

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN BRITAIN'S INDO-PACIFIC SECURITY AND TRADE POLICIES

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The UK's primary motivation for its engagement in the Indo-Pacific is commercial, supplemented closely by its security efforts to maintain regional stability. In July 2024, a Labour government replaced the previous Conservative government. For now, the UK's commitment to its Indo-Pacific role is expected to remain unchanged. However, there are concerns about the affordability of its security commitments in the Indo-Pacific, especially given the ongoing war in Europe. This assessment of the various incentives and pressures behind the UK's ambitions to continue growing its role in the Indo-Pacific examines how sustainable these ambitions are. Economically, the UK needs to strengthen its trade relations with more Indo-Pacific countries such as with South Korea and India. Additionally, reducing trade dependency on China, the UK's sixth-largest trading partner and its largest Indo-Pacific partner, is a key objective.

(Click on the link to read the above in [Chinese](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#))

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Chinese:

英国印太安全与贸易政策的连续性和变化

英国参与印太地区的主要动机是商业目的，并辅之以维护地区稳定的安全努力。2024年7月，工党政府取代了之前的保守党政府。目前，英国对其印太角色的承诺预计将保持不变。然而，人们对其在印度-太平洋地区的安全承诺的承受能力感到担忧，特别是考虑到欧洲正在进行的战争。这项对推动英国在印太地区继续扩大其角色的各种动机和压力的评估，审视了这些雄心是否具有可持续性。经济上，英国需要加强与韩国、印度等更多印太国家的贸易关系。此外，减少对英国第六大贸易伙伴和最大印太伙伴中国的贸易依赖也是一个关键目标。

French:

CONTINUITÉ ET CHANGEMENT DES POLITIQUES COMMERCIALES ET DE SÉCURITÉ BRITANNIQUES EN INDOPACIFIQUE

La principale motivation du Royaume-Uni de l'engagement du Royaume-Uni en Indopacifique est d'ordre commercial, étroitement complétée par ses efforts de sécurité visant à maintenir la stabilité régionale. En juillet 2024, le gouvernement travailliste a remplacé le précédent gouvernement conservateur. Pour l'instant, l'engagement du Royaume-Uni en Indopacifique devrait rester inchangé. Cependant, des inquiétudes subsistent quant à ses capacités à assumer ses engagements en matière de sécurité dans la région, en particulier compte tenu de la guerre en cours en Europe. Cette évaluation des diverses incitations et pressions derrière les ambitions du Royaume-Uni en Indopacifique examine dans quelle mesure ces ambitions sont durables. Sur le plan économique, le Royaume-Uni doit renforcer ses relations commerciales avec davantage de pays de l'Indopacifique, comme la Corée du Sud et l'Inde. En outre, la réduction de la dépendance commerciale à l'égard de la Chine, le sixième partenaire commercial du Royaume-Uni et son plus grand partenaire indopacifique, constitue un objectif clé.

Spanish:

CONTINUIDAD Y CAMBIO EN LAS POLÍTICAS COMERCIALES Y DE SEGURIDAD DEL INDO-PACÍFICO DE GRAN BRETAÑA

La principal motivación del Reino Unido para su participación en el Indo-Pacífico es comercial, complementada estrechamente por sus esfuerzos de seguridad para mantener la estabilidad regional. En julio de 2024, un gobierno laborista reemplazó al anterior gobierno conservador. Por ahora, se espera que el compromiso del Reino Unido con su papel en el Indo-Pacífico se mantenga sin cambios. Sin embargo, existen preocupaciones sobre la asequibilidad de sus compromisos de seguridad en el Indo-Pacífico, especialmente dada la guerra en curso en Europa. Esta evaluación de los diversos incentivos y presiones detrás de las ambiciones del Reino Unido de seguir aumentando su papel en el Indo-Pacífico examina

cuán sostenibles son estas ambiciones. Económicamente, el Reino Unido necesita fortalecer sus relaciones comerciales con más países del Indo-Pacífico, como Corea del Sur y la India. Además, un objetivo clave es reducir la dependencia comercial de China, el sexto socio comercial del Reino Unido y su mayor socio del Indo-Pacífico.

Executive Summary

1. Following the UK public referendum to leave the European Union in 2016, which was formally enacted in 2020, the UK has placed much more attention on growing its commercial ties with Indo-Pacific countries.
2. A closely supporting motivation for its Indo-Pacific engagement has been the UK's desire to contribute to maintaining regional stability. In this undertaking, the UK's Royal Navy and its maritime expertise have played an important role.
3. During the previous UK Conservative governments of Boris Johnson, Liz Truss and Rishi Sunak, the UK took clear steps to increase its Indo-Pacific security role. Specifically, the UK deployed an aircraft carrier in 2021 to the region. It is also a leading partner in the AUKUS submarine and Global Combat Air Programme fighter jet programmes.
4. The pertinent question now is whether the UK's Indo-Pacific engagement will continue or change, following the end of Conservative Party rule and the Labour Party's return to power under Prime Minister Kier Starmer.
5. In 2025, the Labour government is expected to have completed its defence review of the UK's global commitments and plans to temporarily deploy an aircraft carrier to Asia. It remains to be seen how affordable the UK finds its Indo-Pacific security commitments given the ongoing war in Europe that is soaking up UK resources.
6. Economically, the UK still has significant progress to be made in the Indo-Pacific. Recent trade statistics highlight the need for stronger trading relationships with a wider range of Indo-Pacific countries, if the UK's economic ambitions in the region are to be realised.
7. Notably, though the UK's bilateral trade with Singapore is growing, and efforts are underway to increase UK's bilateral trade with Japan, much more could be achieved with South Korea. Growing its bilateral trade with India remains a major ambition.

8. Another motivation for this is to reduce its trade dependency on China, which remains as its sixth biggest trading partner in the world, and by far the UK's single largest Indo-Pacific trading partner.