



Tenth Report
of the
Foreign Affairs Committee
Session 2007-08

Global Security: Japan and Korea

Response of the Minister of State
for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

*Presented to Parliament
By the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
By Command of Her Majesty
January 2009*



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TENTH REPORT FROM THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

SESSION 2007-8

GLOBAL SECURITY: JAPAN AND KOREA

RESPONSE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Introduction

The Government welcomes the Committee's inquiry into the foreign policy aspects of the UK's relationship with Japan, the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea).

North East Asia is of vital importance, both politically and economically, to the UK and EU. As the Committee notes, the UK has important commercial links with both Japan and South Korea. Both countries are also important partners on many international issues central to UK foreign policy such as climate change, international institutional reform, international peacekeeping and development. We fully endorse the Committee's conclusion that Japan and South Korea will play a crucial role in ensuring stability in East Asia, which is vital to the security and prosperity of the UK and EU. Both countries' relationship with China will be a central factor in this. We appreciate the Committee's conclusions in this area.

As the Committee recognises, North Korea's nuclear and other weapons activities are a matter of serious concern. North Korea's nuclear ambitions are the single biggest threat to international security in the region. The UK Government strongly supports the Six Party Talks mechanism and continues to see it as the best means of achieving verifiable denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. Our close relationship with the US and our representation in North Korea offer us opportunities to contribute to this process. These considerations are recognised in the Committee's report and we will be working to build on their recommendations in our future policy formulation.

Japan and South Korea are important partners for the UK and over the coming year, the Government will work closely with both to tackle the new global challenges. The financial and economic crisis is at the top of our international agenda and the UK Government is working closely with both countries as we prepare for the London Summit in April. While tackling the financial crisis, we will also be working with both countries on promoting a low carbon economy, and continuing to advise Japanese and South Korean companies that the UK is the place with which and in which to do business.

The Government welcomes the detailed work which the Committee has undertaken. This Command Paper sets out the Government's response to the Committee's 30 November 2008 Report on Japan and Korea. The Committee's recommendations are set out in bold. Unless otherwise indicated, references are to paragraphs in the Foreign Affairs Committee's Report (HC 449).

Japan and South Korea: Regional relations

1. **We conclude that recent Japanese commitments to the international fight against terrorism and to reconstruction efforts in Iraq have strengthened Japan's relations with the United States, as has the two countries' co-operation in developing a ballistic missile defence programme in response to the nuclear threat from North Korea. (Paragraph 38)**

The UK Government welcomes Japan's commitment to providing resources to Operation Enduring Freedom. These are an important contribution in the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan.

The Japanese Government reported that in a telephone conversation on 7 November 2008, Prime Minister Taro Aso reconfirmed to President-elect Obama that the Japan-US alliance was the principal component of Japan's foreign policy. Both sides agreed that the two countries should further strengthen the alliance and work closely together on current international challenges, such as the global financial and economic turmoil, climate change, and Afghan and North Korea-related issues.

US-Japan cooperation in developing a ballistic missile defence programme is part of a broad US-Japan agenda of security co-operation and we agree with the Committee's conclusion that it contributes to strong US-Japan relations.

2. **We reiterate the conclusion in our 2006 East Asia Report that "productive links between China and Japan are essential for peace and stability in East Asia". In that Report we expressed regret at the deterioration of the relationship to, as one witness put it, "the verge of dysfunctional". We conclude that the successful visit of Chinese President Hu to Japan in April 2008, and the agreement concluded in June 2008 between the two countries over exploitation of gasfields in the East China Sea, are positive signs of an upswing in the relationship between China and Japan. We recommend that the Government should continue to do whatever it can to see that that this is maintained. (Paragraph 46)**

We agree with the Committee that productive links between China and Japan are essential for peace and stability in East Asia. We welcome the recent marked improvement in relations, with agreement to joint exploration for resources in the East China Sea and also agreement in December 2008 to trilateral Japan-China-South Korea annual Summits. The dispute at the beginning of December 2008 over Chinese entry into waters around disputed areas in the East China Sea, however, shows that tensions remain in the Japan-China relationship, as does the current disagreement over alleged Chinese exploration of disputed gas fields. The UK will continue to use its strong ties with both countries to encourage further progress. We will also support the EU in its implementation of the East Asia Policy Guidelines, published in December 2007, which provide a framework for EU foreign and security policy in East Asia. These Guidelines state that the EU has a stake in good co-operative relations between the region's major players,

notably China and Japan, and that the EU should promote confidence building measures and encourage peaceful and co-operative solutions to disputes over territory and resources. They state that the EU should encourage political leaders to build excellent economic relations and promote effective multilateralism. The UK is also keen to identify new ways of working with both Japan and China, including through the EU, on global issues such as climate change and non-proliferation.

