# General Election 2024: Putting a foreign policy lens on party manifestos

## Conservative Party

**The UN and international cooperation**

We believe that the United Kingdom needs to be outward-looking and global in perspective, seizing opportunities to deepen its economic ties and bolster its prosperity in the most dynamic parts of the world.
...
We will strengthen our relationships with like-minded partners around the world. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the UK has a responsibility to stand up for international peace and security. we will keep investing in our collective security through groups like the G7, Five Eyes and NATO.
...
We will be confident in spreading British values around the world, publishing a new Soft Power Strategy to support the role of our embassies and the British Council overseas. We will support the BBC World Service, expand the use of the English language worldwide and champion English learning around the globe.

**Human rights**

Due to our post-Brexit freedoms, we have introduced a new independent sanctions regime that we have used to stand up for human rights around the world in countries such as Russia, Belarus and Iran.
...
In relation to China, we will strengthen our national security protections, align and cooperate with our partners, and engage where it is consistent with our interests. China has disregarded universal human rights and its international commitments, from Tibet and Xinjiang to Hong Kong. We will continue to raise our grave concerns at the UN and other fora and use asset freezes and travel bans on those involved under our human rights sanctions regime.

**Arms control and nuclear weapons**

We will always be steadfast in our support for our Trident nuclear deterrent and have invested in its modernisation, including a nuclear skills package worth up to £763 million by 2030.
...
We have created new defence industrial partnerships, including AUKUS to create the world's most advanced nuclearpowered, conventionally and continually armed, submarines and the Global Combat Air Programme to create a new fighter jet with Italy and Japan.

**Military spending**

Our prosperity depends on our ability to preserve international security. As our record proves, we will do so by deterring our adversaries and acting as a force for peace and stability in the world.

We will hit 2.5% of GDP on defence in 2030 with our fully funded plan. This is the biggest strengthening of our defence since the Cold War, ensuring we remain the largest defence power in Europe. It will protect our security, cement our UK leadership in NATO and create more jobs in the UK. If all NATO partners spent 2.5% of GDP on defence, our collective spending would increase by over £140 billion. Therefore, we will launch a campaign to set a new baseline of 2.5% for all NATO allies by 2030. We will invest in the vital capabilities of the future, to give our Armed Forces the best equipment to do their job.
- We will adapt to the lessons from the war in Ukraine which showed us it is vital to be able to replenish equipment quickly and that the acceleration of disruptive technologies is changing the character of warfare. Our strategic priorities will be: Boosting the UK defence industrial base by giving industry the multi-year certainty it requires to produce the equipment we need when we need it, with at least £10 billion of investment in munitions production, the majority of which will be spent in the UK over the next decade. We will do this in the areas in which we have the most pressing priorities, building on UK expertise. We will build long-term strategic partnerships with our industrial partners and invest in high quality British defence industry jobs across the UK.
- Accelerating the modernisation of our Armed Forces and investing in technology that is advantageous on the modern battlefield. Through our new Defence Innovation Agency, we will scale R&D funding to a minimum of 5% of the defence budget, together with an additional 2% to exploit that R&D, accelerating investments in new weapon systems.

**International development**

To ensure our world-class diplomacy and development expertise is brought together we will maintain the merger of the Foreign Office and former Department for International Development – and use this advantage to the maximum benefit in every post overseas.

The UK will remain one of the largest development donors in the world. We will return to spending 0.7% of GNI when fiscal circumstances allow. We will assess every penny of this money with a strict national interest test.

We will continue to ensure that aid and development supports our strategic objectives, with a focus on fragile states.

We will work with our partners to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals and tackle poverty, as set out in the International Development White Paper.
- We will use our influence to ensure Multilateral Development Banks get more money to the countries who need it and work to deliver debt relief.
- We will expand our international campaigns on girls' education, women's rights and reproductive health. We will stand up for those persecuted for their faith and put the existing role of Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief on a statutory footing. We will promote international media freedom and work to end human trafficking and modern slavery.
- We will support marginalised communities in the developing world and protect those persecuted for their ethnicity, political views, faith or sexuality. We will continue our campaigns against child marriage and FGM.
- We will scale up high impact, cost effective global health interventions, including maternal nutrition and antimicrobial resistance, for benefit at home and overseas. We will continue our longstanding support for GAVI and the Global Fund - organisations that have saved millions of lives in the fight against disease.

