The strategy is implemented through a series of actions on a spectrum



ranging from acceptable influence (public diplomacy) to unacceptable interference.⁷

The Central Propaganda Department devotes very considerable resources to overseas propaganda (外宣 / waixuan) to support the narrative of the inevitable and irresistible rise of China.⁸ According to *The Economist*, a decade ago the CPP allocated US\$6.6 bn to overseas news work.⁹ It is likely to be considerably more now, perhaps north of US\$10 billion.¹⁰ This is not just a matter of trying to make China Global Television Network (CGTN) and Xinhua into rivals of the BBC or the *Financial Times* and Reuters, but also of providing foreign media with pictures and stories which they cannot afford to cover; such material is carefully filtered to promote the Party's objectives.

2.2 The CCP's foreign policy aims

Into what set of interests is the CCP trying to mould countries, including the UK? Following the 5th Plenum, Yang Jiechi, the Politburo member in charge of foreign affairs, published an exposition in the Party's paper, the *People's Daily*.¹¹ Yang starts with 'an important conclusion made by General Secretary Xi', namely that 'The world today is undergoing major changes unseen in a century' (this leitmotiv is the sibling of the aforementioned 'the east is rising, the west declining'). Yang lists the main elements of change as:

- 'Multipolarisation' (there is no one dominant power);
- Global economic turbulence and the rise of protectionism;

⁷ For an assessment of interference in the UK, see Charles Parton, 'China-UK relations: Where to draw the border between influence and interference?', Royal United Services Institute, 20/02/2019, <http://bit.ly/curwtdtbbiai> (found: 24/03/2021). See also *Hidden Hand* which contains not just a fine description of UFDW methodologies, but many examples of its practice. See: Clive Hamilton and Mareike Olhberg, *Hidden Hand: Exposing How the Chinese Communist Party is Reshaping the World* (London: Oneworld Publications, 2020).

⁸ The translation of 中共中央宣传部 has been changed by the CCP to 'Central Publicity Department'. The Chinese name has remained the same. So too does its nature. It is best to retain the original translation to reflect that.

⁹ 'Nation shall preach Xi unto nation: China is spending billions on its foreign-language media', *The Economist*, 16/06/2018, <http://bit.ly/nspxuncisboiflm> (found: 24/03/2021).

¹⁰ See: David Sambaugh, 'China's \$10bn propaganda push spreads Down Under', *Financial Times*, 09/06/2021, <https://on.ft.com/2QtBfA8> (found: 24/03/2021).

¹¹ 'Actively create a good external environment (Study and implement the spirit of the 5th Plenum of the 19th Central Committee)', *People's Daily Graphic Database (1946-2020)*, 30/11/2020, <http://bit.ly/acageet> (found: 24/03/2021).



- The need for reform of the United Nations (UN) and global governance systems;
- Threats to international security and stability;
- The rise of clashing ideologies and values.

With this background, Yang lays out the main interests for China's foreign relations:

- **To create more favourable conditions for the country's economic and social development.** While there is a necessary focus on domestic consumption and self-reliance, international cooperation is required for 'high-quality development of the service economy' and for 'deepen[ing] scientific and technological innovation'.
- **To 'actively participate in the reform and construction of the global governance system' centred on the UN and 'expanding the representation and voice of developing countries in international affairs'.** Note that the CCP sees China not just as the representative of developing countries, but as a developing country itself and hence able to enjoy the concessions open to that status in forums such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO).
- **To 'oppose unilateralism and protectionism, and promote the improvement of a more just and reasonable international economic governance system.'** This is shorthand for establishing a world order which is not dominated by the US and which allows a greater role for international bodies more aligned to China's interests.
- **To 'safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests'.** Yang mentions Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang, Tibet, the South China Sea, and not allowing 'external forces to interfere in China's internal affairs', which surely includes the CCP's abuse of human rights.¹²

¹² *Ibid.*



In Yang's world view – or rather Xi's, since 'Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy' now bestrides the globe – the US is the elephant in the room.¹³ Space for China's rise, the ending of American 'unipolar' supremacy, the extent of US-China economic decoupling, such themes lie behind what Yang listed above. Ultimately the CCP aims not to impose a political system on other countries, but to ensure that they adopt certain norms and standards, so that the world sings to its tune, not an American one. In dealing with US allies and like-minded democracies, such as the UK, much flows from this: they too must be moulded to fit this narrative.

¹³ See also: 'Unilateralism, protectionism and bullyism are resurging. Deficits in governance, trust, peace and development are widening further. To navigate this highly uncertain world, we must take fundamental guidance from Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy for all our work, stay focused amid the turbulence and seize opportunities from the changes in order to usher in a new stage of major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics.' This is a clear reference to the US from Wang Yi, Chinese Foreign Minister. Wang Yi, Speech: 'Study and Implement Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy Conscientiously and Break New Ground in Major-Country Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics', Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy Studies Centre, 20/07/2020, <http://bit.ly/saixjtodcabngimcdwcc> (found: 24/03/2021).