3. **We conclude that recent indications on both sides of a wish further to improve Japanese-South Korean relations are to be welcomed. Given the important contribution which enhanced Japanese-South Korean co-operation could make on a number of issues, especially policy towards North Korea, we further conclude that the continuing capacity of the Takeshima/Dokdo islets dispute to disrupt Japanese-South Korean relations is regrettable. We recommend that the Government should urge Tokyo and Seoul not to escalate the dispute and encourage both parties to seek a mechanism for its lasting resolution. We further conclude that the issue of the Second World War “comfort women” – Korean and other Asian women obliged to provide sexual services for the Japanese army – remains a painful and emotive issue for the South Korean public and Government, and that its importance should be recognised internationally, including by Japan. (Paragraph 54)**

We welcome recent improvements in Japan-South Korea relations. We recognise the impact on regional relationships of territorial disputes such as that over the Liancourt Rocks (called Takeshima in Japan and Dokdo in Korea). The UK does not take a position on territorial claims over the rocks but has encouraged peaceful resolution between the two parties, and will continue to do so where appropriate. The tensions over the rocks that flared up in July 2008 have subsequently died down, due partly to the concern of both parties not to put in jeopardy their new relationship.

The FCO met representatives of Amnesty International and two former “comfort women” during their visits to the UK in November 2007 and November 2008. We recognise and regret the suffering they have endured and encouraged the Japanese Embassy in London to engage with Amnesty International after both visits. We appreciate that this remains an important and emotive issue for those involved and hope the Japanese Government can engage on the matter constructively.

4. **We conclude that there is a realistic prospect of Japan normalising relations with North Korea, if progress can be made to resolve both the North Korean nuclear issue and the issue of North Korea’s abductions of Japanese nationals, but that these issues should be resolved separately. We further conclude that although the number of Japanese nationals who were abducted by North Korea is small, even allowing for the highest possible estimate, nonetheless it should be recognised by the international community that this is an understandably emotive issue for the Japanese public and Government. Like**

the Prime Minister, we extend our sympathy and respect to the surviving abductees and to the abductees' families. We conclude that the British Embassy in Pyongyang has played a useful role in bringing pressure to bear on North Korea in relation to the abductees. We recommend that the Government should continue to give such assistance as it can to Japan over this matter, and in particular that it should encourage North Korea to proceed speedily to set up the proposed reinvestigation commission, with a view to reaching a final resolution of the issue and removing this significant obstacle to the normalisation of North Korea's relations with Japan. While recognising the importance of these country-specific sensitivities, we further conclude that, in relations with North Korea, the greatest interest of the international community as a whole, including the UK, lies in denuclearisation. (Paragraph 68)

The UK Government supports the Japanese Government's efforts to seek an early resolution to the abduction issue with North Korea. The Minister of State for Asia, Bill Rammell MP, met the Special Adviser to the Japanese Prime Minister on the abduction issue, Mrs Kyoko Nakayama, on 11 November 2008. Mrs Nakayama briefed the Minister on latest developments and the Minister restated the UK's strong support to finding a lasting settlement to this issue. The British Embassy in Pyongyang has also raised the issue with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, most recently in November 2008. It was disappointing that North Korea did not follow up its offer in August 2008 to re-open investigation into the issue after the resignation of Japanese Prime Minister Fukuda in September.

We agree with the Committee that in relations with North Korea, the greatest interest of the international community lies in denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, but that human rights issues are also very important. The Government notes that the US and Japan will also cover human rights issues in their respective Normalisation Working Group meetings with North Korea.