**Climate diplomacy**

We will maintain the leadership on climate change we achieved at COP26 and our efforts to tackle global warming and biodiversity loss.

We will continue to ring-fence our commitment to International Climate Finance. We will work with Small Island Development States, including our Commonwealth friends in the Caribbean and the Pacific, to access finance for climate change adaptation and resilience.

**Conflict & conflict resolution**

We are proud to be a problem-solving and burden-sharing nation. We will use our diplomatic efforts to keep pushing for reconciliation and stability in parts of the world where there is conflict or unresolved territorial disputes.
...
We staunchly stand behind Israel's right to defend itself and to live with security. We will continue to support access to aid for those affected by the conflict. We will push for a two-state solution in the Middle East - our long-standing position has been that we will recognise a Palestinian State at a time that is most conducive to the peace process. We will redouble our efforts to help achieve diplomatic breakthroughs in Cyprus, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Myanmar.

We will bring back our Bill to ban public bodies from imposing their own boycott or divestment campaigns against foreign countries and territories.
...
We have led the world in support of Ukraine against Putin's aggression, as the first European country to mobilise lethal aid and to send Western tanks and longrange missiles. Russia's attempts to destroy Ukraine are an assault on European security.
...
We will always stand up for British values and interests and will never be afraid to act when it is necessary. We have been part of a coalition that protected maritime security from Houthi attacks and helped police the airspace of our partners in the Middle East.

**General peace and security**

We must be prepared to tackle the axis of authoritarian states and hostile actors who are working together to threaten international security. That is why we will include Russia, Iran and China within the enhanced tier of the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme.
- We will strengthen our relationships with like-minded partners around the world. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the UK has a responsibility to stand up for international peace and security. We will keep investing in our collective security through groups like the G7, Five Eyes and NATO.
- We will maintain our special relationship with the United States, building on the closer trading and national security ties we have built in recent years.
- We will seek to strengthen the Commonwealth, as an organisation that accounts for over a quarter of the membership of the UN and a champion of values. We will deepen cooperation with Commonwealth partners and institutions to enhance the benefits of membership, strengthen intra-Commonwealth trade, support members facing challenges in attracting inward investment and strengthen the resilience of the most vulnerable members to climate change, nature loss and environmental degradation.
- We will build on our post-Brexit relationships in Europe, including through the Joint Expeditionary Force and new defensive treaties with Germany and Poland, to match the treaty we have with France under Lancaster House.
- In relation to China, we will strengthen our national security protections, align and cooperate with our partners, and engage where it is consistent with our interests. China has disregarded universal human rights and its international commitments, from Tibet and Xinjiang to Hong Kong. We will continue to raise our grave concerns at the UN and other fora and use asset freezes and travel bans on those involved under our human rights sanctions regime.
- We will maintain our close ties in the Indo-Pacific, following our accession to CPTPP, our AUKUS partnership with Australia and ASEAN dialogue partner status. We will bolster the Hiroshima Accord with Japan and expand trade and security ties with South Korea, Indonesia, Vietnam and Singapore. We will finalise a free trade agreement with India, alongside a deeper strategic partnership on technology and defence.
- We will continue to seek closer ties with partners in the Gulf and Middle East based on an appreciation of regional perspectives and shared interests.
- We will sign partnership agreements with each of the British Overseas Territories, ensuring we are working together to deliver for their residents and identifying areas for greater cooperation on defence, trade and investment.
...
- Guaranteeing Ukraine the support it needs for the long haul, assuring current levels of support for as long as they are required. We will secure additional military supplies for Ukraine and build international agreement to use immobilised Russian assets to support Ukraine. We will deliver a National Defence and Resilience Plan for our security, preparedness and resilience as a nation. This will be based on the latest assessment of threats and risks, bringing together defence and civilian planning to reflect our increasingly interdependent world, and sit alongside work to build on learnings from Covid to improve the country's preparedness for risks on the National Risk Register.

