

Written evidence submitted by Angie Hesham Abdo Ahmed

Title: Operation Isotrope

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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 alum 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.

Questions

-The use of the military in countering migrant crossings in the Channel,

-What is the potential impact on other Defence commitments?

-What capabilities do the Armed Forces, particularly the Royal Navy, bring that were not available to the Border Force?

-What military engagement and cooperation will there be with the French armed forces and civilian authorities?

Introduction

The amount of unlawful small boat crossings on the perilous route is shocking, posing a danger to UK border security. Due to the fact that illegal entrance into the UK precludes law enforcement from completing criminal record or security checks, we have no idea who they are or what threat they pose to the UK. Immigration crime provides easy money for criminal organisations, fosters other forms of organised crime, and frequently endangers the lives of migrants. People smuggling changes in response to political and legal events in other countries, as well as humanitarian concerns, making it a dynamic threat. The closure of migrant camps in France in 2016/17 hampered opportunistic attempts to reach the United Kingdom. But it also gave organised criminality an opportunity to conduct a smuggling operation. The French consider the deployment of the British fleet to be a political manoeuvre. The Royal Navy would use modern techniques to combat the problem, such as drones or cameras to monitor every length of water. This evidence will cover a wide range of area according to the above questions as they are all related.

1. Migrants seeking entry to the UK or saved in the English Channel pose both an economic and political implications to the UK government.

2. First, if the UK choose to resettle those migrants in the UK it will have to provide them with a catalogue of services, like housing, education, and medical assistance as well as providing them with weekly financial assistance.

3. As the UK government seeks to re-establish itself as a global superpower post-Brexit as per its Global Britain agenda returning those migrants can pose a challenge since the UK is a promoter of freedom of rights. Migrants who do not have a legal visa to work in the UK may be exploited and pushed into modern slavery, or they may resort to crime to support themselves, regardless of how they enter the country.

4. A question remains elusive; will these migrants face any persecution upon their deportation from the UK and arrival in their countries.

5. Despite this, they are at risk of great danger if they return to their home country

1- The death penalty

2-Armed conflict poses a threat to civilian life

3-Illegal killing, torture, or cruel or degrading treatment.

6. On the other hand, the political implications remain with France as the English Channel borders Dover and Calais also, the waters traversed by migrants' boats does not constitute as international waters.

7. This shrouds the atmosphere with political tensions creating a rift with France on who takes the migrants. As the air remains unsettled with Paris over fishing rights post-Brexit.

8. Should the UK pressure France to take migrants, her majesty's government will have to show compromises.

9. Making use or deploying the navy to assist with the persistent issue of the migrants will sour relations with France. The French side will consider this as an act of aggression and disrespect of its sovereignty.

10. Pierre Henri Dumont is a French member of parliament (MP) for Calais and a member of the French National Assembly's foreign affairs committee informed the Info migrants that he understood the principle of sending the Navy but worried what would happen in actuality.¹

11. He posed a hypothetical question, asking whether the Navy was "willing to shoot at tiny boats that have entered British seas, i.e., 12 nautical miles from the British coast?" "Was the British Navy trying to invade French territorial seas in order to force the boats back before they could reach British waters?" he wondered. He stated that the navy "would not alter anything, plainly," as he referred to it as a "political measure."²

12. When questioned if the concept of battleships acting as a "deterrent" to smugglers was "hazardous," Dumont acknowledged it was. In reality, this would occur if naval ships attempted to push back small boats carrying migrants.³

¹ Emma Wallis UK appoints 'Clandestine Channel Threat Commander' to tackle migration by sea 2020 <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/26535/uk-appoints-clandestine-channel-threat-commander-to-tackle-migration-by-sea>

² Emma Wallis UK appoints 'Clandestine Channel Threat Commander' to tackle migration by sea 2020 <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/26535/uk-appoints-clandestine-channel-threat-commander-to-tackle-migration-by-sea>

³ Emma Wallis UK appoints 'Clandestine Channel Threat Commander' to tackle migration by

In case of the migrants can be pushed back to France.

13. Under international law, people have the right to seek shelter in whatever country they arrive in. They are not obligated to seek sanctuary in the first safe country they come across.