- 5. We conclude that the recent moves on both sides further to strengthen the South Korea-US alliance are to be welcomed. We conclude that the likelihood of greater convergence between South Korean and US approaches to North Korea should be especially useful. (Paragraph 76)**

We recognise that the relationship with Washington is of crucial importance for South Korea and for regional security. At the time of President Lee's visit to Washington in April 2008, senior US officials noted that South Korea was a long-term ally of the US, a troop contributor in Iraq, and the US' seventh largest trading partner. The two countries continue to work on alliance transformation, including repositioning of US troops and preparations for the transition of wartime operational control to the South. We welcome the close co-ordination between the US and China, South Korea, Russia and Japan in the Six Party Talks in their approach to the goal of denuclearisation.

6. **We conclude that the growing relationship between South Korea and China is to be welcomed as a potential factor for stability in East Asia, in particular as regards the management of the risks posed by North Korea, and on the assumption that there is no question of the two countries aligning against Japan. We recommend that the Government should make clear to the parties that it would welcome an early agreement on the South Korean-Chinese maritime border. (Paragraph 83)**

South Korea and China recognised at their last bilateral summit in August 2008 that an early resolution of the maritime demarcation issue is important. We welcome this and hope that they can successfully achieve this objective.

7. **Particularly in the context of the failure of the global Doha trade round, and given our support for a strengthening of relations among regional states, we conclude that bilateral and regional trade agreements involving Japan and South Korea are to be encouraged, provided that they do not prejudice economic access to local markets for the EU nor undermine any remaining prospects for the conclusion of a global trade agreement. We recommend that the Government should remain vigilant in assessing the implications of such agreements for the UK and the EU, and ensure that the EU maintains a similar stance. (Paragraph 91)**

The Government is not aware of any evidence to suggest that regional Free Trade Agreements in this area are having a significant negative impact on EU business or commercial interests. We continue to assess the potential for positive and negative impacts of proposed and existing Free Trade Agreements for both UK commercial interests and other UK trade policy objectives. In addition, the government would like to stress that it strongly supports the World Trade Organisation Doha Development Agenda round of multilateral trade negotiations. We regret that recent discussions in Geneva in December 2008 were inconclusive, and will work for successful completion at the earliest possible time in 2009.

8. **We conclude that North-East Asia is characterised by a set of interlocking and highly delicate inter-state relationships. While there have been improvements recently in some bilateral relationships, the region continues to be marked by a number of historical and territorial disputes which are potential sources of instability and obstacles to enhanced co-operation. We further conclude that the states of the region have a clear common interest in maintaining stability, in the interests of perpetuating economic growth and enhancing their international standing. We also conclude that, although there is no question of replicating European institutions in East Asia, there are some aspects of the European experience which might usefully be drawn on in the region, in terms especially of the mitigation of historical and territorial disputes, and that the strengthening of standing forums for regularised security dialogue among regional states would be welcome. We recommend that the Government should continue to work with its East**

Asian, European and US partners to encourage the further development of regional security forums in East Asia. In particular, the Government should convey to the US Administration its support for what appears to be a shift in US policy towards promoting multilateral regional frameworks in East Asia. We recommend that in its response to this Report, the Government should provide an assessment of the development of the various East Asian regional security forums so far, and in particular of the likely impact of the apparent shift in US policy and of prospects for the further institutionalisation of the Six-Party Talks framework. (Paragraph 101)

North and South East Asian countries participate in a range of economic, political and security institutions including Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC), the Association of South East Asian States Plus Three (ASEAN+3 which includes China, Japan and South Korea), the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Although the ARF has terms of reference focussed on security issues, none of these organisations provides for collective security. The organisations encompass a wide range of countries with different security interests, and work on the basis of consensus with relatively low levels of institutionalisation. The US continues to make a key contribution to regional security, through its engagement with regional mechanisms in East Asia as well as its longstanding military alliances with Japan and South Korea.

Decisions on regional security architecture are primarily for the countries of the region, and we have limited scope to influence the detailed development of regional security architecture. Nevertheless we take an interest and discuss these issues with the countries concerned, as active and informed outsiders. We do not push for any particular model for regional security architecture, but believe that any model which evolves needs to be open and inclusive and to recognise the continuing key contribution of the US to regional security.

