



ALUMNI COMMITTEE UPDATE

With near 300 professionals, the Alumni Network is growing, with continued initiatives to share, connect, and engage in discussions surrounding international strategy, diplomacy and current affairs.

To effectively facilitate best suited opportunities for all Alumni and to further expand activities of the Alumni Network going forward, we have formed the LSE IDEAS Alumni Committee (AC) was formed.

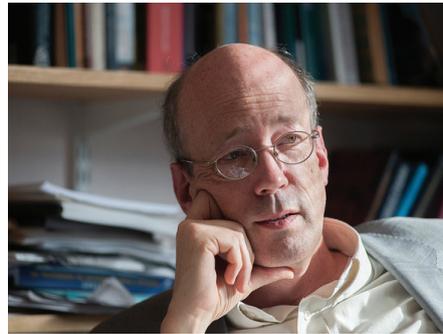
The responsibilities of Alumni Committee are passed on to a new Alumni cohort on an annual basis, and those may include, but are not limited to:

- driving the organisation of the (Virtual) Alumni Day in summer
- acting as LSE IDEAS Ambassadors for the Network as well as prospective students,
- working with the LSE IDEAS team and other Alumni in the network to keep and improve exclusive access to the entire Network to unlock its' potential further, and to discuss, debate, connect, collaborate and support.

We will announce our **new Alumni Committee** in the next newsletter, and in the meantime—big thank you to the current Alumni Committee who will hand over their responsibilities soon to the new AC:

- Bobby Vedral
- Paul Tyler
- Mohammed Shanti
- Anthea Ow
- Francesca Marina Galliano.

A Year Like No Other



It's that time of year again when students begin to assess what they have learned, be it through the slow accretion of ideas for an essay or the (occasional, one hopes) mad dash to prepare for a class presentation, and put this knowledge towards developing a dissertation. Academics, too, reflect upon course content, lectures recently delivered and challenging questions posed by students as well as the prospect of marking. All of us, in fact, are taking stock of a year like no other one we have experienced that has seen us adapt to online learning environments and navigating novel teaching platforms as never before. For some of us this has necessarily happened

while managing the fallout from Covid at home as well as work, including illness, childcare and other challenges.

From my perspective, our students on the MSc Executive International Strategy and Diplomacy have done a phenomenal job in responding to the circumstances produced by the pandemic, in particular the ebb and flow of policies which obliged us migrate from classroom to 'zoom-room' on a number of occasions. So too, have LSE IDEAS colleagues on the programme whether on the academic or the administrative side, in devising innovative responses to delivering materials to students in a timely fashion. Coping with uncertainty and adjusting to risk is part and parcel, of course, of strategy. This ability to react and recalibrate, so evident in this year's cohort of students, has enabled us to emerge from the difficulties of the pandemic to go on and have one of the programme's most successful academic years to date.

— Chris Alden

PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Executive MSc has undergone a second extraordinary year, delivering taught components of the programme through mixed delivery and online when necessary. In addition to the taught programme, the Executive MSc has enjoyed a series of exclusive 'fireside' conversations with senior thinkers in strategy, including G. John Ikenberry, Nathalie Tocci, and Joseph Nye, chaired by Michael Cox.

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FACULTY INTERVIEW

Dame Judith Macgregor



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What important links do you see between the role of gender equality in foreign policy, and gender equality in the foreign ministries that are tasked with delivering foreign policy?

There are many natural links. A foreign policy which espouses greater gender equality e.g. in education, civil rights, economic opportunity and social participation is only really credible if the country itself shows it backs that policy in its own society and institutions. Embassies are a shop window for a country's views and values—and they are closely scrutinised. As an Ambassador, I found it was more acceptable to offer others ideas on change programmes and measures, if we had ourselves tried them and found a way through. And obviously as a woman I could identify with issues that specifically affected women's welfare. But gender empowerment or policies to strengthen diversity should not be badged as just women or protected minority issues. The arguments for greater equality should be seen as mainstream: benefiting both individuals and societies. You don't need senior women diplomats to make the argument but it can help to strengthen how it is received.

What are some of the steps that you think a government department—in any country—needs to take to make sure that it brings in and promotes women?

