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A brief introduction about the person or organisation submitting evidence, for example explaining their area of expertise or experience.

Angie Hesham Abdo is a sea power expert that focuses on China, an alumnus delegate of Harvard University, 2018. She was invited to Malaysia by Harvard University project for Asia and International Relations, where she gave a speech about the reason behind why American companies file for bankruptcy in China. Due to their lack of understanding of the Chinese consumer's needs and mentality: the seminar provoked Angie to think and act in the spirit of multilateralism, embracing the changing dynamics and conditions of a globalized world. Angie was a guest speaker in the Webinar USDinfo.org where she spoke about China-U.S relations and how the U.S hawkish stance towards China and its foreign policy solidifies the U.S waning decline and unease with Beijing's rise. Angie graduated from Bradford University with an MA in International Relations and Security Studies. Her dissertation draws a connection behind China's use of sharp power in Taiwan and Australia while examining the geostrategic importance of these countries to Beijing in terms of fragmenting the first and second island chains. Angie is a PhD student at the University of Hull, England. Her PhD dissertation topic is on the South China Sea geostrategic and geo-economic importance She published multiple academic articles with the journal of contemporary voice and GRIN Wissen Finden & publizeren. Her article on COVID19 was chosen in the "WHO" special print.

Part 1 – What is the UK’s ambition for the Navy’s role over the next 20 years?

- 1. What naval threats is the UK likely to face and what standing commitments, including for NATO and UK Overseas Territories, does the government intend the Navy to undertake?
 - a. In particular what is the implication of a tilt to the Indo-Pacific?**
- 2. What naval forces (vessels, capabilities and bases) are required to combat these threats and to deliver these standing commitments?
 - a. What are the implications of cooperation with vessels from allied nations, for example allied vessels participating in carrier strike groups?**

Introduction

*The resurgence of the QUAD has witnessed the United Kingdom naval presence return to Asia since its East of Suez policy in 1968 with the maiden deployment of its flagship aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth and its escort group in May 2021. The Micronesian nation of Palau a country that has been under-utilised by the US since WW2, under President Whipp, an advent opposer of China’s expansion in the Pacific has extended a visit to the UKCSG. To underscore the growing geopolitical stakes in IP(Indo-Pacific) as China bids to secure its territorial boundaries creating a Monroe doctrine which threatens the interests and to replace the United States as the security guarantor and promote Beijing as the guarantor of peace and stability in the region. One country that opposes the PRC maritime expansion can become the getaway for international forces like the UK to engage in Asia-Pacific.

*Freedom of navigation carried out by the Royal Navy in the SCS justifies the Global Britain initiative which calls for modernisation and upgrade in military spending. A British naval presence in the South China Sea strengthens global security and Britain’s global role. But it must be matched with a more systematic approach to the region, and to China’s growing assertiveness in the region.

*The U.S formulated its own strategy known as the coalition of the willing to check China's ascension in the SCS in which the United Kingdom joined recently in patrolling the Chinese Nan Hai as part of the UK's Global Britain initiative after Brexit.

1. *Her Majesty's government should be mindful when it comes to sending military vessels to the SCS as the PRC can resort to hard and sharp power tactics that can hurt the UK-China trade relations and stall any ongoing trade deals. The Chinese assertive hard and sharp power can harm the UK if it keeps infringing on China's sovereignty over the SCS.
2. *Military exercises in the South China Sea are contentious in the region. These drills may be perceived by Beijing as a reaction to America's call to contain and check China's accession. ASEAN countries are becoming increasingly worried about the possibility of increased rivalry between China and the United States in the region. The increased military activity of the United Kingdom would certainly raise questions over increased external militarization in the region, which ASEAN will not accept. Such views would have significant consequences for the UK, as well as a negative impact on the promotion of Global Britain in general.
3. One must bear in mind the geo-economic and geo-strategic salience of the South China Sea to China in terms of energy security, goods flow and military. The PRC is surrounded by five American military bases, these notes highlight the debility of the Chinese navy lack of support outposts, control over the SCS strengthens the Chinese weakness.