3.0 The importance of the UK to China

Given the Party's approach to international relations sketched above, how does it view the UK? The CCP has more immediate priorities: the US, the European Union (EU), peripheral countries, Russia, India, Africa, the South China Sea, to name the obvious ones. Chinese think tanks, which feed the CCP foreign policy-making machine, produce relatively few papers about the UK. What there is mainly looks through the prism of Brexit.¹⁴

Nevertheless, the UK is not of nugatory importance. The Party recognises its geopolitical weight as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, supporter of open trade and investment, repository of financial expertise, centre of educational excellence and scientific research, leader of innovation, and one of the biggest economies in the world. Chinese business, financiers and cultural figures recognise the UK's significance, and, conscious though they have to be of politics, many seek to carry on their professional and personal relations for their intrinsic benefits.

¹⁴ See, for example: Qu Bing and Wang Shuo, 'The UK's post-Brexit "Global Strategy" and its Prospects', Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences, 17/03/2021, <https://bit.ly/2PtPbcP> (found: 24/03/2021).



4.0 What sort of Britain does China want to see?

Although the Party tightly controls foreign affairs through its Central Foreign Affairs Commission, and while think tanks and researchers (increasingly tightly controlled by the CCP) rarely in open material make detailed policy recommendations, consistent themes do emerge, not least from what the Party's leaders say when they meet our leaders or when the Chinese ambassador or Ministry of Foreign Affairs comment on events. The CCP would like to see a UK which is:

- **A model to others in promoting globalisation, 'advanc[ing] the idea of new state-to-state relations and new type of major country relationship.'**¹⁵ In 2015 the UK-China relationship was designated a 'Global Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for the 21st Century for In-depth Development'. Such characterisations matter.¹⁶
- **A country with a similar outlook to China, even if systems differ.** Respect for their long histories, strong cultures, and mutual concerns (such as climate change, regional rejuvenation, global development).¹⁷

¹⁵ Liu Xiaoming, Speech: 'Let the "Golden Era" Shine Brighter', Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 17/11/2015, <http://bit.ly/ltgesb> (found: 24/03/2021).

¹⁶ The CCP has a hierarchy of descriptions which vary depending on the degree of importance of a country, its perceived friendliness, the aspirations of the CCP and the government concerned. It is intended not just to flatter, but also to reinforce obligations implied by the CCP, transgression of which leads to accusations of not living up to agreed agendas.

¹⁷ A striking repetition in Chinese leaders' speeches on the UK is the cooperation to be entered on the basis of shared experiences in regional development: 'You have the Northern Powerhouse and Midlands Engine. In China we have development of the Yangtze River Economic Belt, construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and coordinated development of Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region. We can dovetail the economic strategies.' See: Liu Xiaoming, 'Ambassador Liu Xiaoming Answers Questions from Sir Sherard at the CBBC Webinar', Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 05/05/2020, <http://bit.ly/alxaqfssatcw> (found: 24/03/2021). Too few wonder why the CCP would want to invest in developing the north of England, when it has its own priorities. Gaining infrastructure contracts is another matter. Chinese leaders are also playing to the political gallery in Beijing: the Yangtze, Greater Bay and 'Jing-Jin-Ji' regions are pet policies of Xi Jinping.



- **A place from which China can learn – about urban planning, regional development, balancing industrialisation and the environment, and international development.**¹⁸
- **An innovative and creative people, with a good education system, willing to be open** (at the least by not going against the interests of the CCP).¹⁹

At the same time, the Party recognises the reality that the UK is a country with closely shared historical ties, language, interests and values with the US (hence it was a cause for major celebration, when contrary to US urgings, Britain was the first major nation to join the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank). However, when the UK goes against Chinese interests, this recognition transforms into accusations that Britain is the lackey of the US. As Liu Xiaoming, then Chinese Ambassador to the UK, put it: ‘It is our hope that the UK will stay independent in its foreign policy rather than dancing to the tune of the US. Great Britain cannot be ‘Great’ without independent foreign policies.’²⁰

¹⁸ Liu Xiaoming, Speech: ‘The 13th Five-Year Plan: New Opportunity for China-UK Cooperation’, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 16/12/2020, <http://bit.ly/ksbhealxt13fyp> (found: 24/03/2021).

¹⁹ ‘The UK is known for its people’s outstanding spirit of innovation: Britain has mature and effective mechanisms to inspire and encourage creativity...one of the global leaders in scientific, technological and cultural creativity. Innovation and creativity constitute the basis of the strong competitiveness and industrial strength of the UK in the global market...China is ready to work with the UK to take cooperation on innovation to a higher level.’ See: Liu Xiaoming, Speech: ‘The 13th Five-Year Plan: New Opportunity for China-UK Cooperation’, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 16/12/2020, <http://bit.ly/ksbhealxt13fyp> (found: 24/03/2021).

²⁰ Liu Xiaoming, ‘Interview given by Ambassador Liu Xiaoming to Global Times’, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 18/08/2020, <http://bit.ly/igbalxtgt> (found: 24/03/2021).