Well there are a number of aspects—probably all equally important. First you need to make your organisation visible and accessible to women. So your recruitment message is targeted and welcoming. That requires your

structures, processes and opportunities not automatically to disqualify women. And this will happen if departments or companies are not prepared to offer eg reasonable maternity or paternity leave, flexible working or joint postings to couples. Thirdly, you need to ensure that promotion processes are fair to women who may have taken time out for caring reasons or who work flexibly. And finally, you need to show top level support for your women, encouraging senior role modelling to inspire others.

So it is a package really—making it possible for women to manage their lives sensibly but also to feel they will get the recognition and responsibility they deserve. And this is not a policy just for women. It needs to be for everyone. And we are just at the beginning of this journey for most organisations and countries.

As Chair of the FCO Women's Association (WA), did you find Officials from other countries were interested in what the WA was achieving?

I think this went hand in hand with our general progress. At the beginning of our work, we did not have the time or resources to pursue international connections very strongly. But as opportunities arose, we did bring in speakers from other foreign ministries or international organisations to talk to our members. I remember some great talks with senior women ambassadors in London, including from China and with the South African Foreign Minister and Helen Clark then head of UNDP—when they were visiting London. And as we developed and expanded, we encouraged

UK women ambassadors around the world to seek or accept invitations to talk to WA counterparts or form local ambassador networks to share ideas. Our counterparts were generally I think impressed with what we were doing—few other Foreign Ministries at the time had associations like ours or such good policies to help families and working partners. But sometimes they had many more female heads of mission...So always something to learn!

What were the highlights of the time you spent representing your country in Slovakia, Mexico and South Africa?

Lots of highlights. In Slovakia, (2004-7), it was achieving a really close relationship with a new EU partner and NATO ally which led to a first visit by a UK Prime Minister, Tony Blair in 2006 and the first visit by the Queen in 2008. And just the opening up to so many young people in Slovakia the chance to work and study in Britain. My time in Mexico (2009-13) marked also a busy and productive time for bilateral programmes: really close and lasting collaboration on Climate Change that helped bring success at COP 16 in Mexico in 2010 and the development of some important environmental partnerships. I recall representing the UK at a number of high level G20 meetings, including on a boat trip in the Pacific Ocean to view whale migrations (!) and leading a number of successful initiatives to promote trade and tourism.

My posting in South Africa began with the sad but extraordinary funeral of the great Nelson Mandela, involving a beautiful burial service in the Eastern Cape amidst the vast crowds of leaders attending—

including four UK premiers and Prince Charles—from all parts of the globe. But perhaps the highlight of my time there was securing a wide ranging bilateral agreement with the South African Government on science and R&D—using new ODA funds and matched funding to step change the scale and range of joint activity and increasing the number of scholarships to study in the UK.

What is the way forward for Britain as it negotiates its Trade and Foreign Investment policies?

A combination of the old and new really. A lot of work and study has gone into the where and what Britain should cover with potential new trade agreements and how we can build on the many good bilateral arrangements forged in the past. Both sides in trade deals will be looking for a balance of interests and opportunity, with a view to long term certainty and assurance. Equally the scope of trade agreements has broadened hugely into new policy areas beyond tariffs on goods, reflecting the focus on services and new technology. In my experience, good trade and foreign direct investment has flourished when a clear strategy is in place but when diplomats and trade commissioners can also support flexible and fast moving openings from whatever quarter.

I personally favour a broad approach to trade policy, which takes account of all the people and business flows between countries. Tourism and inward student and research flows into UK schools and universities for example, contribute significantly to our GDP—and can lead to equally important FDI. UK arts, culture and sport play a great role in attracting tourists and business events to Britain, which in turn can lead to increased trade. So making soft and hard power work more closely together seems to me axiomatic.

What does diplomacy and strategy mean in foreign policy. How can they be utilised in other professions?

Well in foreign policy, I take strategy to mean the overall direction, values and vision of what we want to achieve for the

UK and its key interests. And diplomacy (using all the levers at its disposal) is the enabling means by which we will realise these aims: focused on the many significant global challenges that face us and the need for good partnerships and allies. Good diplomacy requires serious recognition of the forces at play and a real understanding and knowledge of other countries.