4. Last summer, the HMS Albion, an amphibious assault ship known as the Royal Navy's "Swiss Army knives," carried out what was generally assumed to be a freedom of navigation operation near the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea. The British government has shown its commitment to maintaining the rules-based system and asserting its market access rights in Southeast Asia as a result of this action. This is commendable for two reasons:
5. -it portrays a Britain that is willing to take diplomatic and economic risks in the name of upholding maritime rights that benefit many smaller and medium-sized states in the region.
6. -It also demonstrates that, after the Brexit process and counter to popular belief, British foreign policy leaders still believe they have plenty to add to the global system. This helps the United Kingdom to reclaim its strategic autonomy, sovereignty on the world level, and status as a global competitor. However, admirable HMS Albion's passage across the South China Sea is, it begs the question of what comes next. How does the government's stated goal of "Global Britain" follow through on this naval transit in a substantive and long-term way? Also, how can it stop clashing with China, which has started to press back on US freedom of navigation operations (FONOPs), raising fears of a miscalculation or a naval incident at sea? In other words, how can the UK avert a crisis in which a single British sailor is killed, prompting wider diplomatic concerns about Britain's role in "meddling" in the affairs of "far-off peoples" about which it claims to know little?
7. *A Global Britain that really believes in a rules-based order and wants to secure its market access in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, this requires a development of a myriad of policies and overlapping strategies for dealing with an upcoming of

challenges. The large distances will face logistical and geographical difficulties, but Britain is fortunate in that it has access to many regional strategic outposts, including those in Singapore, Diego Garcia, and Brunei. Although geography offers several obstacles, it also imposes a valuable constraint: Britain's forward basing must depend on international partners and allies, and new basing arrangements with supportive regional forces must be negotiated. The new basing arrangement between France and India could serve as a model.

8. To contend with the political and economic problems of an assertive rising regime, Britain would need to develop an all-government China agenda:
9. -It's important to note that China needs access to Britain's capital markets, technology, and political and media soft power networks, just as Britain does. But it will only be when China recognizes Britain's determination that the British government will begin to have a true if minor effect on Chinese politics.
10. -Ministers from France and the United Kingdom jointly declared in June 2018 at the Shangri-La Dialogue that their ships will traverse the South China Sea to maintain the collective right to freedom of navigation.
11. The announcement came after the United Kingdom and France, respectively, declared in July 2017 and May 2018, that they would increase their involvement in the SCS.
12. In late August 2018, the Royal Navy performed what is thought to be a FONOP with HMS Albion, a 22,000-ton amphibious transport dock, in the waters of the Parcel Islands. Unlike many US FONOPs, Albion's FONOP was a conventional declaration of freedom of travel on the high seas.¹ Beijing chastised the Albion mission for sailing

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within its territorial waters around the Paracel's without first obtaining permission. "HMS Albion exercised her rights to freedom of navigation in strict accordance with international law and standards," a Royal Navy spokesperson said. Commentators have interpreted the British FONOP as a warning that the Royal Navy is going to be a rogue force.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPTIONS FOR THE UK

13. -In reaction to the PRC's revisionist expansive operations in the South China Sea, the United Kingdom might always abandon its position in maintaining the rules-based structure and take a more passive stance. The Royal Navy could still be present on a regular basis, for example while sailing to Japan or South Korea, but operations like those carried out by HMS Albion near the Paracel Archipelago on August 31, 2018, will be forfeited. This would deter the PRC from escalating “horizontally” in reaction to British patrols, and it would also prevent the PRC from taking offensive economic and commercial actions that would damage the British economy.
14. -Beijing is well aware that, as it prepares to leave the EU, the United Kingdom is eager to encourage Chinese investment and open the Chinese market to British goods, both tangible and intangible.
15. -A new Henry Jackson Society study attempted to address these concerns by recommending a series of policy changes that could mitigate or soften the risks while still looking at ways to better resource and maintain operations far from British shores. For example, the report suggested that Royal Naval vessels could conduct two types of freedom of navigation manoeuvres to protect British access to the seas: jurisdictional and territorial.