## Labour Party

**The UN and international cooperation**

Multilateral institutions remain indispensable, but they are struggling under the strain of new global challenges. Labour will work with allies to build, strengthen and reform these institutions. We will use the UK's unique position in NATO, the UN, G7, G20 and the Commonwealth to address the threats we face, and to uphold human rights and international law. Labour values international law because of the security it brings.
...
**Strengthening diplomacy**
Labour will strengthen Britain's influence abroad, defending our national interests, promoting progressive values, and protecting UK nationals. Our diplomatic leadership is bolstered by the soft power of our world-leading cultural institutions. Rather than running these institutions down, we will work across government to bring leading creative and cultural institutions together to increase the UK's international clout. And we will work with our proud diaspora communities to enhance our cultural links across the world.
...
With Labour, Britain will once again be strong on the world stage, confident in the pursuit of our national interest, and progressive but realistic about the challenges we face. We will reconnect with allies and forge new partnerships to deliver security and prosperity at home and abroad.
...
Labour will end the chaotic approach to foreign affairs, turn the page and reconnect with our allies, to once again stand strong on the world stage.

**Human rights**

We will use the UK's unique position in NATO, the UN, G7, G20 and the Commonwealth to address the threats we face, and to uphold human rights and international law. Labour values international law because of the security it brings. Britain will unequivocally remain a member of the European Convention on Human Rights.

**Arms control and nuclear weapons**

**An unshakeable commitment to NATO and our nuclear deterrent**

Our commitment to the UK's nuclear deterrent is absolute. It is a vital safeguard for the UK and our NATO allies.

**Military spending**

As the party that founded NATO, we maintain our unshakeable commitment to the alliance, and we will apply a NATO test to major defence programmes to ensure we meet our obligations in full. In recent years, threats to our safety and security have multiplied and diversified. Alongside greater conventional threats, we are faced with the growing emergence of hybrid warfare, including cyber-attacks and misinformation campaigns which seek to subvert our democracy. To ensure the UK is fully prepared to deal with these interconnected threats, Labour will conduct a Strategic Defence Review within our first year in government, and we will set out the path to spending 2.5 per cent of GDP on defence.

**International development**

**Modernising international development**

With previous Labour governments, Britain gained world-leading expertise in international development, with the aim of making the world a safer, more prosperous place. Under the Conservatives, this capacity has been degraded, and as a result Britain has lost influence.

Labour will turn the page to rebuild Britain's reputation on international development with a new approach based on genuine respect and partnership with the global South to support our common interests. To counter the growing influence of malign actors and boost efforts to combat threats like climate change, the UK's development work must be closely aligned with our foreign policy aims, co-ordinated to tackle global poverty, instability, and the climate and nature crisis.

Our mission statement will be 'to create a world free from poverty on a liveable planet' as a signal of our commitment to greater multilateral action, and our intention to lead on this agenda. Regaining Britain's global leadership on development is a key part of our plan to reconnect with our allies and partners. Labour will strengthen international development work within the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office.

We will renew expertise and focus, especially in priority areas such as supporting economic transformation, tackling unsustainable debt, empowering women and girls, supporting conflict prevention, and unlocking climat e finance.

Labour is committed to restoring development spending at the level of 0.7 per cent of gross national income as soon as fiscal circumstances allow. We will deliver value for money for the British taxpayer by working closely with the Independent Commission for Aid Impact to apply the highest standards to our aid spend – bringing in robust measures of development effectiveness, transparency, and scrutiny.

**Climate diplomacy**

We cannot address the urgency of the climate and nature crisis without co-ordinated global action. A failure to act will cause environmental devastation, fuelling displacement, conflict and famine. By being climate leaders at home, including meeting our agreed targets, Labour will restore the strong global leadership needed to tackle the climate crisis. International allies and competitors have already recognised the opportunities and are racing ahead, investing in new technology and creating the jobs of the future. Under the Conservatives, Britain has squandered our leadership, wasting the opportunity of our COP26 presidency to make historic progress. Labour will move faster by working together with our international partners, especially those at the forefront of the climate crisis, including Pakistan and Bangladesh, and the COP30 hosts, Brazil.