I think there is a general recognition in business and the professional world of the need for clear strategies—both for advancing their interests and coping with an uncertain world. What diplomacy can bring to the picture is its emphasis on the need for understanding and reconciling differences, how to work with unfamiliar international players and how to seek sustainable solutions through relationships and negotiation. It is certainly about thinking through a Plan B!

“Good diplomacy requires serious recognition of the forces at play and a real understanding and knowledge of other countries”

Is this a good time to be a diplomat? Why/why not?

It is a good time notwithstanding the constraints on travel and living abroad at present. The world is unsettled for many reasons—and there is a greater need than ever to advance significantly on the challenges of sustainability and fairness while seeking to prevent and reduce even greater conflict and hardship. It is said that public opinion worldwide is deeply sceptical these days of the ability of the international rules based system to satisfactorily address these issues without widespread reform

which is seemingly unreachable. But it is also acknowledged that the challenges of eg pollution, climate impacts, mass pandemics—all require urgent collective action right now. So it is absolutely the task of diplomacy and the diplomats to redouble efforts to defuse these tensions and find common agreements to resolve them.

And on a lighter note, the range and interest of diplomatic work has never been greater—moving some time back from a focus on government to government negotiation to the widest range of people to people interactions. Getting the structures right to allow those interactions to flourish and avoid conflict is key but none of it is easy. And Consular work continues to expand in importance in the ever shrinking global village.

What advice would you give to our students and alumni? What advice do you find yourself giving most often?

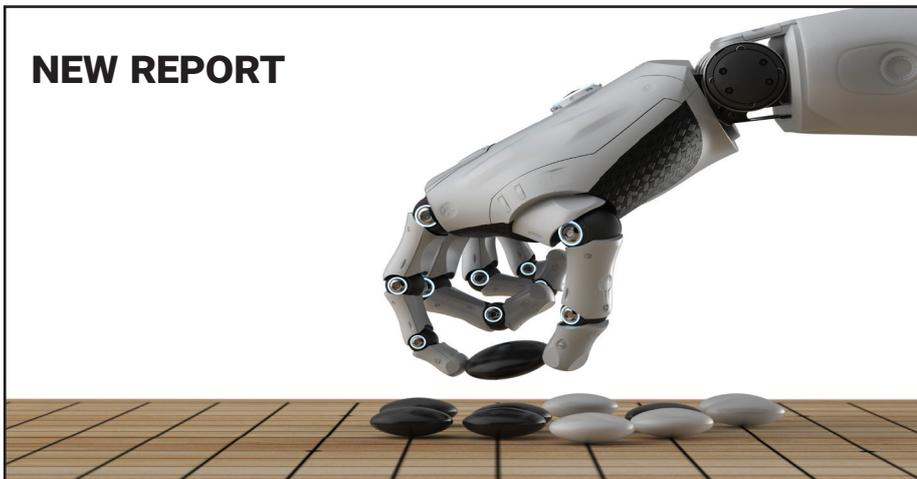
I am often asked how I managed to work through to a senior position in the FCO combining this with four children and a husband who was also a diplomat. Did I have a grand plan or was there some magic formula which minimised the problems? The unexciting answer is no and no! We largely took life as it came, focusing on securing the next job, settling the children into new homes or schools and trying to get the most out of each stage. We did have some key objectives but the path to them was very, very flexible. Equally when opportunities arose, e.g. to take on new or unfamiliar assignments, I tried to do so even though it went outside my comfort zone.

So it is good to aim high and be ambitious. Many professions are now more conscious of staff wellbeing and post pandemic, we can expect greater flexibility. But achieving a good work life balance is hard. It can take time. Equally be prepared to take risks and if international relations is your preferred area, there are many ways of working in it outside of formal, national ministries. And of course, do your bit to make genuine diversity the norm. ■

PROJECT UPDATES

China Foresight

NEW REPORT



Protect, Constrain, Contest: Approaches for coordinated transatlantic economic and technological competition with China

China Foresight has released a report detailing the basis for a coordinated strategy of technological and economic competition with China, featuring essays from six authors. Foundational to the report are three strategic pillars proposed by Peter Watkins:

1. **Protect:** Transatlantic allies need to better protect and control access to those Western technologies which are still ahead of Chinese ones—and which the Chinese state therefore seeks to access through fair means or foul.
2. **Constrain:** Allies should act to strengthen the international framework—the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the various international standards setting bodies—from which China as well as the West have benefited, so that China is less able to “tilt” the playing field to its advantage.
3. **Contest:** Sustaining the Western position in the face of the China challenge cannot be a purely defensive game. Nations need to reduce their dependency on certain Chinese technological applications, ensure that such dependencies do not recur with future critical

technologies, and regain the lead in key technologies which would enhance the competitiveness of Western economies and the resilience of their societies.

