



HOUSE OF LORDS

~~Re~~vised transcript of evidence taken before

The Select Committee on International Relations

Inquiry on

UK PRIORITIES FOR THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

Evidence Session No. 5

Heard in Public

Questions 62 - 72

MONDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2016

2.30 pm

Witnesses: Baroness Anelay of St Johns, Paul Williams and Edward Hobart

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Members present

Lord Howell of Guildford (Chairman)
 Baroness Coussins
 Baroness D'Souza
 Lord Grocott
 Lord Hannay of Chiswick
 Baroness Hilton of Eggardon
 Lord Inglewood
 Lord Purvis of Tweed
 Lord Reid of Cardowan
 Baroness Smith of Newnham

Examination of Witnesses

Baroness Anelay of St Johns, Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, **Paul Williams**, Director, Multilateral Policy Directorate, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and **Edward Hobart**, Migration Envoy, Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Q62 The Chairman: Minister, welcome. Thank you for being with us. I know you have an extremely tight schedule. We will get through our business as quickly as we can so you can fly off to your next assignment. We also welcome Mr Hobart and Paul Williams, whom we have met before. Perhaps I may say formally, although you have heard this a thousand times, that the session is open to the public and is webcast. A verbatim transcript will come to you and can be altered as you advise of any corrections you want. That is a formality.

Having gone through that, perhaps we may go straight into the issue. As you know, Minister, our fairly focused self-appointed task is to provide a clear agenda of priorities for the new Secretary-General, who might be in place at the end of October or in November. One does not really know, but that is the way it seems to be going. To do that, we would enormously value your advice and insights as a Minister directly concerned. Perhaps I may start with a fairly general question. There are four priorities. What should the UK be putting at the top of the list?

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Thank you, Lord Chairman. I also thank the Committee as a whole for agreeing to meet on a day and at a time it would not normally expect to be here. It enables me to go to the Human Rights Council on the evening flight today. This week, the United Kingdom is campaigning to be re-elected to the Human Rights Council. We take our work through the United Nations extremely seriously, although of course we work through other international fora such as the G7, the G20 and the Commonwealth. It is our leadership in the United Nations, however, that for us takes primacy.

Looking at where our focus lies on reform, we want the next Secretary-General to be able to reform the way the United Nations has managed to work through its three pillars, in the way things can slide between the three. Traditionally it has worked through the pillars of security, development and human rights. In a modern world, that no longer accurately reflects what the United Nations needs to do as a whole. We need to see more coherence between those three pillars. We have belligerents who do not fall into the old category of state Government against state Government, or one opposition against a Government. We have to find better ways of working, and the next Secretary-General needs to lead that kind of work and can do so through demonstrating his or her own priorities in the United Nations, but also by being a good communicator. So the priority is to make the UN even more fit for purpose than it has been in the past and fit for the next 70 years, as it has been for the last 70.

The Chairman: Do you think, Minister, that a new Secretary-General will have the power and authority to begin to unravel the old divisions, overcome the stove-piping, as it is often called, and, as you said, bring together these major streams of activity—all of which we have questions on—into a new coherence? Is this maybe asking too much of a new Secretary-General?

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: I do not think we can ask too much of any new Secretary-General. We have seen very ambitious candidates put forward their pledges. They know they will lead the United Nations at a time when we see more instability around the world. We need to be sure the United Nations can deliver what we have always hoped for: an organisation that can bring countries together to avoid conflict. I do not think we can ask too much. What we can do is be practical in understanding what can be delivered. The Secretary-General certainly does not have authority to direct states on what to do. He or she has to be persuasive in enabling states to work within the UN. But any Secretary-General of course has authority over his or her management systems in the UN and can lead by example there, and, of course, has important relationships with the other arms of the United Nations, which are semi-autonomous. They have not quite been spun off, but you can see the spider's web. The new Secretary-General needs to be able to build a better relationship with them. We have already seen the IOM¹ take steps to come more within the UN family than it has been. There certainly are steps the United Nations Secretary-General can take. We will want ambitious ones, but we also have to be practical.