5.0 What does the CCP want from its relations with the UK?

There are two sides to this coin: what the CCP wants and what it does not want. As much effort is put into preventing the negative as into encouraging the positive. Some areas, such as global economic governance, could be either positive or negative, depending on UK policy; others can only be negative, such as British ‘interference’ in Hong Kong or naval activity in the South China Sea.

5.1 *Emphasising the positive...*

Since the dawn of the ‘Golden Era’ of UK–China relations following Xi Jinping’s visit in October 2015 until today, the areas for cooperation focused on by Chinese leaders have remained constant.²¹ They include:

- **The UK as a showcase for establishing China as a world leader in important industries** – hence the investment in nuclear plants at Hinkley Point and hopes for Bradwell B, as well as emphasis on Huawei in the telecoms sector and hopes for high-speed rail. To obtain British cooperation would aid expansion in other developed economies. As former Ambassador Liu noted at the start of 2020: ‘The attitude of the UK, as a major player in the telecommunications sector, is very important.’²²
- **Access to British innovation and science and technology research.** As the Chinese Embassy notes: ‘The UK was the first

²¹ See for example: Zhou Zin, ‘Xi meets May, calling for better Sino–British ties in new era’, *Xinhua*, 01/02/2018, <http://bit.ly/xmmcfbsbtine> (found: 24/03/2021); Liu Xiaoming, Speech: ‘Let the “Golden Era” Shine Brighter’, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 17/11/2015, <http://bit.ly/lgtgesb> (found: 24/03/2021); Liu Xiaoming, Speech: ‘The 13th Five-Year Plan: New Opportunity for China–UK Cooperation’, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 16/12/2020, <http://bit.ly/ksbhealxt13fyp> (found: 24/03/2021); Liu Xiaoming, Speech: ‘Shore up Confidence, Seize the Opportunities and Deepen Cooperation’, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 20/01/2021, <http://bit.ly/sucstoadc> (found: 24/03/2021); and ‘Ambassador Liu Xiaoming and his wife held a resignation reception’, *People*, 26/01/2021, <http://bit.ly/alxahwharr> (found: 24/03/2021).

²² Chen Qingqing, ‘Blocking Huawei will harm China–UK relations: ambassador’, *Global Times*, 20/01/2020, <http://bit.ly/bhwhcura> (found: 24/03/2021).



country to sign the Joint Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation with China.²³ In earlier years, the CCP talked of Britain's contributions to its 'Made in China 2025' industrial strategy, which aims to dominate new industrial and technological sectors (the strategy persists, even if mention is no longer made, following pushback from foreign countries).²⁴

- **Maintaining easy access for Chinese investment**, for which the UK has been the number one destination in Europe. China has appreciated the absence of restrictions. After earlier profligacy, since 2017, China has targeted its foreign investment more precisely, focusing on hi-tech areas which can advance its economic, commercial and military/security ambitions.
- **Using cooperation with the City of London to develop financial expertise**, including in green finance and legal, insurance and other related services. As the former Chinese Ambassador put it: 'Take a look at world history...no major country achieved national prosperity without a foundation of considerable financial power.' He went on: 'Therefore, China must build a strong financial sector if it is to achieve national revitalisation.'²⁵ As with other sectors, the CCP's aim is for Shenzhen and Shanghai to supplant current global financial centres, particularly London as a global leader.
- **Using the City of London to promote greater use of the Chinese currency and in the long term the internationalisation of the renminbi** (very long term, because unless China runs external deficits or permits unrestricted outward movement of capital, and improves trust through the rule of law, it is hard to see the

²³ Liu Xiaoming, Speech: 'Serve with Sincerity All the Way Through', Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 26/01/2021, <http://bit.ly/swsatwt> (found: 24/03/2021).

²⁴ 'From China's One Belt, One Road initiative and Made in China 2025, to Britain's National Infrastructure Plan and Northern Powerhouse, the two countries are working to pool their respective strengths and align their endeavours.' See: Liu Xiaoming, 'Manchester and China Entering a "Golden Era"', Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 22/10/2015, <http://bit.ly/maceage> (found: 24/03/2021).

²⁵ Liu Xiaoming, 'Remarks by HE Ambassador Liu Xiaoming At the opening of ICBC Standard Bank', Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 02/02/2015, <http://bit.ly/rbhealxatooisb> (found: 24/03/2021).



renminbi, which currently has around 2% of market share, increasing dramatically).²⁶ If these major changes ever happened, the long-term aim is to escape American dollar domination affecting Chinese interests.

- **Supporting China in maintaining an open, non-protectionist economic global governance system**, not least in the WTO, as well as aiding – or not impeding – CCP aims for reform of other aspects of global governance or leadership (e.g., climate change or the G20). As Premier Li Keqiang said at a meeting with Philip Hammond, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, in April 2019, ‘...the two sides’ joint safeguarding of the rules-based multilateral trading system is conducive to promoting world peace, development and prosperity.’²⁷
- **Providing expertise and experience for the Party’s reforms in urbanisation, health (and well before Covid-19), and social security.** This has been a common theme in former Ambassador Liu’s speeches.²⁸ There is likely to be some element of flattery as well as of substance in this.