The UK was an active partner in the production of the EU's East Asia Policy Guidelines in 2007, which state that, "The EU's long-term aim [on Regional Security Architecture] should be increasing regional integration and the emergence of strong regional institutions based on clear recognition of shared interests". The EU is represented at the ARF through the EU Troika. The UK welcomes the resumption of trilateral US-Japan-South Korea coordination meetings. We strongly support the US engagement in the Six Party Talks, and hope that the North East Asia Peace and Security Working Group under the Six Party Talks will make progress when it next meets under Russian chairmanship in February. Bilaterally, the UK will continue to discuss regional security issues with all countries in the region, and with the new Obama Administration. We also maintain dialogue with the US on regional security issues through a UK liaison officer at the US Pacific Command in Hawaii.

- 9. We recommend that in its work in East Asia, the Government should take every opportunity to support initiatives aimed at developing a shared historical understanding between the region's Second World War combatants.**

We further recommend that the Government should build elements of co-operation between regional states into programmes and projects in the region that it might otherwise pursue bilaterally, for example regarding climate change or research co-operation. We recommend that in its response to this Report, the Government should provide information on such work as it is already doing to encourage co-operation between regional states in specific policy areas. (Paragraph 102)

Whilst the UK Government supports efforts by governments in the region aimed at developing a shared historical understanding, the UK also hopes that South Korea, Japan and China can focus on issues that have to be faced now and in the future, such as low carbon, sustainable growth and dealing with new diseases, such as avian influenza. The Japan-South Korea-China Summit on 13 December 2008 addressed joint efforts to tackle the financial crisis, showing that this kind of regional co-operation is possible. The UK welcomes the agreement to hold these summits regularly.

Developing East Asia networks is a priority for the UK Government. On climate change, our embassies in Tokyo, Seoul and Beijing are working increasingly closely to co-ordinate climate change strategy and activities and identify regional synergies. Close collaboration between Tokyo and Seoul is aided by some of the similarities between the climate change and energy security challenges facing Japan and South Korea, and the government and business response to these.

The UK strongly supported Japan as G8 President in its outreach efforts on climate change, both at the Summit itself, and at the relevant Ministerials. The Environment Ministerial in May included China and South Korea among 10 outreach countries, and agreed – with UK support – a number of follow-up initiatives, including building a Low Carbon Society research network, sharing expertise and capacity building on sectoral approaches and measuring emissions, and promoting ‘co benefit’ approaches (combining pollution and emission reduction). The UK also strongly supported Japan’s initiatives at the Energy Ministerial in June 2008, where G8 countries were joined by China, South Korea and India. The final G8+3 communiqué agreed actions to improve data sharing on oil markets, establish a new international initiative on energy efficiency (the International Partnership on Energy Efficiency Co-operation), accelerate action on innovative technology R&D, and develop the legal and technical frameworks to promote carbon capture and storage.

The UK has encouraged South Korea to take a leadership role on climate change and act as a bridge between developed and developing countries. This contributed to President Lee Myung-bak’s announcement in July 2008 of an East Asia Climate Partnership with an initial pledge of 200 million dollars. The Embassy is also facilitating collaboration between the South Korean and Australian Governments on research into the economic impacts of climate change.

North Korea

10. **We conclude that the North Korean denuclearisation process in the framework of the Six-Party Talks is difficult and imperfect, and that there can be no certainty that it will lead to the elimination of all North Korea's nuclear weapons activities. However, we also conclude that the process has achieved a significant degree of denuclearisation, namely a halt to plutonium production at Yongbyon, verified by International Atomic Energy Agency personnel, and significant dismantling of the facility. We conclude that the fact that the agreements reached in the Six-Party Talks process are similar in outline to the 1994 Agreed Framework – namely denuclearisation steps by North Korea in exchange for energy supplies and security gains through improved relations with the US – suggest that this is the most effective basic deal for securing progress in denuclearisation. We further conclude that, by better harmonising the policies towards North Korea of the states most immediately concerned, and by increasing the number of states signed up to agreements and therefore the costs of defection, the Six-Party Talks format is more effective than bilateral US-North Korean negotiations, and may also have wider knock-on benefits for regional security. We conclude that the leading role of China in the Six-Party Talks is to be welcomed, and that the Government is correct to identify China as key to North Korean denuclearisation. We therefore conclude that the Government is correct to support the Six-Party Talks process, including the priority which the process gives to denuclearisation over other policy aims regarding North Korea. (Paragraph 137)**