¹ International Organization for Migration

Lord Hannay of Chiswick: May I ask a follow-up on stove-piping, as it is called? You quite rightly separate it into two bits. One is the bit over which he has some control, which is management of the secretariat. Secretary-Generals have not always been all that successful in ensuring that the various bits of the secretariat under their authority are all coherent. But by far the most difficult bit, which you referred to yourself, is the agencies, all of which have quite separate mandates, charters and—alas, more importantly—have completely separate governance. For example, an agency such as the WHO² is basically subject to health ministries, which probably do not pay much attention to what their foreign ministries want them to do. I feel that, rather than saying generally, as you have said and which I welcome, that we hope the Secretary-General will get to grips with both these forms of stove-piping, we might have some ideas on how that is to be done and what we can do to help the new Secretary-General do it. On his or her own, they do not get very far.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Lord Hannay is absolutely right. It is only by agreement between the states that reform can take place in any event. As a country that feels it is one of the leading members of the United Nations—a P5 member that takes that work very seriously—we want to be able to set out how we think those reforms can go forward. Lord Hannay referred to the World Health Organization. When I had meetings with Margaret Chan I put forward to her the UK's ideas about how the WHO could reform its structures so it would not be found a little on the slow side, as it was when the Ebola crisis broke out. I absolutely agree that it is vital for the UK to show its proposals for reform. That is one of the pieces of work I do when I go both to the Human Rights Council and, as I shall, to the United Nations General Assembly next week in New York, when I host events with other countries to probe exactly where we can have support for some of our proposals.

Q63 The Chairman: When it comes to reorganisation there is the eternal obstacle of the P5 membership, which is stuck in its 1945 form. What do you think the chances are either of getting around the P5 problem in the reforms you are talking about or of bringing the P5 along with everybody else?

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We have supported the proposals to expand the membership of the P5. Lord Chairman, you make the point that the P5 membership was set shortly after the end of the Second World War, and the world has changed since then. During the discussions on reform we have always said that we would support an expansion to Germany, Brazil, India and Japan, and we would look beyond those to support the proposals that there should be

² World Health Organisation

some kind of representation from Africa. When the African Group went to meet the P5, one of the stumbling blocks that I found in discussions with the representatives of the African group that was negotiating was that the African countries wanted to be able to have fluidity: that is, they wanted to be able to decide from time to time which countries would be members, whereas we firmly believe that you need certainty. So our view would be that two countries are nominated from the African group to be permanent members. The other issue, as you, Lord Chairman, are naturally aware, is the use of a veto if and when the P5 is widened to more permanent members. However, I think it is a very good process to continue discussions about how that enlargement of the P5 might work. I think it is very healthy.

The Chairman: Can we turn to the central issue for many people, which is peacekeeping, which you heard about at conference? Lady Hilton would like to open on this.

Q64 Baroness Hilton of Eggardon: Yes, quite explicitly in relation to the conference last week, could you outline the outcomes, and were any of them concrete enough to produce further action in terms of commitment, payment and so on?

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Obviously Lady Hilton puts her finger on the important thing, which is: what happens next in practical delivery? Last week's conference was not a conference as such; it was a defence ministerial. Last year, Obama held a summit. This year we hosted, with colleagues from around the world who made pledges last year, a defence ministerial at which more than 70 countries and international organisations were represented. Over forty Defence Ministers came to that. In addition, there were Foreign Ministers, such as Susana Malcorra from Argentina, if Defence Ministers were not able to be present. The important thing now is to hold them to account. There were 30 new pledges, including ours, which is for a level 2 hospital for South Sudan. They were significant pledges. However, as colleagues will know, in this House I have always said, "But will it work?" That is my test.

The communiqué, which was agreed by 62 of the 70 countries at the end of the ministerial, holds us to account on our commitments. It asks how we deliver our pledges in a way that is more accountable and more transparent, and in particular it has a numerical way of saying how each country should go ahead to ensure that women play their part in peacekeeping. For me, the practical sign of how that can work was seen last week when Major Issaka from Niger was, for the first time ever, given an award by the UN for gender advocacy. In the very tough situation—to put it mildly—in Mali, she went out into the community and got credibility for the whole peace process.

Next, we hold people to account. The French are holding a conference later this autumn, and they will continue this theme of what happens next and how we hold each other to account.