16. -In the first place, the Royal Navy may contest China's claims to disproportionate jurisdictional rights, such as Beijing's requests for advance notice of ships transiting its territorial waters. In this case, Royal Navy warships only need to make a routine passage across the seas, without asking permission or providing advance notice, thus implicitly refuting China's bid for jurisdictional rights. In the second case, Royal Navy ships might challenge China's overbroad territorial claims, especially those drawn between islands, by sailing through them in a manner unfit for innocent passage. This might include doing a fast man-overboard exercise or piloting a helicopter.
17. -Given the UK's proven presence in the area, it would be reckless to disregard developments in the South China Sea from a geostrategic perspective. After all, the British armed forces have a provincial defence staff and a naval logistics base in Singapore (which has the world's largest fuel stores and is currently upgraded), and the British army's warfare training centre and Gurkha battalion in Brunei. The United Kingdom has military bases in Nepal and on British Indian Ocean Territory, i.e., Diego Garcia, part of a “strategic array” of military facilities linking to the British home islands just outside the South China Sea.
18. In the coming years, the British government intends to reinforce the “array's” terminus, with a greater naval concentration in Southeast Asia, either in Singapore or Brunei. Meanwhile, the South China Sea borders the FPDa, Southeast Asia's other strategic grouping, of which the UK is a part. While the FPDa does not have a joint defence provision, it does include consultation between the Five Powers members: Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, and Singapore, in the event of an attack.

19. -To compliment the Royal Navy's beefed-up presence in the Gulf and the Arabian Sea, the Royal Navy pursues a "Pacific dimension" with a permanent facility in Singapore and/or Brunei. Which require upgrading to host military vessels and ships that can conduct Freedom of Navigation Operations.
20. Ensure that the Royal Navy is maintained in size with improvements in the number of warships to allow a more persistent British naval presence in the Indo-Pacific so that the UK can persuade its allies while still discouraging future rivals from taking revisionist steps. Unilaterally, HMS Albion's visit by Royal navy warships to the Paracel Islands on August 31, 2018.
21. Bilaterally, with the use of a "ship Rider" scheme, which involves housing non-UK military officers or properties on board Royal navy warships as they conduct a FoneX mission (or British military officers or assets on allied ships).
22. -By effectively building a reciprocal ship, the PRC's future ire will be diffused by only having one vessel, avoiding needless escalation through increased ship numbers.
23. Multilaterally, using two or three warships, with one vessel breaking away from the main force to attempt a FoneX, whilst the other vessels provide protection to prevent further escalation.
24. -In terms of the economic-strategic nexus, countries bordering the South China Sea, especially those that are not trying to rewrite maritime law, are more likely to form viable and profitable trade relationships with the United Kingdom if the Royal Navy is able to protect them and help underwrite more robustly their own security. Since the UK is SEA third largest defence supplier, Britian's involvement in the SCS evokes an arms race which is financially beneficial to Britian. However, the downside of this, is that the Chinese government provides economic development aid and trade

projects with no strings attached ring-true and resonate with Southeast Asian nations as the Chinese trade volume encourages these nations to become a market for Chinese products, unless the UK government can provide lucrative trade deals to SEA countries, only then they can be swayed to the UK side.

25. -The decision by Australia and Canada to choose the Type 26-class frigate for their future naval needs is thought to be linked to Britain's increased strategic visibility in the Indo-Pacific, especially in the South China Sea.
26. -Indeed, the United Kingdom has been working to strengthen relations with both nations. The HMS Albion was traveling between Japan and Vietnam when its arrival in the South China Sea enraged the PRC.
27. -Naturally, there is the issue of whether the Royal Navy, like the US Navy, can participate in certain operations within the 12 nautical mile line of those designates as Chinese features.
28. -Although there are risks in doing so, there are also risks in not doing so, especially in areas where China's claims are excessive, such as man-made features or low-tide elevations. Should the Royal Navy participate in such jurisdictional or territorial disputes, it must do so in a way that does not add to regional tension or threaten a military response.
29. Opening up the scheme to joint action by like-minded nations, but in a way that does not raise the number of vessels in the region, is one way to reduce risk. There's the 'ship-rider' initiative, for example, which was suggested by former US Pacific Fleet Commander Admiral Scott Swift.
30. He discovered that many countries in the Indo-Pacific and Europe were torn between their national interests in defending maritime rights and their national interests in

attracting Chinese investment and trade. Of course, China's leadership recognizes this and has been more likely to 'punish' states in strongly symbolic ways that have an effect on internal foreign policy discussions in offending countries. The transit of the HMS Albion, for example, was met with a warning from the China Daily, a state-run newspaper, that potential transits could 'thwart' a post-Brexit free trade deal.