Part of these necessary efforts involves recognising past Western shortcomings. Stephen Paduano, for example, explores how developed countries’ misguided approach to WTO reform indirectly benefitted China’s influence in the organisation, and how future reform efforts can succeed. Jonathan Liebenau describes how Western technological giants such as Cisco and IBM Computers have atrophied over the past decade, and how transatlantic allies should learn from the CCP’s industrial policy in order to maintain their innovation edge.

At the same time, new thinking and better adoption of international best practice is required. Anthony Vinci provides various potential defensive measures against economic coercion and warfare. Ashley Lenihan details how allies can better coordinate their FDI regulations, and Francois Chimits describes recent EU measures to protect against China-driven economic distortions and how Europe’s allies can act in coherently. ■

CHINA
DIALOGUESMost Shared
Piece of 2021

George Magnus: China’s Bittersweet Recovery From COVID-19

George Magnus reflects on the China forecasting conducted at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic. He argues that predictions of a “Chernobyl Moment” for the Chinese Communist Party in early 2020 have proven incorrect. On the whole, China’s economy has recovered well from the COVID-19 pandemic, and political stability has been maintained.

However, key target areas for economic reform, including consumption, social spending, income inequality, and debt, remain a concern and in some cases regressed in 2020. Productivity growth is particularly crucial for China’s economic prospects. While some steps have been taken in this area, deeper reform is required for longer-term sustainable economic development. This, at present, does not seem forthcoming.





2020/21 Engelsberg Chair

The 2020/21 academic year has seen the return to LSE IDEAS of its co-founder, Professor Arne Westad, as the second Engelsberg Chair in History and International Affairs; following on from Professor Michael Burleigh in 2019-20 and the theme of populism. This year's Engelsberg lectures cover the theme of 'Empires Past and Present'. The first lecture took place in November 2020, on the 'Ideas of Empire'. The second talk, 'Empire Around 1800', took place in January 2021. The third lecture will be given 30 March on 'Empires Circa 1900' and the series will conclude with 'Empires Today', in early June.

The lectures have so far provided a global reach; including the Qing, the Ottomans, Mughal India, British North America and the USA's 1898 acquisitions, its Twentieth Century form of 'empire by invitation' and post-Cold War conflicts of liberal intervention as the world's hyperpower. A key insight discussed has been drawn from Prof. Westad's current research for an upcoming biography on James Bruce, the Eighth Earl of Elgin; Governor of Jamaica and Canada in the mid-1800s, as well as British plenipotentiary on the 1860 mission to Beijing, resulting in the burning down of the Summer Palace. The concept of empire in the West shifted with the rise of capitalism through industrialisation; empire became a civilising mission, a means of 'enlightening' those who were colonised, as opposed to expansion through conquest. This did not exclude, as Elgin's central role makes clear, the forceful opening of states' markets through gunboat diplomacy.

The Engelsberg lectures have so far proven a popular success, especially so given the current necessity of exclusively online lectures and podcasts due to the global Covid-19 pandemic. The first two lectures both received over 600 attendee sign-ups (or over 60% of the maximum audience capacity) and were each rated 'Excellent' on average in feedback. The lectures drew in a large proportion of academics and LSE students (both current and alumni); those identifying as female made up a large majority of the audience, and just under 50% of audience members were first time attendees of an LSE event.