Lord Reid of Cardowan: Welcome, Minister. My question follows on precisely from Lady Hilton's. I understand that the conference involved talks about talks rather than talks about practical action, which is being postponed. The UK's position is neatly encapsulated in the P3 formula—that is, planning, pledging and performance. Can you tell us a little more? Given that we are a member of the P5, presumably we are exhorting people towards our P3 aspirations, and we then have to carry some authority by saying what we have done. Perhaps I was not looking hard enough but, with the exception of the level 2 medical facility for South Sudan, I could not find anything in the Defence Secretary's speech that would have persuaded me, as a member of that conference, that the person who was exhorting in that direction was making a major contribution in any of those areas, despite being a member of the P5. So it would be helpful for us if you could outline what we are doing in each of those areas that would allow us to say that we want others to do something similar.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We took the lead last year in demonstrating how and where we were going to double our contribution to peacekeeping. David Cameron announced that we were going to re-engage with peacekeeping in South Sudan and Somalia. Of course, we already have a presence in Cyprus and we have technical expertise in places such as Mali and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where I have met our peacekeepers—the technical people there. So that pledge has already been made. We started to deliver on it this year, so I believe that we are talking about 70 in Somalia and now up to 400 in South Sudan. But, of course, what we are asked to do is pretty much at the expert end of the range. We are talking about medical help, which is why the level 2 hospital is so important, as well as providing technical training. Those at the conference already knew that. This time we are saying, “Last year we promised; this year we're delivering”. The new pledge was for a hospital.

As Lord Reid will know, we have contributed through money. We provide financing not only to the United Nations as a whole but to peacekeeping in particular. Not only do we provide those pledges and pay up but we then have pledging conferences. There will be one very shortly in the margins of UNGA³ next week in New York, when we co-host a pledging conference to ensure that more money is available for peacebuilding. So the promises were made, the accountability is there, and the communiqué shows that the UK has taken a lead in ensuring that, for example, UK troops who are deployed as peacekeepers in the future must be—it is compulsory—trained before they go on deployment and after they have arrived in preventing sexual violence in conflict so that we can get rid of the scourge of sexual

³ UN General Assembly

exploitation and abuse, which has so undermined the credibility of the UN. We lead through leadership.

Lord Grocott: Do the P5—or however many it turns out to be—and peacekeeping relate closely to each other? One of our earlier witnesses made what struck me as a pretty practical point—that sometimes stalemate on the Security Council, which, as we all know, has existed for decades, makes it possibly unproductive for a new or any other Secretary-General to focus their attention primarily on the peacekeeping areas where there are real differences of opinion among the P5 and to concentrate instead on second-order issues. I do not want to call them that but they are second order in the sense that they take place in areas of the world where there is not the same level of disagreement/conflict among the great powers—the P5 or whatever you want to call it. Examples are the two that you mentioned—South Sudan and Somalia. I just wonder what your thoughts are on a new Secretary-General, with British support, saying, “There are things we can do and things we can’t, and one of the things we really can do is redouble our efforts in areas where there is not a serious dispute at ‘Cabinet level’”.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Of course, it is correct to say that the Secretary-General cannot force the P5 to undo a disagreement in that respect. But what the Secretary-General can do is to assist the P5 in thinking again and having conversations about it so that it is not the end of the story. Also, I would imagine that any Secretary-General would not want to turn their back on the kinds of conflicts during which people suffer humanitarian disasters that are almost unimaginable to us sitting here around this table. Therefore, the Secretary-General would be looking at the development strand very strongly. The UK provides great assistance on that because of the 0.7% of GNI that we devote to assisting countries with ODA⁴ overseas. So I suggest that an adept Secretary-General can assist the P5 to overcome their disagreements by using his or her other instruments, whether by using United Nations systems, interacting with other international organisations or financial institutions in the private sector, or using communication and media skills. A good Secretary-General can do that.

Q65 Baroness Coussins: In your view, what practical steps could be taken by, first, the UK and, secondly, the new Secretary-General to get more member states to take more seriously Resolution 1325 on the role of women in peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction?

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Last October the UK put down its pledges and we will be held to account on those. For me, again, it is a case of what happens on the day. Last Thursday we

⁴ Official Development Assistance

saw our own Ministry of Defence put the whole issue of women, peace and security at the core of what was being discussed by showing that it was only if women peacekeepers were involved and only if we engaged with, and got the trust of, societies in which peacekeeping was taking place that we could ensure the peacekeepers, who may become peace enforcers, could ultimately leave because there would be an adherence to the peace process. We know full well that when women are involved in negotiating a peace process, then when peace is resolved and there is some form of agreement, it has a much longer life span than if women are not involved. So we tend to lead by example. We have updated our own national action plan, and I work with the GAPS⁵ group, which has led very much on Resolution 1325 and civil society here, as well as with the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Women, Peace and Security in the Palace of Westminster, on showing how the UK's experience can be more widely used. It is a case of never giving up.