It is also worth noting that many Chinese businesses want consistency of policy from the UK; they are less concerned about the details, not least with regards to the effects of Brexit.

5.2 While warning about the negative

Many of the positive elements above could turn negative, depending on the policies which the UK adopts. The Integrated Review described China as a ‘systemic competitor’ and one of the most significant

²⁶ See: ‘RMB Tracker’, Swift, <https://bit.ly/3siTPsM> (found: 24/03/2021).

²⁷ ‘Li Keqiang meets with British Prime Minister’s Special Representative and Chancellor of the Exchequer Hammond’, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 27/04/2019, <http://bit.ly/lkmwbpmsracote> (found: 24/03/2021). See also: Liu Xiaoming, ‘Work together to tackle climate change and make our planet a better home for all’, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 15/10/2021, <http://bit.ly/wttccamopabhfa> (found: 24/03/2021).

²⁸ See, for example: Liu Xiaoming, Speech: ‘The 13th Five-Year Plan: New Opportunity for China-UK Cooperation’, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 16/12/2020, <http://bit.ly/ksbhealxt13fyp> (found: 24/03/2021).



challenges to British national security.²⁹ Also relevant is the degree to which the UK aligns with the US on China. Other areas are inherently negative, such as when Britain reacts to CCP actions which infringe on the free and open international order, or threaten UK security. The last eighteen months have witnessed contention over:

- **Chinese participation in critical national infrastructure.** Huawei's participation in 5G telecoms is the most salient example, but it looks increasingly likely that nuclear energy and high-speed rail may be restricted for Chinese companies.
- **The UK tightening its conditions for Chinese investment through the National Security and Investment Bill, currently going through Parliament.** A stricter regime for participation in scientific research with dual civil-military or surveillance/repression use is imminent.
- **The UK's decision to uphold the Sino-British Joint Declaration on Hong Kong, an international treaty lodged with the UN.** The CCP describes this as 'interference in the internal affairs of China'.³⁰
- **Gathering momentum in the UK to react to genocide and crimes against humanity involving the Uyghurs in Xinjiang.** Dominic Raab, the Foreign Secretary, announced the first sanctions against four Party officials and one organisation on 22nd March 2021.³¹
- **The passage of Royal Navy ships through the South China Sea.** Tension is likely to grow when HMS Queen Elizabeth transits the South China Sea on its maiden deployment later in 2021. What to

²⁹ 'Global Britain in a Competitive Age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy', Cabinet Office, 16/03/2021, <https://bit.ly/3vX8RGY> (found: 24/03/2021).

³⁰ Accusations of the UK interfering in Hong Kong are not new. See, for example: 'China warns UK of "consequences" over Hong Kong "interference"', *BBC News*, 21/07/2020, <http://bit.ly/cwocohki> (found: 24/03/2021).

³¹ 'UK sanctions perpetrators of gross human rights violations in Xinjiang, alongside EU, Canada and US', Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, 22/03/2021, <https://bit.ly/3vZnNUQ> (found: 24/03/2021).



the UK is upholding freedom of navigation is seen by the CCP as ‘gunboat diplomacy’ and resurrecting ‘Cold War mentality’.³²

- **Divergent positions on media freedoms and governance**, such as the recent withdrawal by the Office of Communication (OFCOM) of CGTN’s licence to broadcast in the UK because it infringed regulations about political parties running media.³³ Further cases have ruled against CGTN, fines have been imposed and more sanctions will follow.³⁴ This comes as CGTN has invested considerably, in line with its intention to locate its European headquarters in London. It cuts across the CCP’s ambitions to change global perceptions in its favour.
- **Pushback against perceived CCP interference in the UK’s academia, politics and media**, which makes it likely that measures will be taken to limit the Party’s attempts to operate unfettered on British soil.
- **Increasing concern in the security services about Chinese intelligence activity, both cyber and human operations**. Last year three intelligence officers operating under the cover of journalists were expelled. The CCP worries that the UK will follow the US and Australia in being more vocal and active.

Two issues have not yet increased friction, but are likely to do so in the future. The first is Tibet, not least when the Dalai Lama dies. At present foreign focus on the Party’s abuse of human rights centres on Xinjiang, but Tibet suffers too from forced suppression of its indigenous culture, religion, education and other freedoms in theory guaranteed in the Chinese constitution. The CCP has said that it will play a major part in the search for the next reincarnation of the Dalai

³² For example, on 20th March 2019, the Chinese Ambassador had published an article in the *Daily Telegraph*, carried in *China Daily*, with a veiled criticism of British naval activity in the South China Sea. See: ‘The Daily Telegraph publishes a signed article by ambassador Liu Xiaoming’, *China Daily*, 21/03/2019, <https://bit.ly/2PqWbqU> (found: 24/03/2021). See also: Patrick Wintour, ‘Chinese envoy hits back at Williamson’s “gunboat diplomacy”’, *The Guardian*, 26/02/2019, <http://bit.ly/cehbawgd> (found: 24/03/2021).