Labour will create a new Clean Power Alliance, bringing together a coalition of countries at the cutting edge of climate action. This will help to deliver lower energy bills while accelerating the energy transition and protecting and enhancing clean energy supply chains.

**Conflict & conflict resolution**

Long-term peace and security in the Middle East will be an immediate focus. Labour will continue to push for an immediate ceasefire, the release of all hostages, the upholding of international law, and a rapid increase of aid into Gaza. Palestinian statehood is the inalienable right of the Palestinian people. It is not in the gift of any neighbour and is also essential to the long-term security of Israel. We are committed to recognising a Palestinian state as a contribution to a renewed peace process which results in a two-state solution with a safe and secure Israel alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state. Labour will also strengthen support for British nationals abroad. We will introduce a new right to consular assistance in cases of human rights violations.

**General peace and security**

Defending the UK's security Labour's first duty in government will be to keep our country safe. We will launch a Strategic Defence Review to assess the threats we face and the capabilities needed to address them. At the heart of our security are the men and women who serve and risk their lives for this country. We will strengthen support for our Armed Forces communities by putting the Armed Forces Covenant fully into law and establishing an independent Armed Forces Commissioner to improve service life. Labour will ensure veterans have access to the mental health, employment, and housing support and in other areas they need. We will also scrap visa fees for non-UK veterans who have served for four or more years, and their dependents.

Strengthening Britain's security requires a long-term partnership with our domestic defence industry. Labour will bring forward a defence industrial strategy aligning our security and economic priorities. We will ensure a strong defence sector and resilient supply chains, including steel, across the whole of the UK. We will establish long-term partnerships between business and government, promote innovation, and improve resilience. We will prioritise UK businesses for defence investment and will reform procurement to reduce waste. Labour will support industry to benefit from export opportunities, in line with a robust arms export regime committed to upholding international law.

Strengthening our defences also requires stronger leadership, clearer accountability, faster delivery, less waste, and better value for money. Labour will establish a fully functioning military strategic headquarters and a national armaments director to create a strong defence centre capable of leading Britain in meeting the increasing threats we face. With Labour, the UK's military, financial, diplomatic and political support for Ukraine will remain steadfast. Labour will support efforts to hold Putin's Russia to account for its illegal war, backing calls for a Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression. We will work with our allies to enable the seizure and repurposing of frozen Russian state assets to support Ukraine. And we will play a leading role in providing Ukraine with a clear path to NATO membership.

Labour will also work with our allies and international financial centres to tackle corruption and money laundering, including in Britain, Crown Dependencies, and in British Overseas Territories. Labour is fully committed to AUKUS, the trilateral security partnership with [illegible]

## Scottish National Party

**The UN and international cooperation**

We want to see an independent Scotland take its place in the international community; alongside the 193 other United Nations member states, able to join the European Union, with the powers necessary to protect our citizens and prosper in the global economy. We are determined that Scotland plays a positive and progressive role in international affairs through action and leadership.

**Human rights**

**Increase access to democracy by extending the voting age to 16**, and eligibility to all residents, including all international students and those with refugee status, as is the case in Scotland. Scrap Voter ID. SNP MPs will continue to call on the UK Government to repeal the legislation and seek to rebuild trust in our democratic processes with voters. We will push for the introduction of automatic voter registration so that no-one needlessly misses out on their democratic right to vote.

**Respect international law and protect rights.** Rather than rolling back on rights, we should be seeking to strengthen human rights protections for all. We will call on the UK Government to respect international law and strongly oppose [illegible]

**Arms control and nuclear weapons**

**Scrap Trident** and invest the billions spent funding these immoral weapons in public services, like our NHS and schools and adequately funding conventional defence. The SNP has never and will never support the retention or renewal of Trident, and will press the UK government to meet their international obligations on nuclear disarmament.