Q66 Lord Purvis of Tweed: I have a brief question on the peacekeeping side. The Committee has heard evidence on the proposals for a mandatory pre-deployment code of practice. We would be interested in hearing the view of the UK Government on the prospects for that and at what level they see it as a priority.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: It was very much a priority last week to have that in the communiqué. When I listened to some of the participants last week, I could hear some caveats coming in. There were concerns that, because they did not have conscription, they could not force people to go through the pre-deployment training. That conversation continued throughout the day both on the floor of the defence ministerial and in bilaterals—in the side meetings. By the end of that day, some countries—one country in particular was very concerned that it would not be able to keep to its commitment—signed the communiqué because they had heard from other countries how, when you have voluntary service within the Armed Forces, it is still possible to find a way of making it work. This is essential and a priority because, if we do not have pre-deployment training, we let down the troops because we do not give them the tools to do the job when they are there. It also puts an onus on the troop-contributing country to plan. Our three Ps last week were all about planning first—planning where you need to have troops, whom you need to have there, asking whether they are the right ones to do it and whether they have had the training—rather than thinking, “There’s a crisis here. We need to put people in. Who’s available? Let’s do it”. That is a very crude way of describing what has been a sophisticated process, but we want to make it more

⁵ Gender Action for Peace and Security

sophisticated, saying, “Plan first”, and with that planning comes pre-deployment training. We heard some very positive stories from Belgium and others, who said, “We had competitions to see who would be a commander because we want the best of the best, and we know that they will insist that their troops are trained before they arrive”.

Q67 Lord Purvis of Tweed: Last year’s SDSR⁶ said that, in addition to doubling the number of military personnel contributing to UN peacekeeping operations, we will also increase UK law enforcement and the number of civilian experts in UK peace operations. I wonder what percentage increase that is going to be, and where are we on that?

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: I shall certainly have to get back to you on the percentage increase—I do not have the figure in my mind—but I can give an example of where it happens. We have deployed police officers in South Sudan because, in any event, community policing is not necessarily known in other societies. But certainly in areas where there has been conflict, it is a dangerous place to be. Our police officers are extremely well trained and are able to pass on their training. I have also met a police person who is engaged in the same process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, I will get back to you on the percentage increase.

I certainly think that where the UK has shone and has credit is in the way that we are able to select and provide expertise. On the particular point that you made, perhaps I may end by saying that very recently I had a meeting with the chief constable and his deputy. We talked through the whole process of what it means to the police to be able to identify in advance the people who are best able to carry out this work. The planning for that has to have quite a long lead-in time.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick: I want to go back to something you yourself mentioned, Minister, concerning sexual exploitation and abuse. Having just speed-read last week’s communiqué, it slightly bears out my view that the use of communiqués varies in inverse proportion to their length. This one covers two very lengthy paragraphs and says absolutely nothing that is not already happening. I hope you will forgive me for saying that I was slightly disappointed that you did not mention this subject in your article. What are the British Government going to do to really grasp the nettle of accountability? It is all here in the communiqué as usual. Everybody swears blind that they are going to train their troops not to do these horrible things and that they will be accountable for them if they do. But, as far as I know, the record shows that no one has been held accountable for any sexual crime that has

⁶ Strategic Defence and Security Review

been committed. They are just put on a plane, taken back home and redeployed somewhere else. You turned down the recommendation of the Sexual Violence in Conflict Committee which suggested that we really now have to take seriously the idea of some kind of international tribunal before which these people can be brought if there are charges against them. Do you not think it is a pity to turn it down flat like that? Do you not think that that is the direction in which we will have to go? It may take a very long time to get there and it may be very unattractive to a lot of troop contributors, but surely we ought to be out there saying that this is the only way to crack this problem.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: There are several strands in there. Perhaps I may take the overarching strand first and then give some detail on the point about nobody ever having been dealt with for sexual violence in conflict, when in fact clearly they have been. I shall give one or two examples of that which may be new to the Committee. They were raised only last week, so I would not expect people to know about them.