31. The ship-rider concept seeks to mitigate possible Chinese retaliation by joint action. As a result, the next Royal Naval vessel to conduct a freedom of navigation manoeuvre may have uniformed officers from NATO, India, some EU states who aren't part of the Alliance, or even foreign states like Vietnam or the Philippines on board. Such a manoeuvre complicates and entangles China's punishment policy; however, it also increases the possibility – however remote that Beijing will recognize that growing multilateralism in the South China Sea will necessitate compromise.
32. The 'many hulls' scheme, in which multiple ships pass the South China Sea together, with only one carrying out a freedom of navigation manoeuvre while the others wait only outside, is another form of multilateralism freedom of navigation manoeuvres in a way that does not raise the chance of miscalculation. As an example, a number of European powers could sail through the South China Sea enroute to port visits, with only one participating in the manoeuvre.
33. -The US-Japan-Australia trilateral and the US-Japan-India-Australia Quad are both relatively recent quasi-alliance groupings that have sprung up in the wake of China's expansion over the South China Sea, though in a rather incipient shape. A Global Britain that is serious about maintaining its position and interests in the area could enter those coalitions and participate in interoperability-building activities like Cope North Guam or Pacific Bond.

34. -The former is an annual air warfare exercise where British Typhoons may demonstrate their capabilities, whilst the latter is an annual trilateral maritime warfare exercise where Britain may show off its anti-submarine warfare-heavy Type-23 frigate.
35. -The RN also has to deal with conflicting demands on its scarce resources. Despite Britain's desire to play a bigger part in Asia, the Euro-Atlantic (where it faces a resurgent Russia) will remain its top target, followed by the Middle East. Britain's willingness to send warships to Asia would be limited whether there is a conflict in any of those countries, or elsewhere.
36. *The HMS Defender was expected to deploy to the Asia-Pacific in mid-2019 but was instead transferred to the Persian Gulf to support British-flagged warships after an increase in tensions with Iran.
37. *The second issue is China, and what kind of post-Brexit relationship London needs with Beijing. The Chinese government was obviously irritated by the HMS Albion's FONOP. Vice Premier Hu Chunhua told then-Finance Minister Philip Hammond in April 2019 that the operation had caused a "pause" in Sino-British cooperation. The UK's support for the US' tough stand on freedom of navigation in the South China Sea has also irritated China.
38. *China's ambassador to the United Kingdom, Liu Xiaoming, said in September 2019 that Britain should not do the US' "dirty work" in the South China Sea, while the security attaché, Major General Zhang Jianguo, cautioned, "If the US and the UK join hands in a challenge or threaten the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China, that will be a hostile action." In 2021, the HMS Queen Elizabeth is expected to embark on its first mission to the Asia-Pacific, carrying both British and American F-35B fighter aircraft.

39. *The South China Sea, along with the UK's disapproval of Beijing's policies in Hong Kong and Xinjiang, could stymie Johnson's ability to pursue a post-Brexit free trade agreement (FTA) with China. A Sino-British FTA could be jeopardized, according to China's state-run media, if the UK tries to "violate" China's hegemony in the South China Sea. As a result, London could face a challenge in the near future: whether to maintain the operational pace of its naval operations in the South China Sea provoking Beijing's wrath and potentially jeopardizing a key trade agreement or, as other countries have done, downplay the conflict in the search of economic profits.
40. *The Asia-Pacific has a “considerable impact on the future and credibility” of the rules-based international order, according to the UK's 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review SDSR hence the urgency of sanctions-enforcing operations against Pyongyang and naval presence in the South China Sea. The RN has been able to commit more naval forces to the Asia-Pacific as a result of the UK's military disengagement from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq prior to the publication of the SDSR.
41. The second explanation is the impending Brexit. Under the slogan "Global Britain," the government outlined a post-Brexit strategy for the UK. In terms of stability, Global Britain aims to reinforce the country's overseas military networks, improve established alliances, and promote the international rules-based order. One of the core pillars of this order, according to London, is freedom of navigation and overflight.

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