

British Broadcasting Corporation
Broadcasting House
London, W1A 1AA

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP
Chair of the Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
Committee Office
London, SW1A 0AA

21 January 2026

Dear Sir Geoffrey,

Thank you for the opportunity to give evidence to the Public Accounts Committee on 8 January 2026 to discuss the NAO report: 'The BBC World Service's Savings Programmes'. I am writing following my appearance to provide further information as requested by the Committee.

We are grateful to the NAO for their work on this report and have already implemented several changes as a result. As outlined in the NAO report, we have saved £46.8m of the targeted £54.2m, with the remaining savings expected to be delivered by March 2026.

In response to Q45, related to the dataset on how people perceive the UK and democracy, and Q46 which requests a breakdown of how RT and CGTN have achieved very extraordinary levels of trust, I include the Global Influence and Impact Research 2025, alongside a summary of its findings.

Predominantly through the BBC World Service, the BBC is unmatched in driving favourable impressions of the UK and is the most trusted international news provider amongst all audiences. However, audiences consuming the Chinese state broadcaster, CGTN, and Russian state broadcaster RT, have a direct influence on their country's respective favourability and trust is increasing. In order to combat mis- and disinformation and champion media freedom in a world of increased geopolitical instability, the BBC World Service requires long term, secure and sustainable funding.

If the Committee requires any further information on our responses, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Fiona Crack
Global Director (interim) BBC News
Director, BBC World Service



Summary: Global Influence and Impact Research 2025

Research conducted by independent research company Tapestry investigated the extent of the BBC's role internationally and changing global trends. It sought the views of audiences around the world on varying international news providers as well as the BBC. The research was conducted amongst a sample of 23,000 individuals across 18 countries from 7 January to 4 February 2025.

BBC

- Predominantly through the BBC World Service, **the BBC is unmatched in driving favourable impressions of the UK.**
- The BBC is **the country's most recognised cultural export internationally** with 76% of influential audiences around the world having heard of BBC News – higher than any other British cultural export including British sports, films and universities.
- The BBC is **the most trusted international news provider amongst all audiences.**
- **BBC users around the world are more likely to invest in the UK than non-users.** 73% of BBC users intend to invest in the UK in the future compared with 51% of non-users.

China and Russia

- Audiences consuming the Chinese state broadcaster, CGTN, and Russian state broadcaster RT, have a **direct influence on their country's respective favourability.**
- **71% of CGTN consumers view China favourably while 58% of RT consumers view Russia favourably.**
- Over the past three years, China has shown a considerable increase in favourability. This growth appears across all countries included in the study with the biggest increases in African countries Nigeria and Kenya. **Trust in their services has also increased.**
- As press freedom has been in retreat globally since 2021, over the same period we have seen **a rise in the demand for free media** with Kenya, Indonesia, India and Mexico seeing the largest increases.

Democracy and free speech

- While a preference for democracy has fallen across multiple countries, the fall is most evident in **Asia and the Middle East.**
- **BBC users are significantly more likely to believe in democratic values than non-users** and are **more likely to participate in democratic processes.**
- **BBC users associate the UK with values** such as free speech and freedom of the press significantly more than non-users.
- **BBC users are more likely to agree that the media in their country should be free** to report on anything they want to without restrictions.
- **Accuracy, independence and impartiality** are the most important qualities for news users globally but are the least associated with local news providers.