Overall, we have said that we do not see that as the magic bullet at the moment. In politics obviously one should never say never, but it does not appear to be the solution. The solution appears to lie more in exactly what Lord Hannay said—that is: how do you hold the individual troop-contributing countries to account? This is where I would expect the new Secretary-General to take the zero-tolerance approach enunciated by Ban Ki-moon. The new Secretary-General will have the opportunity to show what he or she means by how they choose who provides the troops. This is also the prime work of Hervé Ladsous, who is the Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and for Atul Khare, who is the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support. They have to work together on that. What do we mean when we say that we have to ensure that there is not the commission of the offence in the first place? It has to do with how you plan, whom you provide and how you train the troops, and then how you hold people to account if they ignore all the training that they have been given. We know from our own criminal justice system that you can have amendment after amendment to a criminal justice Bill but human beings will still do what they have been trained specifically not to do. So what do you do at that stage? Last week, for example, we heard from Uruguay how it carries out courts martial on the spot. There is no delay. One of the worries I have about a new bespoke tribunal is delay and disconnect between the people who have seen their families butchered or raped and the international system. They see it at one remove. Uruguay has held courts martial on the spot with the local people able to see that happening and see who is found guilty and why. So has South Africa. I agree with Lord Hannay: the danger is that if people just whisk their troops out and say,

“Don’t tell us what to do”, that is not acceptable. That then gives a bad reputation to all peacekeepers.

There are other ways to make sure we can deal with transgressions. The problem of international courts is one I have come across in detail when seeking an answer to the question of what we should do about Daesh and the appalling murders and rapes it has carried out. Looking at what the UN could do, I come up against the problem that, if you have a new international UN-created tribunal that can order troop-contributing countries if something goes wrong, “You have to be a member of this, you will be bound by it”, what effect will that have on whether troop-contributing countries will simply back out? I do not want them to do that and then supply their troops through other organisations; I want them to come up to the best muster possible in how they deliver peacekeeping operations through the United Nations. At the moment the signs are that a new international court would be too distant and too slow, and not have that real bite that Lord Hannay is looking for. That is what I want, too: what happens to the individuals? Is it just for the person accused? Is there any military responsibility for the commander? How do you deal with that chain of command? There is a complexity there that I am still looking at. In politics you never say never; you find an answer you think can really work now and see how other matters will work.

Q68 The Chairman: Thank you for that very full coverage of a vital and central issue. I have one final question on peacekeeping contributions. We have had submissions on facing up to the problem that troops and military resources are limited, so is there not an argument for what are called “over the horizon” operations? This is a new phrase for an old idea—earmarking—but it is pledging to have troops or resources ready to come in at a moment’s notice. This requires huge agility of planning with great complexity. Do you have a comment on that?

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Lord Chairman, you are absolutely right. It requires planning. That was the first of our Ps—planning, pledges and performance. There may well be that kind of rapid response capability. Rapid response is vital. It is something that we have seen used well through the UK Armed Forces. It is something we want to investigate. I discussed it a couple of weeks ago with a Foreign Minister from a country that is particularly adept at providing rapid response. At the moment our concentration is on fulfilling the commitments we have already made, but it is right that in planning ahead one should be able to say that there may be a role for the light forces—the Special Forces that can react quickly. An issue that one always has to think about is making sure that they have been trained effectively to deal with that situation as well. As we know, whenever peacekeepers go into a new cultural

area there are always sensitivities about how they behave. Rapid response can work. It is a very interesting idea, but I want to be sure the planning is good.

Paul Williams: Lord Chairman, perhaps I can briefly add to that. As the Minister says, we are focusing on our pledge of 45 to 70 troops in Somalia and up to 300 in South Sudan, plus now the field hospital. That is one pledge among many that we had at the conference last week. We had a session at the conference about rapid deployment, because the UN is trying to put a database of these pledges together to try to build them up through a rapid deployment scale, such that they will get sufficient troops that are relatively rapidly deployable to any zone where they need to go and where the Security Council asks them to go. That was very much in the United Nations' mind.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Also, on what Lord Hannay said about communiques, just about everybody without exception would say that communiques are always too long. How could I disagree with him on that? The most important thing is to make sure we follow them up. That is exactly where my colleague's comments come in. It is then a case of following it up, whether it is events and/or meetings we have internationally to pin down how each of us as countries plan to deliver.

