

## Britain briefing: October 2022

*Reporting period: 8th October - 8th November 2022*

### Counter-terrorism and Counter-extremism

New CONTEST counter-terrorism strategy being developed, consolidating aggressive turn of recent Home Secretaries

- A new edition of the CONTEST counter-terrorism strategy is [due to be published](#) in 2023, and will cover the four strands of counter-terror policy: Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare.

The last version of CONTEST was released in 2018, under Sajid Javid's tenure as Home Secretary in the Theresa May government.

- The new CONTEST will likely consolidate the marked shift towards the punitive, 'hard' counter-terror approach that has been driven by Priti Patel and then Suella Braverman since 2020 - as opposed to the emphasis on Prevent and pre-crime counter-extremism policy which had been prioritised by their predecessors.
- It will also cement the recommendations and outcome of the Shawcross Review of Prevent and the Manchester Arena bombing inquiry.

Coverage in *The Telegraph* also indicates a renewed focus on 'Islamist extremism' in the strategy - which is also due to be a key demand of the Shawcross review - by quoting a Home Office official stating "We need to face the fact that [Islamist extremism] is a much bigger issue than we are willing to accept at the moment"

UN Counter Terrorism Committee adopts Delhi Declaration on terrorism financing and technology at conference in India

- At the end of October the Counter Terrorism Committee of the UN Security Council [held a 'special meeting'](#) in Delhi, India on the theme of 'countering the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes'.
- At the conclusion of the conference it adopted a non-binding document known as the ['Delhi Declaration'](#), which focuses on actions to be undertaken by states to prevent the Financing and facilitation of terrorism, and on deepening public-private and



public-civil sector collaboration to tackle terrorism.

- In his [address to the conference](#), Foreign Secretary James Cleverly spoke of their collaboration with states like the UAE in “tackling illicit finance” as well as working with private companies to “disrupt terrorist finances, including in Somalia and North Africa”

## Far-right Dover firebombing attack designated a terrorist incident

- On 30th October an immigration processing centre was firebombed by an individual who killed himself after the attack.

On 5th November, Counter-terror Police [formally designated the attack](#) as being “driven by an extremist ideology” and that “This meets the threshold for a terrorist incident.”

- It is worth noting that while there has been a push - led by the Shawcross review, and seemingly supported by the Home Secretary - to shift away from the issue of rightwing ‘extremism’ in favour of a focus on Muslims, other elements of the security apparatus remain committed to the supposed ‘equal opportunities’ approach to counter-terrorism that has prevailed since 2016, i.e. targeting both ‘Islamists’ and the far-right.

A [recent report](#) by the Parliamentary Intelligence and Security Committee, for example, references MI5’s concerns of being under-resourced to tackle far-right ‘extremism’.

These divisions are likely to come to a head once the Shawcross review is finally released.

## National Security

### National security strategy being re-written after less than 2 years

- The Global Britain in a Competitive Age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy (henceforth Integrated Review) was released in March 2021 and outlined Britain’s approach to foreign policy, military and national security over the next 5 years.

In October it was [announced that the strategy](#) would already be re-written, and include plans for a new taskforce on protecting Parliament from the “growing threat from hostile states”.



- The review will take into account developments since the Integrated Review was first published - most notably the Russo-Ukraine war, and a number of security breaches by MPs and ministers.

It will be overseen by Security Minister Tom Tugendhat, who has a military background and has been leading on calls within the Conservative Party for a more hawkish approach to China - which will also likely be a feature of the new review.

- There have been [calls within the government](#) to update or review the Integrated Review since the outset of the Russo-Ukraine war, and it was controversial upon its release for reorganising British military capabilities away from a ground force towards long-range capabilities - leading to a reduction in troops.

## National Security Bill amended to include Foreign Influence Registration Scheme

- An [amendment to the](#) National Security Bill, currently in Parliament, will compel those working on the direction of a foreign power/entity to register themselves as carrying out foreign influence activity, and criminalise those who do not.

This Foreign Influence Registration Scheme was mentioned by Priti Patel as a future addition when the Bill was initially introduced in June this year.

- The Foreign Influence Registration Scheme mirrors an existing system in the US and is designed ostensibly to tackle infiltration and subversion by those working for supposed 'Hostile States' - a category which currently includes Russia, China, Iran and North Korea, but can be extended by the government at their will.
- Those exempt from registrations would include individuals 'working for a foreign power in their official capacity, those with diplomatic immunity, those who provide legal services, those working for domestic and foreign news publishers and those in an arrangement to which the UK government, [...] is party.'

However provisions in the amendment would allow the Home Secretary to override these exemptions and designate states or entities for which registration would be compulsory.

- Further amendments under consideration for the National Security Bill include [anti-treason measures](#) which would 'make it an offence to aid a state or organisation that is attacking or preparing to attack the UK or UK forces in an armed conflict', punishable by life sentence.

The rest of the Bill concerns a swathe of powers mirroring existing counter-terror



laws to target 'hostile activity' from foreign states, a concept first introduced in the Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Bill 2019.

## Two men convicted in Rochdale child sexual abuse ring have deportation confirmed after citizenship stripping

- Following a 7 year-long legal battle, two of the men convicted for their role in an infamous child sexual abuse ring in Rochdale [have lost an appeal](#) over their deportation to Pakistan, having previously been stripped of their British citizenship.
- Having renounced their Pakistani citizenship already, it seems that the two individuals would be stateless - something which formed the basis of their appeal.

The judge presiding over the Immigration Tribunal ruled against their appeal on human rights grounds and decided that their deportation was in the public good.

- The citizenship stripping of members of the Rochdale ring by then-Home Secretary Theresa May [was notable for being](#) among the first examples of individuals having their citizenship removed on the basis of committing 'serious crimes', rather than national security or terrorism purposes.

May's successor Sajid Javid [signalled his intention](#) to expand on the usage of citizenship stripping powers in this manner.

## Other

### Rishi Sunak selected Prime Minister after Truss government collapses, Conservative Party crisis continues

- On 24th October Rishi Sunak was selected unopposed by the Conservative Party to take over leadership of the party from Liz Truss, who resigned the previous week - in large part due to the fallout from the market after her 'mini-budget' was unveiled.
- While Truss had been elected as the standard-bearer for the Conservative Party's rightwing, MPs' support for her successor appeared to play out less along factional lines and more by the self-interest of MPs.

Notable figures of the party's rightwing, such as Suella Braverman and Kemi Badenoch, came out in support of Rishi Sunak - rather than Boris Johnson in his brief unofficial attempt at making a comeback.

- Notable appointments to Sunak's Cabinet include:



- Suella Braverman reinstated as Home Secretary - which she had previously resigned from over security breaches
  - Michael Gove as Levelling Up Secretary - having [previously announced](#) his 'quitting' frontline politics
  - Tom Tugendhat continuing as Security Minister - which he has led in a more hawkish direction, particularly vis-a-vis China
  - Ben Wallace continuing as Defence Secretary - which he has served as since the Johnson government
- Since assuming the role, a number of Sunak's Cabinet members have faced high levels of public scrutiny - including Suella Braverman for her numerous [security breaches](#), Gavin Williamson [who resigned](#) over a bullying scandal, and Dominic Raab, also under pressure over [bullying allegations](#).

The level of scrutiny placed on Liz Truss and Rishi Sunak by the media and political establishment have made clear that the crisis facing the Conservative Party extends beyond issues with Boris Johnson's leadership.

It also indicates that support within the political establishment for the Conservative Party appears to be shifting away, towards the Labour Party - who under the tenure of Keir Starmer may be seen as more reliable advocates for the interests of the market, security industry and more.