³³ See: ‘Ofcom revokes CGTN’s licence to broadcast in the UK’, OFCOM, 04/02/2021, <https://bit.ly/3tSzPNY> (found: 24/03/2021).

³⁴ See: ‘Sanction: to be imposed on Star China Media Limited’, OFCOM, 08/03/2021, <https://bit.ly/39uobBt> (found: 24/03/2021).



Lama. It also reacted badly to the Dalai Lama's suggestion that he might not reincarnate, an insistence motivated by a desire to use its own nominee to buttress control (the irony of an avowedly atheist regime demanding reincarnation seems to have passed the Party by).

The second is Taiwan. The next decade will continue to see the CCP ramping up pressure on Taiwan to convince its 24 million people that unification with China is inevitable. Xi Jinping has said that the Party's patience will not be infinite.³⁵ While an invasion is most unlikely (there is every chance that it would not succeed, with failure causing a backlash against Xi), persuasion may well turn strong-armed and unpleasant.

The CCP will seek to restrict UK contacts with both areas, claiming that these are 'core issues'. As it increasingly rides roughshod over Tibetan and Taiwanese freedoms, so relations with the UK will increasingly become a rough ride.

³⁵ 'China's Xi says political solution for Taiwan can't wait forever', *Reuters*, 06/10/2013, <https://reut.rs/3swHaHq> (found: 24/03/2021).

6.0 Where does the UK currently stand in the CCP's eyes?

So far, it seems that the Party has not lost hope in positioning the UK to its own advantage. Despite movement on the negative aspects set out above, the CCP has not subjected the UK to an Australian-style systematic attack. Recent speeches and CCP newspaper coverage have mixed optimism for continued good relations with veiled concern at developments. The *Global Times*, the Party's 'tabloid', ended a recent article with the remark that at the end of the day, the UK was a 'pragmatic country'.³⁶

If the CCP is indeed still considering where to place the UK on the spectrum between 'Golden Era' and 'Australian doghouse', it is probably because it is awaiting a decisive China strategy from the UK (the Integrated Review, published on 16th March 2021, leaves this for the future).³⁷ The Party will also be waiting to see how the US under President Biden acts towards its main 'Five Eyes' intelligence and NATO ally, and whether in pursuit of a greater degree of decoupling Washington will put pressure on London to follow the American stance on technology, as it did with Huawei, and in other areas.

³⁶ See: 'Malice against China is surging in the UK, and the British business community is worried: I hope the UK will not become the next Australia!', *Huanqiu*, 08/02/2021, <http://bit.ly/macisituatbbciw> (found: 24/03/2021).

³⁷ 'Global Britain in a Competitive Age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy', Cabinet Office, 16/03/2021, <https://bit.ly/3vX8RGY> (found: 24/03/2021).

7.0 What to expect in the future

Much depends on the positions taken by the UK government in the next year, not least in response to US policies on China. But the mood of the public, press and Parliament has undoubtedly turned away from the accommodations which characterised the ‘Golden Era’. If Britain adopts policies which the CCP sees as against its interests, the UK will be framed in a less favourable light:

- **As a declining power.** This is part of the ‘the east is rising, the west is declining’ (‘东升西降’ / ‘dong sheng xi jiang’) theme, but the UK as a former imperial power is the leading example.
- **As a small, quaint, irrelevant country, good for its history and tourism, but little else.**
- **As a country led by a government hijacked by bad elements;** the British reaction to Huawei and Xinjiang prompts this line.³⁸
- **As an irredeemable imperialist, seeking to restore its old glory.** This line has emerged particularly in the context of the Royal Navy sending ships through the South China Sea or of the UK paying more attention to the Indo-Pacific region. It was also trotted out in reaction to OFCOM’s revoking of the licence of CGTN.³⁹ A more virulent variation is a reference to the Opium War (history is very much alive for the CCP: that conflict is the basis for the important ‘century of humiliation’ narrative, which seeks to explain Chinese weakness in terms not of internal failure, but of foreign aggression, a state of affairs from which the Party supposedly rescued China).

³⁸ Wang Yi, the Chinese Foreign Minister, talked of ‘some people in the United Kingdom demand the “reset” of bilateral ties in an attempt to overthrow the two countries’ cooperation’, while Liu Xiaoming put it more directly, referring to: ‘Some politicians self-deemed as “supervisors” on the matter, who continue to make irresponsible remarks...’ See: ‘China is opportunity, not threat to Britain, says Chinese FM’, Xinhua, 29/07/2020, <https://bit.ly/3vYzwmT> (found: 24/03/2021) and Chen Qingqing and Bai Yunyi, ‘Exclusive: Chinese envoy urges UK to fix its policy deficits toward China’, *Global Times*, <https://bit.ly/2QF07oV> (found: 24/03/2021).

³⁹ See: ‘BBC World News is ousted! Why?’, *CGTN*, 12/02/2021, <https://bit.ly/39e2lBR> (found: 24/03/2021).