The Chairman: Can we move on to human rights?

Q69 Lord Inglewood: Minister, in your opening remarks you told us that you were off to try to get us re-elected to the Human Rights Council. What is our USP? Why should other people vote for us, rather than someone else?

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Because we are leaders in the world on human rights. We have shown how we can stand up for freedom of religion or belief when it has been one of the most unfashionable and uncomfortable things to do, and to gather together support from other countries, so much so that there is now consensus on language condemning attacks on individuals on the base of their religion or belief. There will always be a difference in the understanding of language when one talks about it, but religious extremism is certainly something we are all concerned about.

We can persuade people. We have led work on eliminating violence against women and girls. Through the Prime Minister, we have been asked to do more than that. I am not using the royal we, by the way; I use it to refer to departments across government. It just happens that, as the Prime Minister's special representative on preventing sexual violence in conflict and, for the time being, as a Minister for the Department for International Development, I have a special interest in the eradication of violence against women and girls. We have led the world

in showing why female genital mutilation should be abolished. We have put money and work into that.

We have also shown how we fight to prevent the closing down of civil society. We have shown the value we have for civil society. For example, before the defence ministerial we had a meeting of NGOs to take their advice on what should happen at the defence ministerial. It is part and parcel of what we normally do. We have also led the way throughout the process on the sustainable development goals of showing we want to put into practice sustainable development so that it is not, rather like a communique, just a commitment, so that it had an impact and so that the phrase “no one should be left behind” means something. For example, in Geneva this week we put our efforts into giving small-island developing states and the least developed states the opportunity to have technical advice and support so they can operate at an international level. Overall, we have led by saying that human rights should be right at the centre of everything the United Nations does. If it is not, the United Nations does not mean what we think it does.

Lord Inglewood: I am sure you are not one of them, not least because I have heard what you told us, but there are those who have criticised the Human Rights Council as being a bit weak and ineffective. What is your clarion call? How are we going to turn the commitments that are clearly there into impact on the ground?

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: When the Human Rights Council celebrated 10 years of existence this summer, it was clearly time to show what it will do next to prove itself. So what has it done? It introduced a new, rigorous system of holding each other to account: the universal periodic review. When I first heard of this, it sounded to me like waffle-waffle, but it is not. It is a real process that means you are held to account. We work with Morocco and we hold each other to account. But it is now time, in the third universal periodic review, for everybody’s commitments to be put into practice. Universal periodic review really does work. There are also the special procedures mechanisms whereby you can give an “open sesame” that you will always take part in those. An increasing number of countries do so, which is another way of being held to account.

Plenty of improvements can be made. It is good progress on the report card, but there is much more to do. For example, nowadays there is far more evidence of countries trying to close down debate using procedural methods if they feel they will be criticised in the Human Rights Council. I am going to be very careful in what I say. We have Standing Orders in the House of Lords. We know how to use them to our best advantage. Some countries do exactly the same thing at the Human Rights Council. If you are a good Lord Speaker or a good Chairman

on the Woolsack, you can keep control. In the Human Rights Council it is up to the individual countries to make sure we enable debate to go ahead, even when some of those who try to close it down try to form alliances to do so.

Lord Inglewood: So you are saying that it is rather the opposite of financial advice: past performance is a guide to future performance?

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Yes.

The Chairman: The other vast issue that seeps into everything else is migration and refugee movements on a scale unknown since the last century.

Q70 Baroness Coussins: Yes, I want to move on to that hugely challenging issue, as the Lord Chairman said. The scale is unprecedented and the causes of migration are now more diverse than ever. You have already mentioned next week's UN General Assembly in New York, where there will be a high-level meeting to look at these issues. We have heard from other witnesses who have been urging the UK to push a very ambitious agenda there and to press for concrete outcomes. You have already mentioned on a number of other issues that you take a very pragmatic, practical approach to things. Could you say what you would like to see delivered at this high-level meeting on refugees and migration?

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: A declaration has already been agreed as a foundation for the debate in New York next week. That there is a declaration is a success in itself. It is to set out a framework within which UN members are pledged to work over the next two years after that in two areas: to look first at refugees, and secondly at illegal, irregular migrants, how the world looks at their needs, and individual states' and the UN's responses to those circumstances. Those will be two different strands of work, both of which must come to a conclusion in 2018.