14. However, Dublin III, a European Union-wide provision, allows asylum seekers to be returned to the first EU member state they were proved to have entered.

15. Using Dublin III, 231 migrants who crossed the Channel between 1 January 2019 and 1 October 2020 were returned to continental Europe. Furthermore, the UK should produce a scheme to replace the Dublin III policy as it is no longer an EU member.

16. To utilise Greek's approach of a push-back on migrants' boats with the deployment of navy forces, border forces and even special forces.

17. In Australia, a method known as "push back at sea" is utilised. However, France has refused to cooperate with the UK's proposal. Without a deal with the French to repatriate migrants, perilous boat crossings of the Channel will continue.

18. The border Force has been experimenting and doing trials with the push-back strategy, Border Force has the necessary vessels to perform a push-back manoeuvre safely; on the other hand, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines do not. However, there are portions of the channel where it absolutely cannot be done, and there are areas of the channel where it may perhaps be done. That is something the Navy commander will have to think about in due course.

19. The boats are subject to UK law the moment they leave French seas, which the UK authorities cannot access without France's permission, and the moment they reach the UK's. If France does not want to take them back after they have left, it cannot be forced to, and a stalemate follows.

20. The United Kingdom has an extremely vital role in global humanitarian and refugee challenges. The boats are being deployed not to bring people into the nation, but to return them to France, and that the French should do more to ensure that those boats do not depart in the first place.

What capabilities do the Armed Forces, particularly the Royal Navy, bring that were not available to the Border Force?

Recommendations

21. First, ensuring that the boats do not leave France in the first place; second, ensuring that if they do leave French beaches, they are picked up early and returned to France; and third, ensuring that persons who break into our nation and land on our shores are sent back to France.'

22. Innovative strategies for ending small boat crossings, such as employing unemployed passenger ships to re-route migrants, are required.

23. A bilateral agreement on immediate repatriation or coordinated patrols with the French is required for the UK to securely return them to France for processing.

24. Under a single command and control, deployment of the navy and the armed forces can canvas a vast stretch of sea and limit the number of migrants who seek to enter illegally to the UK.

25. This advancement in command-and-control capabilities means that there is a more robust reaction at sea, ensuring that no one lands on their own terms and enters a procedure in the United Kingdom that may lead to a return or another conclusion. The data in Australia and elsewhere indicates that it has had a deterrent impact.

26. The UK's commitment in the Sahel through the UN peacekeeping mission operation MINUSMA and our backing for the French through Op Newcombe remains in place, but the instability in the Sahel poses a direct danger to the UK's interests. As part of addressing the rising issue of border crossings, the MOD is working to provide stability in countries such as Iraq and the Sahel, where the majority of migrants are coming from.

27. It was unrealistic to expect police forces to given that it only takes five to ten minutes to grab a boat and load it with migrants, to patrol 200-300km [125-186 miles] of shoreline around the clock.

28. Morning and night patrols using drones or surveillance cameras will be used to monitor every span of sea.

29. The Home Office should take into account this recommendation that claims to the UK asylum system should be able to be made from France, because the reason people are desperate and, as a result, are taking this perilous journey to come to Britain is that there is a dearth of safe legal routes to the UK.

The use of the military in countering migrant crossings in the Channel,

30. Inexcusable influx of individuals continues to attempt these perilous channel crossings, and the terrible fatalities in November serve as a stark reminder of the need to put a stop to them.

31. The government has been looking at every viable way to prevent additional crossings and has now designated the Ministry of Defence as the operational lead for cross-channel counter-migration activities.

32. Great Britain has just come out of an incredible time. The government is relying on the size, competence, and dedication of our military personnel to assist the NHS and civilian authorities in dealing with the epidemic. That, in my opinion, demonstrates the outstanding service and professionalism of the men and women in the armed services. It is a positive thing that the government has been ready and able to use that power throughout. In terms of the broader issue, a strong response is required.

33. The Royal Navy will play a considerably greater and more visible role in operations planning, asset coordination, and operational delivery as a result.

34. The Priority is for no one to enter the UK illegally on their own terms, thus all vessels conveying illegal migrants across the channel must be apprehended before or as they land.