Prof. Westad also collaborated with the China Foresight programme at IDEAS, on a discussion of his recent book exploring six centuries of Sino-Korean relations. The final two lectures on empire will take place on 30 March and 8 June respectively. ■



Economic Diplomacy Commission

Last month concluded the two-year endeavour of the LSE Economic Diplomacy Commission. On 9 February, Linda Yueh, the Chair of the Commission, Mick Cox, the Lead Commissioner, and Stephen Paduano, the Executive Director of the Commission presented the Final Report in a panel event that included Lord Mark Sedwill, former Cabinet Secretary, and Dr Adam Marshall, Director-General of the British Chambers of Commerce. The Commission's findings were subsequently presented in an event with the Carnegie Endowment on 17 February, which was moderated by Gideon Rachman, Chief Foreign Affairs Commentator for the Financial Times, and which included Dame Karen Pierce, British Ambassador to the United States; Robert Zoellick, former President of the World Bank and U.S. Trade Representative; and Rozlyn Engel, non-resident scholar in the Geoeconomics and Strategy Program at Carnegie. The Final Report is available [here](#).

The LSE Economic Diplomacy Commission was convened by LSE IDEAS in 2019 to chart a post-Brexit path for the UK: to establish a strategic direction for a new age of foreign economic policy, to understand the domestic ramifications of changes to the UK's new trade agenda, and to present recommendations that may best advance the UK's priorities at home and abroad. To do so, the Commission spent the past year studying a wide range of economic, geo-political and other trends, and conducted evidence sessions featuring experts across a broad range of subjects. Throughout 2020, the Commission published a series of Interim Reports, which can be found [here](#).

The Final Report begins with the framework for "economic diplomacy"—which helps set the recommendations within the broader inter-linked dimensions of a nation's economic and political agendas. The ten key recommendations of the LSE Economic Diplomacy Commission are then discussed. These recommendations fall under three categories: Trade & Investment Policy, both for the UK and where the UK can play a role in furthering international trade liberalisation; the UK's Global Role, which includes advancing global public goods and developing partnerships to promote global rules; and Institutional Changes, the reforms needed to expand the UK's ability to conduct economic diplomacy. ■

Global Strategies



Everything we do at LSE IDEAS touches, in one way or another, on the issue of how to do strategy better. The Global Strategies Project, that connects resources within LSE and beyond to UK policy makers, has focused for much of this past lockdown year on the UK's national security priorities.

At an early stage in the preparation of the UK's Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy—due to be published in March—Global Strategies held a series of discussions with LSE academics on issues we identified as posing significant dilemmas for UK policy. After these had been written up and sent to our Whitehall contacts, we took part in a number of consultations organised by the

UK government to talk over priorities for the Review. We expect to recognise at least some of our recommendations when the Review finally appears.

As part of a critical re-assessment of the UK's Biosecurity Strategy, finalised shortly before the pandemic and clearly inadequate in light of the country's early response to COVID-19, Global Strategies worked with colleagues elsewhere in LSE to submit a detailed set of recommendations for bringing this strategy up to date.

Online, the Global Strategies project has continued regular private meetings between UK policy makers and LSE experts, recently covering climate change and security, and approaches to improving the performance of democracies. Europe's strategy in the Indo-Pacific, and the strategic implications of military cooperation between Russia and China, are next on the agenda. ■

alumni

Executive MSc in International Strategy and Diplomacy @ LSE IDEAS

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The Executive MSc International Strategy and Diplomacy is managed by LSE IDEAS, the LSE's foreign policy think tank.

We connect academic knowledge of diplomacy and strategy with the people who use it.

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A Sea Change? The Impact of the US Presidential Election on CSEE Security and Defence



Central and South-East Europe Programme

The Central and South-East Europe Programme in partnership with the Ratiu Forum launched a special report in March called 'A Sea Change? The Impact of the US Presidential Election on Central and South-Eastern European Security and Defence'. In this special foreign policy update the authors, Ivan Vejvoda (Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna), Corina Rebegea (Center for European Policy Analysis) and Wojciech Michnik (Jagiellonian University) build on their insights given at a CSEEP online talk held on 27th November on this topic. This in-depth report analyses likely changes and patterns in US foreign policy across the

Balkans, the Black Sea region and Central and Eastern Europe. The event recording is available on [our YouTube channel](#).

The report finds grounds for optimism but also for managing expectations. President Biden's support for multilateral security approaches is likely to strengthen NATO and regional cooperation, particularly on Russia, but the region cannot expect to be the US' top priority. A return to values-based diplomacy under Biden, too, may put pressure on democratically-backsliding allies to whom his predecessor turned a blind eye. ■