



Policy Exchange announces new Indo-Pacific Commission

July 20, 2020

Policy Exchange, Britain's most influential think tank, today [Tuesday, 21st July] announces the launch of a new international commission on the Indo-Pacific led by the former Canadian Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Stephen Harper.

The **Indo-Pacific Commission** will include* diplomats, business leaders, politicians and military and civil leaders drawn from the United Kingdom, the United States and across the Indo-Pacific region – including Japan, India, South Korea, Australia, Indonesia and Singapore.

The aim of the Commission is to write the blueprint for a new strategic approach to the region, examining questions of trade, diplomacy, politics, defence and security that centre on the Indo-Pacific.

It is the first UK-led effort to assemble a group of diverse and experienced policy-makers to discuss a new approach to the way responsibility for the rules-based order is shared across this strategically important region. In this era, Policy Exchange argues, isolated positions are vulnerable places.

The Indo-Pacific Commission is set up in the tradition of American “Blue Ribbon” panels. Regional perspectives are vital to sound strategy-making – and a diversity of viewpoints lies at the heart of the programme. The Commission will produce a strategy that enables practical methods of co-operation to demonstrate the strength of shared regional perspectives.

The Commission will:

1. Strengthen the **Special Relationship** along the Asia-Pacific axis and increase the relevance of British advice and coordination in this area in Washington D.C.
2. Help position Britain, given its diplomatic experience, to act as a new focus for alliance-building among independent states committed to the rule of law in the Indo-Pacific. As a source of high-level thought and political leadership, it will establish vital new links between key policy-makers in the region.

3. Help shape a national and **international consensus** on the nature of the challenges to world stability and prosperity emanating from the Indo-Pacific, and foster new partnerships.
4. Provide a **public forum** for the exchange of views at the highest non-official level.

The Commission's work will be comprised of a series of **targeted events**, bringing together key stakeholders across the policy-making establishment and Asia specialists; and a stream of **written output** in the form of policy briefings, backgrounders, and analytical reports.

Both the events and the written work will stretch across three broad policy areas:

- A. Indo-Pacific **trade, economics and technology** developments, including novel issues of industrial “decoupling”, IP, digital standards, technology and science policy.
- B. Indo-Pacific domestic and international **politics** and diplomacy, particularly with regard to community formats and summit mechanisms to reinforce the rules-based international order.
- C. Indo-Pacific **defence and security** issues, ranging from “hard power” and strategic stability to information/political warfare, cyber security and renewed concerns about biological weapons and health security.

* The Commission will be lead by the former Canadian Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Stephen Harper and will include diplomats, business leaders, politicians and military and civil leaders: Claire Coutinho MP (UK: Parliamentary Private Secretary to Chancellor Rishi Sunak), Lt Gen In-Bum Chun (South Korea: decorated South Korean military veteran, Brookings Visiting Fellow), Hon Alexander Downer (Australia: former Foreign Minister, former Australian High Commissioner to the UK and Chairman of Policy Exchange), Murray McCully (New Zealand: former Foreign Minister), Rt Hon Sir Michael Fallon (UK: former Defence Secretary), Ely Ratner (US: Executive Vice President and Director of Studies, Centre for a New American Security – and former Deputy National Security Advisor to then Vice President Joe Biden; Rt Hon Lord Robertson of Port Ellen (UK: Labour Peer, former NATO General Secretary), Rt Hon Marquess of Salisbury (UK: former Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Lords), Samir Saran (India: President, Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi), Nadia Schadlow (US: former Deputy National Security Advisor), Yahya Cholil Staquf (Indonesia: General Secretary of the Supreme Council of the Nahdlatul Ulama, the world's largest Muslim organisation), Koji Tsuruoka (Japan: former Japanese Ambassador to the UK; Japan's chief negotiator for the Trans-Pacific Partnership), Robert Hannigan (UK: former Head of GCHQ), Michael Auslin (US: Payson J. Treat Distinguished Research Fellow in Contemporary Asia at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University), C Raja Mohan (Singapore: Director, Institute of Asian Studies).

<https://policyexchange.org.uk/news/policy-exchange-announces-new-indo-pacific-commission/>