35. In response to the small boat challenge, the military help to civilian authorities' mechanism is being used. It will provide a range of support, including surveillance planes, extra accommodation, and planning expertise, as well as aid in the conduct of trials for innovative approaches to enable Border Force and the Home Office effectively detect and discourage migrant vessels.

36. A fundamental reason for using the armed forces in this operation, our opponents, whether state or non-state, are highly effective at identifying vulnerabilities in countries. I would argue that the influx of refugees has reached a stage where it poses a threat to our national security, and that the Royal Navy should have a role in coordinating the response.

What is the potential impact on other Defence commitments?

37. The armed forces and Her Majesty's Army safeguard the United Kingdom's interests across the world and are prepared and trained to step forward and help other governmental departments in times of need.

38. The bigger picture, on the other hand, is quite clear. Our world is getting more hazardous and complicated, and the demands on our military, particularly the Royal Navy, are growing.

39. The integrated review outlines the importance to the UK economy of maintaining freedom of the seas, which is increasingly under threat from China, Russia, and, indeed, Iran.

40. The Royal Navy, according to the Defence Committee's latest analysis, is currently too limited and stretched to satisfy its present obligations in the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, the Gulf, off east Africa, the Caribbean, and the Arctic, not to mention the Indo-Pacific tilt.

41. Nonetheless, the navy is establishing a new duty here: coordinating the migrant crossing response, which is primarily the responsibility of the Home Office.

42. In this regard, broadening the military and navy's mission and operations scope necessitates modernization, comparable to what China is undertaking to preserve and secure its sphere of influence and interests in Asia and Africa. 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.

43. The Royal Navy also must 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 which might create a false-flag war to invade Ukraine) 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.

44. However, this opens an opportunity to commission new military naval vessels and recruiting more personnel for the navy.

45. Although the Royal Navy are engaged in an array of operations, being deployed to assist in countering the flow of illegal migrants will not result in a mission creep.

46. To further assist lessen the burden on the navy's shoulders, one must first dismantle the gangs that promote migration in the first place, and then work to restore government and security in the nations that these people are leaving, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Somalia. As these parts of the world lack enduring stability and security

47. The Navy will not have to make choice between working at home and working abroad. Ships are being deployed all around the world right now, and others are preparing to set sail in reaction to whatever problems may arise in the Euro-Atlantic in the coming weeks, for instance, Ukraine. Hence, this will not result in mission creep.

48. Furthermore, there is capability to do that all year, which is to send naval resources into the canal for objectives such as fisheries protection and border security. That is a crucial aspect.

49. The aim of the UK's military forces is to safeguard the UK's national security interests both at home and abroad and deploying them to guarantee our borders are secure is an entirely proper use of them. Indeed, in some regions of Europe, state-sponsored illegal migration is currently being utilised as a low-threshold weapon of competition.

50. However, migration over the channel has not reached that point yet, but in the lack of adequate border defences, it may be in the future, and the MOD has a completely acceptable role to play in ensuring that our borders are securely defended.

51. Human traffickers responsible for smuggling people will be sentenced to life in prison, according to the government. That the absolute key is to go upstream of the problem, ideally by preventing migrant flows in the first place, and then go after organised crime organisations attacking the network. However, the Ministry of Defence does not endorse this aspect of the plan yet.

52. It is beneficial to have more ships at sea and more ships that can intervene if there is a problem but having the Navy there does not mean the navy can suddenly intercept migrants in French national waters any more than the UK would let the French navy to conduct operations in ours.

53. Hence, the importance of reaching an agreement with France that allows the Royal Navy to patrol French waters and intercept illegal crossings.

54. Having a strong reaction that begins with the certainty that the navy and Border Force will intercept any boats at sea or as they arrive, and then bringing individuals into a system that functions as a deterrence, is the way to proceed.

55. Her Majesty's government is working across the world to provide security and stability in the nations from which most people are fleeing through humanitarian and military initiatives. I believe that the work of the military forces and the excellent professionals in the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office who conduct foreign development is successful, but that much more must be done. Criminal gangs' prey on the most vulnerable, and it is right that we and our partners throughout the world pursue such groups to cease their operation, which is fundamentally devious and evil.

23 January 2022

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