- **As a country whose politicians apply double standards and are ‘old colonialists’,⁴⁰ ‘foisting its colonialism and expansionist mindset upon China’,⁴¹ or (depending on the context) are suffering from a ‘Cold War mentality’.⁴²**

To ‘substantiate’ such characterisations, the CCP will reach into a toolkit of accusations well-used on other occasions and appearing already. These include assertions that the UK:

- **Fails to observe the norms of international relations, international obligations or commitments.**⁴³
- **Has changed, not China;** tension is not China’s fault or responsibility. Therefore the UK must return to the correct path.⁴⁴
- **Disregards China’s ‘core interests’.** In the CCP’s eyes, there can be no discussion or compromise on ‘core interests’ (such as Taiwan, Hong Kong, the South China Sea (not officially declared a ‘core interest’, but treated as such), but also economic development). The Party rarely accords ‘core interests’ to others.
- **Interferes in the internal affairs of China.** There can be no discussion of human rights, Xinjiang or Hong Kong, no matter

⁴⁰ See: ‘Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin’s Regular Press Conference on December 15, 2020’, 15/12/2020, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of Vietnam, <https://bit.ly/3ri65IR> (found: 24/03/2021).

⁴¹ See: Li Qingqing, ‘Is UK trying to launch another opium war against China?’, *Global Times*, 05/07/2020, <https://bit.ly/2QCdSoc> (found: 24/03/2021).

⁴² See: Liu Xiaoming, ‘Interview given by Ambassador Liu Xiaoming to Global Times’, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 18/08/2020, <http://bit.ly/igbalxtgt> (found: 24/03/2021).

⁴³ For example: Zhao Yusha and Deng Xiaoci, ‘Harboring illegal separatists may add obstacles to China-UK ties: ambassador’, *Global Times*, 17/08/2020, <https://bit.ly/2PkQVoS> (found: 24/03/2021) or Liu Xiaoming, ‘It’s very dangerous to challenge China’s sovereignty and support the anti-China forces that create disruptions in Hong Kong’, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 18/07/2020, <https://bit.ly/2PmVSO6> (found: 24/03/2020).

⁴⁴ For example: Liu Xiaoming, ‘Ambassador Liu Xiaoming Holds On-line Press Conference on China-UK Relations’, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 01/08/2020, <https://bit.ly/3ckLwax> (found: 24/03/2021) and Liu Xiaoming, ‘Interview given by Ambassador Liu Xiaoming to Global Times’, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 18/08/2020, <http://bit.ly/igbalxtgt> (found: 24/03/2021).



what international covenants or treaties China has signed. Any attempt to do so is ‘slander’.

- **Politicises things which the CCP thinks should not be politicised.** As Wang Yi, the Chinese Foreign Minister, said after a telephone call with Dominic Raab on 28th July 2020, ‘Regrettably, under pressure and coercion from a certain country, the United Kingdom has politicised business issues and discriminates against Chinese companies.’⁴⁵

These charges are not just aimed at the UK, but they are also for the benefit of the Party’s domestic audience. Insincere and untrustworthy behaviour are regular bullets fired from the CCP gun. They contrast with the Party’s uprightness. This plays to nationalism, which Xi Jinping has stoked. External propaganda considers the domestic audience before all others, hence the ineptness of much of the CCP’s performance, not least its highly offensive Covid-19 propaganda.⁴⁶

7.1 Will the CCP put the UK in the ‘diplomatic doghouse’?

On balance, the answer is likely to be a qualified affirmative. Reinforced by a quicker Covid-19 economic recovery in 2020, the Party appears confident that indeed ‘the east is rising, the west declining’ (although like many a paranoid autocratic regime, such confidence may be brittle). The UK is seen as vulnerable because of Brexit and not in a strong position to offend China. Furthermore, if the ‘struggle’ against the US continues, as is almost certain, the CCP will want to drive a wedge between America and its main ally. Supporting the US is a punishable offence.

But ‘doghouse diplomacy’ will not be without costs to the CCP, if it leads to a hardening of UK attitudes and more protective measures. China has a large trade surplus. Chinese investment is not a charity; rather, it seeks out technology, innovations, brands which can help

⁴⁵ See: ‘China is opportunity, not threat to Britain, says Chinese FM’, *Xinhua*, 29/07/2020, <https://bit.ly/3vYzwmT> (found: 24/03/2021).

⁴⁶ One of the more fantastic explanations of the rejection by the UK government of Huawei as a 5G provider was a belief among certain UK quarters that ‘Huawei 5G equipment radiation caused the spread of the new crown virus.’ See: ‘Malice against China is surging in the UK, and the British business community is worried: I hope the UK will not become the next Australia!’, *Huanqiu*, 08/02/2021, <http://bit.ly/macisituatbbciw> (found: 24/03/2021).



China. It needs the City of London's expertise. Curtailing tourism or students coming to the UK would risk a backlash from a rising middle class for whom Britain is a magnet and who do not wish to concern themselves with politics.⁴⁷ So far, threats have been made only against exports, investment and the City of London.⁴⁸ To rephrase Xi Jinping's slogan, it would be 'lose-lose', and for all its evinced confidence that the future belongs to China, the question arises how far it will continue to risk offending more and more big countries of the developed world.