We were pleased to see that the framework very much looks at the fact this is a global problem, as we would expect. It is not a Western Europe problem; it is not a UK problem. It is global. So often, debates in Parliament in both Houses have focused on what we see here and on the other side of the channel, rather than what we see around the world on south-to-south migration, as well as south-to-north and north-to-north. It was important that all states recognised they have a role to play in this.

As we move forward, we need to see how we will deal with the needs of groups of people on the move but also look in a more long-term way at how we will make it possible to enable people to remain where they are and not be at the mercy of people traffickers. However you start your journey—it may be as an economic migrant, having paid your way—as you go through it you are at risk of being ensnared by some of the most evil people we can think of,

who will use and abuse you. Therefore, next week, the meeting on Tuesday, I believe, to look at the declaration will be followed up on Wednesday with the Obama summit, but after that we will get down to the basic work over the next two years on those strands. For us it is crucial that: everyone recognises the imperative of being able to provide certainty to these people so that they are not left at risk of getting into the supply chain and being so brutally treated by people along the way; countries are recognised as having a right to control their own borders; and we come to agreements with each other about how United Nations countries feel it is right to resolve people movement and the various reasons for it. It is also so that people can plan—I come back to planning—how to assist people they will welcome into their countries to settle. That is something the UK has very much led on: to show how we can ensure communities are ready, willing and able to receive people. My community is one such in Woking, with the local council there being engaged. When people settle in a country it is important that they begin to feel part of it and that it is their country, so they do not feel alienated and have to become excluded from society, or indeed, as in some countries, radicalised.

Q71 Lord Hannay of Chiswick: I entirely agree with what you said, Minister: this is not purely a European or British problem but a world problem. But I imagine you also agree that it is no good the Europeans or the British acting in a particular way in their own region, then telling the rest of the world they have to act differently in their regions. That is what we are at risk of doing now if we are not very careful.

That is not the question I wanted to follow up with you. My question is on what you put your finger on: ways in which migration can be made less attractive by developing countries' economies better. Do you not think that there is a lack of flexibility in the way overseas development aid is regulated by the DAC⁷ rules and so on, both in providing assistance in failing states, where you cannot have proper development assistance but where you have to establish some security, and in migration, where assistance is probably not necessarily provided through classical development projects? Do you think that the new Secretary-General might be encouraged to give a lead to build a bit more flexibility into the way ODA, for which we are committed to 0.7% of GNI—in my view absolutely splendidly—is spent?

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: On becoming Prime Minister, Theresa May gave an assurance to Ban Ki-moon that we would continue to meet our commitment to the 0.7%. But clearly there is then a discussion to be had about how that can be used while always remaining within

⁷ OECD Development Assistance Committee

the parameters. There are ways in which, for example, the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund can be appropriately used, to support development in countries, to provide stability through projects with a security aspect. I think that that kind of development will continue. There is now a new fund at the Foreign Office—the Rules-Based International System Fund—which, again, will involve us in looking at how we provide stability that brings economic empowerment to groups. It is core work for DfID and the FCO to provide that upstream support, whether via our work through the Khartoum process or our work in Syria. Billions were pledged at our pledging conference in February and that money is being delivered. The compact has been arranged and agreed with Jordan and Lebanon to provide not only the ability of migrants there to work but the ability of children to go to school, and the latter applies also in Turkey. That is the kind of flexible response that we can make as individual states.

I go back to Lord Hannay's original point. The Secretary-General can lead by example by showing that those are the kinds of activities that he or she would welcome and engage with. We often work through United Nations organisations when we deliver this aid, so his or her leadership on these principles can show not only that we can feel rewarded for doing these things, simply by being told that they are the right things to do, but that we can spread the word to others.

The Chairman: Time is very tight, but we have two more questions for you. First, we are very happy to see that you are Minister for the Commonwealth. Does that indicate that maybe the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is focusing more on what the Commonwealth network can do for us, both at the UN and elsewhere around the world? If so, are we being optimistic, or is there some real movement there? Do you have a new team behind you to develop the Commonwealth network interest?

