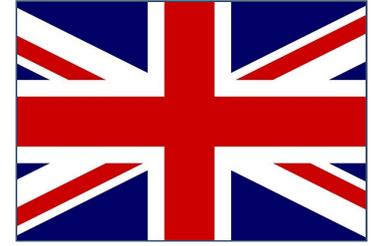




## United Kingdom Position Paper

Altar Gür



### I/ Background Information on United Kingdom

The United Kingdom, which comprises England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, is located in northwestern Europe. It is a country that has its roots before the century, Stonehenge and other examples of prehistoric culture are the only remains of the earliest inhabitants of the land. As the Roman invasion initiated, Britain got in contact with continental Europe but after the Romans withdrew from the region Britain got vulnerable to Angles, Saxons, and Jutes from Scandinavia and the Low Countries. Seven Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were established and by this, the Britons were driven out to Wales and Scotland. These kingdoms were abolished in the 10th century and the country unified under the king of Wessex. After the death of Edward the Confessor, the Duke of Normandy invaded England (Battle of Hastings) and the conquest introduced feudalism to the country. As history progressed, the royal family accumulated more power but after the Magna Carta was signed, nobles and ordinary people assumed basic rights. After Edward I, who proceeded with the conquest of Ireland and reduced Wales to subjection, a separate House of Commons formed with tax-raising powers. Subsequently, Edward III, by his claim over the French throne, triggered the Hundred Years' War, therefore losing massive territories to France. The effects of poverty and war became more severe as the Black Plague killed one-third of the population. After centuries, the Victorian era oversaw democratic development in the area. During Victoria's reign, with the Crimean War against Russia and the Boer War, Britain's influence in Africa has intensified. Britain took part in both world wars and emerged as a victor. In the 21st century, Britain was a strong ally for Post-9.11 America and took part in the US' bombing campaign targeting Afghanistan and subsequently entered the Iraq war. Today, the UK plays an important part in world politics and has power in many countries.

### II/ Past Achievements and Attempts of France on the Issues

- A. **The Question of the Caucasus:** Many Caucasus states declared independence as the Soviet Union collapsed, and some states are still a *de facto* state since they haven't reached full recognition by other states. During the First World War, Russia and the Ottoman Empire had a clash and this conflict was situated in the Caucasus region. As the Bolshevik Revolution transpired, Russia withdrew from the region and the region was left for the Turkish and the German to govern. This particular consequence has upset UK: Caucasus functions as a bridge to Iran, India and the Middle East and there were no forces that would be able to stop a Turkish-German force if this bridge was crossed to India. Additionally, if the petroleum resources were to fall under the central powers, the



war could've ended much later. The British forces took over crucial parts of the Caucasus region and obtained control over the Bakü-Tiflis-Batum line and the communication services. States that have declared independence such as Azerbaijan, Georgia, Daghestan and Armenia remained under British rule. Britain wrote extensive reports on the question of the Caucasus, evaluating all the possible outcomes. One report of the British Ministry of Foreign affairs suggested that the best solution is to unify independent states under a federation, also the independent states should be recognized and the Caucasus Mountains should be defined as a border of the Russian Federation. Britain took part in Paris Peace Conferences and made claims and proposals that were later approved after major debates. The proposals included that states should be encouraged to declare independence, Georgia should be internationally recognized as a state due to its power, British forces do not have to remain in these areas, and the English Navy would remain dominant in the Caspian Sea. By setting economic priorities and goals, Great Britain had an important role in ensuring security and peace in this region however it could not lead to a state of peace.

- B. The Question of the Caspian Sea and Surrounding Territories:** The Caspian Sea is an area that has a legally complicated situation. With the Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea, the surface will perform as a sea. The area contains many resources and the Russian Federation is dominating the Caspian Sea. The claims for the Caspian Sea have been proceeding still today, and countries need to reach an agreement. In the early 19th century, other countries including Britain have fought for dominance in the Caspian Sea. Britain promised Iran military aid if they were to support the UK during the fight for regional hegemony. Great Britain fought for their rights by diplomacy for the Caspian Sea. During the ongoing dispute, Britain developed interests in Azerbaijan. Capturing Azerbaijan would enable owning the bridge between Europe and the East. The trade routes of Baku-Novorossiysk, Baku-Batumi, and Tabriz-Bursa-Istanbul were both economically, militarily and politically significant. Britain occupied some Iranian and Southern Azerbaijan territory and enhanced their status on the southern coast of the Caspian Sea. Britain had hardships in Baku like relying on political branches that had weak social support, and lack of financial capability. Overall, Britain established dominance over the region and also took part in treaties like "Contract of the Century" in Baku in 1994 where major oil companies were included and with the agreement Azerbaijan implicitly established sovereignty over a particular territory of the Caspian sea.
- C. The Question of the Shift of Trade Routes in Eurasia:** Britain benefited from the Silk Road throughout history through exports by China. Silk Road was significant until the Ottoman Empire boycotted the trade route, causing it to lose importance. Britain most definitely benefited from sea commerce, although used land routes as much. The United Kingdom has expressed its support about current attempts like the Belt and Road initiative, claiming that prosperity will be spread



throughout the world. The United Kingdom is strengthening its ties with Beijing employing commerce through trade routes and seeks other initiatives that will spark international trade.

### III/ Objectives, Aims and Possible Solutions Proposed by France on the Issues

- A. **The Question of the Caucasus:** Violence and crime have peaked in the Caucasus region, by territorial disputes and organizations like the Caucasian Emirates. Great Britain has no direct involvement in the region but follows the American steps. Great Britain contains no economic interests in Georgia and Armenia, but it has interests in Azerbaijan and West Kazakhstan which cannot be compared to the interests in Iraq, the Near East, Southwest Asia. The United Kingdom wants and advocates that states want to become independent and supports autonomy. The UK believes that natural resources should be conserved and protected from exploitation in the Caucasus region.
- B. **The Question of the Caspian Sea and Surrounding Territories:** By British Petroleum country, Britain is dominant in the Caspian Sea. BP operates the field collaborating with the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR) and Danish multinational energy company Equinor ASA. Britain is in favor of the Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and treaties that include oil companies.
- C. **The Question of the Shift of Trade Routes in Eurasia:** Britain is in favor of China's "One Belt Road" initiative, although it did not sign it up. The United Kingdom and China will conduct the next round of their Economic and Financial Dialogue (EFD) in mid-June in London. Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond expressed their eagerness and enthusiasm with cooperating Beijing on more commerce-oriented talks. Britain is aware that allies like Greece will benefit from commerce platforms like 16+1 (With Greece 17+1) and One Belt Road initiative, therefore whole-heartedly supports the shift of trade routes for increased exchange.





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