⁴⁷ A soon to be published British Council report 'People to people: what the UK and China think of one another' shows that 81% of Chinese have a positive view of Britain.

⁴⁸ Liu Xiaoming quoted in the *Global Times*. See: Liu Xiaoming, 'Interview given by Ambassador Liu Xiaoming to Global Times', Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United Kingdom, 18/08/2020, <http://bit.ly/igbalxtgt> (found: 24/03/2021). See also comments by Chen Wen, the Second Secretary at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United Kingdom. See: Naomi Adedokun, 'China warns "there will be consequences" if Boris allows Hong Kong citizens to relocate', *Daily Express*, 06/06/2020, <https://bit.ly/3faLSlL> (found: 24/03/2021).



8.0 How successful might an aggressive CCP stance towards the UK be?

CCP reform and development proceeds through ‘experimental zones’ (试点 / shidian), to a broader application of the lessons learnt. In terms of assertive or bullying diplomacy, Australia is the experimental zone. The measures it has taken to protect its own interests have resulted in several years of the Party escalating measures and rhetoric. But, if anything, that has served to harden Australian resolve. Moreover, the economic effects fail to match the rhetoric.⁴⁹

The effect on the UK may also be far less than some fear and others trumpet. Following the Dalai Lama’s visit to Britain in 2012, the CCP put the country in the ‘diplomatic doghouse’. Yet exports rose in the years following, as they did for Norway, South Korea, Canada and others who were ‘punished’ later.⁵⁰ Some symbolic industries or those whose products are easily sourced elsewhere are likely to suffer pain, although in some cases the fungibility of such goods means that when China buys elsewhere, elsewhere buys from the targeted country.

In terms of the stock of investment in the UK, only 0.2% is Chinese.⁵¹ Export of services (broader than just financial) to China in 2019 amounted to just 1.7% of the UK total.⁵² The Party may not be willing or able to cut back substantially on long term tourism or study, for which the UK is a leading destination, and for study not one readily replaceable by another English-speaking country. To prevent the Chinese middle-class travelling and studying abroad risks its ire being turned on the Party. In sum, there are limits to the effectiveness of the

⁴⁹ See, for example: Alex Turnbull, ‘Is China big? Does that matter?’, *Syncretica*, 05/01/2021, <https://bit.ly/31fNkep> (found: 24/03/2021); Rebecca Le May, ‘Aussie coal still finding its way to China through other markets’, *News.co.au*, 15/01/2021, <https://bit.ly/3sl1F1P> (found: 24/03/2020); and ‘China increases import quota for Australian wool’, *Global Times*, 05/01/2021, <https://bit.ly/3fcvZvi> (found: 24/03/2021).

⁵⁰ ‘Statistics on UK trade with China’, House of Commons Library, 14/07/2021, <https://bit.ly/2P8d5Lb> (found: 24/03/2021).

⁵¹ ‘Trade and Investment Factsheets – China’, Department for International Trade, 19/03/2021, <https://bit.ly/3re9cBu> (found: 24/03/2021).

⁵² Combining total UK service exports with the China total. See: ‘UK Trade in Numbers’, Department for International Trade, 02/2021, <https://bit.ly/3lKAAWI> (found: 24/03/2021) and ‘Statistics on UK trade with China’, House of Commons Library, 14/07/2021, <https://bit.ly/2P8d5Lb> (found: 24/03/2021).



CCP threats: the howl of its ‘wolf warrior’ diplomats may be worse than their bite.

To end on a more optimistic note. There is a tendency to see everything through a political lens. The CCP encourages that. Yet the Party is not monolithic; its power is attenuated by distance, other interests and deliberate resistance. Chinese business wants to do business, investors to invest, students to study. ‘The Party leads everything’. But the people do not always follow everywhere.

9.0 Conclusion

Despite Brexit, what the CCP wants from relations with Britain has changed little over the last decade. It hopes to showcase important Chinese industries, to gain access to UK science and innovation, to benefit and learn from British financial and other services, to bolster support for an open economic global governance system, and to avoid unhelpful UK positions on CCP ‘core’ interests and on the ‘narrative’ which the Party wishes to project. In the field of investment Britain as a gateway to Europe is less important than acquiring technologies which the CCP needs to advance its ambitions. Companies such as Tiktok and CGTN are still establishing their headquarters in the UK (although CGTN may reconsider in the light of the recent OFCOM rulings).

What has changed is the context of those aims, particularly as the UK public, press, politicians and government have started to wake up to the reality of Xi Jinping’s China. This evolution of UK views, still ongoing, is changing the CCP approach: more stick and less carrot. In turn, that hardening assertiveness in the Party’s policy and propaganda, reinforced by China’s impressive recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, may lead to more significant pushback from the UK, as has happened in Australia. Indeed the *Global Times* has threatened that Britain risks joining Australia in the ‘diplomatic doghouse’ (the Party uses the paper as a warning mechanism, not necessarily an announcer of policy, although it may be so if warnings are not heeded). The gloves are not yet off, partly because British policy is not clear, American policy is not settled, and possibly because, in order not to disturb its picture of global environmental leadership, the CCP may not want a quarrel before the Glasgow COP-26 Summit on climate change.