**International development**

**Immediately restore and maintain the UK international aid budget to 0.7%.**

**Climate diplomacy**

**Increase investment into loss and damage.** Scotland was the first developed nation in the world to commit funding to address loss and damage, sparking debate and showing global leadership. Since then, the global loss and damage fund has reached $700 million. Instead of following Scotland's bold leadership, the UK Government opted to repurpose existing funding. The UK Government must provide a new contribution to the new Loss and Damage Fund which is truly additional to existing commitments.
...
The UK Government must invest at least £28bn a year in the green economy to deliver a step change in public and private investment in net zero and major investment in the domestic supply chain. As part of this investment, the UK Government should seek an equity stake in future energy projects. The return on this investment for the taxpayer will be used to directly benefit the Scottish people by protecting jobs, growing the green economy and lowering [illegible]

**Conflict & conflict resolution**

**Demand an immediate ceasefire in Gaza**, release of hostages and end arms sales to Israel. We will continue to call on the UK Government to follow the lead of Ireland, Norway and Spain by immediately recognising Palestine as a state. We believe that recognising Palestine as a state in its own right is the only way to move towards a just and durable long-term peace, in the interests of both Palestinians and Israelis.

**Stand by Ukraine and continue to strongly oppose the Russian invasion.** We will continue to support Ukrainians who have settled in Scotland and will press the UK Government to extend visa rights whilst the conflict continues. We will do everything in our power to see the restoration of peace and ensure Ukraine's sovereignty, democracy, independence and [illegible]

**General peace and security**

**Strengthen Scotland's security** by pushing the UK to focus on countering disinformation and misinformation, better protecting national critical infrastructure, improving supply chain resilience and strengthening the ability of the UK to rebound and rebuild from the aftermath of a shock or crisis.

**Raise the military recruitment age to 18**. SNP MPs will urge the UK Government to phase out the recruitment of people under 18 in line with international standards.

[illegible]

## Cooperative

**The UN and international cooperation**

Awaiting news on publication

## About this initiative

UA-UK is shining a spotlight on foreign affairs by extracting passages from parties' manifestos on the subject of United Nations and international cooperation, human rights, arms controls and nuclear weapons, defence spending, climate diplomacy, international development, conflict resolution, peace and security and (atrocity prevention and peacekeeping), .

Britain's future prosperity and security depend on factors we cannot control alone. As such, a considered look at political parties' foreign policy strategies should be part of the conversation on Britain's future role. This initiative is part of a set of General Election 2024 resources intended to stimulate informed debate on international cooperation and the UN.

www.una.org.uk

## Understanding the results

When reviewing this document, please bear in mind the following:
- Manifestos have been included for all parties with at least one MP at the time of dissolution of Parliament on 30 May 2024
- Manifestos are ordered by number of MPs at dissolution. Where numbers are tied, alphabetical order was used.
- The Cooperative Party has been listed last given that its MPs are also jointly Labour MPs and as such there were no exclusively Cooperative Party MPs
- Reform UK called its policy document a "contract" rather than a manifesto and describe it as a "working draft"
- The text comprises verbatim extracts from political parties. Formatting has been preserved where possible. Elipseses (...) are used to show where the flow has been broken and a new excerpt begins.
- While we followed the same methodology for each manifesto, categorisation into comparable themes will always require discretion and arguably relevant content may be missed
- Manifestos are not the only policy expression by political parties - the absence of infornation may not indicate the absence of a policy on a given issue
- Different parties approach manifestos differently; some will be more verbose and completest, others prefer to keep it simple
- Given that responsibility for British foreign policy lies with the Westminster government, some parties based in devolved nations may choose not to include commitments on foreign policy
- We are including the main manifestos of the 12 political parties that returned MPs to Westminster during the 2015-2017 parliament (at the time of writing, not all manifestos had been released)
- While we aim to be as thorough as possible, we may have missed something so please do not take this as a definitive round-up of policies
- For definitive information, please read the manifestos directly (see links below)
- UNA-UK is a UK registered charity and is not affiliated with any political party

## Links to manifestos

Conservative Party Manifesto
Labour Party Manifesto
Scottish National Party Manifesto
Liberal Democrats Manifesto
Democratic Unionist Party Manifesto
Sinn Féin Manifesto
Plaid Cymru Manifesto
Social Democratic and Labour Party (awaiting publication)
Alba Party Manifesto
Green Party Manifesto
Alliance Party Manifesto
Workers Party Manifesto
Reform Contract
Co-operative Party manifesto (awaiting publication)