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: I was delighted to be asked to become Minister for the Commonwealth. Lord Chairman, I know that that was your role when you were at the Foreign Office. I am delighted to be able to take up the cudgels and I hope I do it as well. Yes, I have an enlarged team because CHOGM⁸ is going to be hosted in this country in 2018. In 2014 we started preparing for enlarging our role in the Commonwealth by appointing David Concar as the special envoy for the Commonwealth. I have already had meetings this summer with Commonwealth representatives and high commissioners here and with representative groups from around the world. We have talked about how to better engage and how to make sure—

⁸ Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

this is something that Boris Johnson said at the weekend—that the Commonwealth once again has primacy in foreign affairs. So, yes, there will be more activity and more assistance in the Foreign Office.

With regard to engagement at the UN, obviously the Commonwealth is not the other side of the coin from the EU because it is not a regional group. The Commonwealth is very much a confederation or a voluntary group, whose members have had different interests at different times. They have permanent observer status, which I understand the new Secretary-General wants to use more frequently, but they do not have a specific position within the UN. However, that does not stop us being agile in how we engage with them, as we intend to do. For example—I conclude with this—this week I will be holding a meeting with representatives of the Commonwealth, the small island developing states and the least developed states to ask their advice on how we can best work with them at the UN in our new, enhanced role, and I shall continue that work when I go to UNGA.

The Chairman: That sounds extremely positive. We are reaching the end, but no Lords Committee meeting of this kind is complete without Brexit, and Lady Smith is going to introduce it now.

Q72 Baroness Smith of Newnham: Minister, it will not surprise you that I am the person to lead on the Brexit question. You have talked about the UN and our links with the Commonwealth and have said that we would have an enhanced role in the UN. We have also heard evidence that suggests that our role in the UN at the moment is very much as part of the European Union. I wonder whether you can elaborate on how you envisage us playing a larger role if we lose the core focus of where we do a lot of our work. If we are to play a larger role within the Commonwealth, how do you envisage building up those relations, even with a slightly enlarged team, if a lot of the focus is going to be with Liam Fox and his Department for International Trade? Presumably some of our Commonwealth links will be developed through that.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: I am the Minister for the Commonwealth as an institution. Therefore, my work with it looks at how we can work from day to day but also how we might interact better at the United Nations. With regard to trade, next March the UK will be convening here the first meeting of the Trade Ministers in the Commonwealth. I would expect Liam Fox to play a leading part in that. I am not *parti pris* in thinking that we at the FCO do everything alone; we do things in collaboration. With the negotiations to leave the European Union, it is important that we all collaborate. We cannot predict now what our relationship with the other states of the European Union will be once we leave the EU. However, it will be

important that we maintain extremely strong bilateral relationships with each and every one of those countries. That is why we have a Minister for Europe at the Foreign Office. Sir Alan Duncan will continue that relationship on a bilateral basis.

Our approach in the UN is often to work through the EU regional bloc. I think of December time and the discussions on budgets. Next week people will be working long into the night and sometimes through the night for the UK mission there. They do it for the UK. It will not harm them if we are not in the European Union; it will just mean that they work in different ways. At the moment there are certainly times when we work as the UK, but the UN and other organisations, whether Parliament or local councils, all work better if there is an understanding of where they will find support. You do not necessarily need to be members of a regional bloc to get that support; there are other countries in the UN that get it. You just have to be more agile, and work harder and faster. That is the challenge.

The Chairman: Minister, I promised that we would finish by 3.30 pm, which is what it is now. We would like to thank you for your frankness and for sharing your views on these fast-changing issues, which are very complex and difficult to follow. We wish you well. We hope that you catch your flight and declare your objectives at the United Nations and the Human Rights Council. Thank you very much indeed.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Thank you Lord Chairman. Again, I thank the Committee for making the change in the sitting time. I really was most grateful. I shall now try to ensure that the vote count is as high as possible to get us re-elected.

Lord Reid of Cardowan: Lord Chairman, can I just intervene? Several times the Minister mentioned the initiatives from David Cameron, the former Prime Minister, for which we are all grateful. Just to show how fast moving things are, it has just been announced that he is to stand down as a Member of Parliament. So things do indeed move very fast.

Baroness Smith of Newnham: Is he standing down immediately?

The Chairman: I think we all need to watch this space and see who comes next. Thank you for that additional information and thank you again for being with us.