An optimist might say that the CCP has already alienated too many of the world’s leading countries and may see the benefits of restraint. A pessimist would counter that such restraint would fly in the face of Xi Jinping’s views on struggle with ‘western capitalism’ and would require the difficult act of dismounting from the nationalist tiger which he has stirred within China.

Thus the odds are that the Party will make relations with the UK more difficult in the coming years. To counter that, Britain will need to

have a clear strategy for China and to emphasise that it seeks to maximise cooperation while upholding the right more strongly to prioritise its security, interests and values. And the first step to a clear strategy is an in-depth understanding of the CCP and its aims for relations with Britain.

9.1 Recommendations

Given that this paper focuses on what the CCP desires from the UK, it is tempting to make recommendations to the Party on how to deal with Britain. They are unlikely to be well received. Self-evidently, owing to the ambiguity in the Integrated Review, the UK needs a strategy for dealing with China.⁵³ Until one materialises, the recommendations below are limited to the topic of dealing with what the CCP wants from its relations with Britain. Made in due humility, these recommendations are unlikely to come as a surprise, particularly to those in government whose work centres on China:

- 1. Greater resources should be devoted to promoting ‘China literacy’ within the government.** Incentive structures should be aligned so that there is encouragement for those with experience of China to serve in posts which will benefit from that experience. Secondments from outside government should be encouraged (and the costs of vetting accepted, delays cut). Staff from ministries other than the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office should be encouraged to serve in posts in UK missions in China.
- 2. Government and Parliament should increase their knowledge of the nature of the CCP and its aims through greater exchanges with academics, think tanks and business.** In doing so, they should ensure that they are clear about any bias or self-interest in those whom they consult, given that the Party, through the

⁵³ On the Integrated Review’s perception of China, see: Charles Parton, ‘China in the Integrated Review’, *Britain’s World*, 19/03/2021, <https://bit.ly/3clshox> (found: 24/03/2021). For broader China strategies, see: Charles Parton, ‘Towards a UK strategy and policies for relations with China’, Policy Unit, King’s College, London, 06/2020, <http://bit.ly/tausapfrwc> (found: 24/03/2021) and Sophia Gaston and Rana Mitter, ‘After the Golden Age: Resetting UK-China Engagement’, British Foreign Policy Group, 07/2020, <http://bit.ly/atgaruce> (found: 23/03/2021).



UFWD and other elements, makes great efforts to influence those close to the British government.

3. **The Government should carry out an urgent assessment on how damaging CCP threats to exports, investment, services and the City of London, tourism and Chinese studying in the UK are in the light of the past, other countries' recent experience and possible future developments.** There is much scaremongering, particularly from those with interests which may not align with those of the UK as a whole. Not only is the weight of the stick sometimes exaggerated (in the past, while some sectors have been hit, overall exports and investment have risen for all countries 'sent to the doghouse'), so too is the juiciness of the carrots (for example, how many jobs have really been brought by Chinese investment?).
4. **The Government should prepare for some turbulence.** It may need to give temporary support to certain areas of business. It will need to communicate clearly the reasons for its need to stand firm on the UK's wider interests.
5. **Once it has set a clear China strategy, the Government needs to put in place the structures necessary to improve work with China on positive areas, while protecting UK interests in others.** A salient example is providing guidance and enforcement to both universities and companies, so that scientific and technological cooperation is limited to areas which do not harm UK security or values. Another is the establishment of an equivalent to the Australian National Counter Foreign Interference Coordinator's Office.⁵⁴
6. **The Government should speed up and deepen the process of consultation, sharing of experience and adopting unified policies towards China with like-minded countries.** These would include not just the EU and 'Five Eyes' countries, but to the extent possible, Japan, India, South Korea, Taiwan and other Indo-Pacific nations.

⁵⁴ 'Stepping up Australia's response against foreign interference', Prime Minister of Australia, 02/12/2019, <http://bit.ly/suarafi> (found: 24/03/2021).



About the author

Charles Parton OBE is a James Cook Associate Fellow in Indo-Pacific Geopolitics at the Council on Geostrategy. He spent 22 years of his 37-year diplomatic career working in or on China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. In his final posting he was seconded to the European Union's Delegation in Beijing, where, as First Counsellor until late 2016, he focussed on Chinese politics and internal developments, and advised the European Union and its Member States on how China's politics might affect their interests. In 2017, he was chosen as the Foreign Affairs Select Committee's Special Adviser on China; he returned to Beijing for four months as Adviser to the British Embassy to cover the Communist Party's 19th Congress.



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Address: 14 Old Queen Street, Westminster, London, SW1H 9HP

Phone: 020 3915 5625

Email: info@geostrategy.org.uk

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