The Government has supported the Six Party Talks process since its inception, and continues to view it as the best means available of achieving verifiable denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. Expanding the US-North Korea bilateral talks in 2003 into the Six Party Talks to include all the regional players provides a framework in which both sides can have confidence, allows for a greater sharing of the burden that will have to be borne to resolve the issue, and makes any agreements reached multilaterally binding and more difficult to renege on. However, the process is now nearing the end of Phase II (disablement), and Phase III (dismantlement) will be even harder to achieve. Nothing that has been done so far is irreversible. North Korea is likely to seek to drive a very hard bargain before finally giving up its nuclear ambitions.

11. **Given the difficulties in the denuclearisation process which arose in September 2008, we recommend that the Government should make clear to Six-Party Talks participants that it is willing to assist in any way that might help prevent any further possible breakdown in the process. We further recommend that the Government should make clear to the incoming US Administration that it would welcome an early commitment to continuing the Six-Party Talks and the policy approach which they embody. We recommend that, in its response to this Report, the Government should provide an assessment of prospects for the international North Korean denuclearisation effort under the new US Administration, in light of the latest developments in the process and in the West's relations with Russia. (Paragraph 138)**

The Government has consistently expressed its support for the Six Party Talks process, and will seriously consider any request from the parties to provide practical assistance. Staff at the British Embassies in Japan, South Korea, China, and the US are in regular contact with the Six Party Talks teams in State Department and Foreign Ministries. FCO Ministers and staff at the British Embassy in Washington will continue to discuss North Korea with their counterparts after the inauguration of the new US administration, including expressing our support for the Six Party Talks process. The Committee asked for our assessment of prospects. The latest round of talks (8 – 11 December 2008) ended in stalemate, with no agreement reached on verification of North Korea's nuclear programmes. It is possible that North Korea is hoping to get a better (from its perspective) deal from the new US administration. In our view, they would be wrong to expect this. Difficulties in Russia's relations with the West do not appear to have spilled over into the Six Party Talks process. As noted above, completion of the disablement of Yongbyon (not yet a foregone conclusion) will be comparatively simple compared to negotiating the dismantlement phase of the process.

- 12. We conclude that the Government is correct to regard the North Korean case as having wider implications for nuclear proliferation and for international non-proliferation efforts. We conclude that it is important from this perspective that North Korea should be returned credibly to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) regime as a non-nuclear weapons state. We further conclude that the North Korean case highlights important weaknesses in the current NPT regime, and we recommend that policymakers should draw systematically on the North Korean case, alongside others, in considering the future of that regime. We further recommend that North Korea's ongoing demand for civil nuclear power should be considered in the context of both the international effort to end the country's nuclear weapons programme, and current international discussions about mechanisms for the future safe provision of such power to further states. (Paragraph 143)**

It is all too clear that North Korea's nuclear ambitions – alongside those of Iran – have put the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) under unprecedented pressure. The absence of a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol (IAEA Integrated Safeguards) allowed North Korea to become a party to the NPT but use its safeguarded nuclear programmes to develop fissile material for a nuclear weapon. Pyongyang then sought to withdraw from the Treaty and carried out a nuclear test, which showed the inadequacy and lack of clarity inherent in Article X of the NPT.

It is important that the international community responds with purpose and urgency. The UK and EU are pushing for integrated safeguards to become the international verification standard. We also strongly support the G8's lobbying for universal adherence to the IAEA Additional Protocol. We do not accept that North Korea has fulfilled the "supreme national interest" criteria required under Article X to withdraw from the NPT. We continue to regard it as a State Party,

which is bound by the provisions of the Treaty. We accept however that not all countries share this view. We have worked closely with EU partners to address the systemic shortcomings and tabled a proposal on Article X that would significantly raise the cost of withdrawal from the Treaty. This would create a strong and timely international response to notice of withdrawal, including automatic referral of the dossier to the UN Security Council and the securing of materials and technology acquired during NPT membership.

This proposal is under serious consideration and we will push for further discussion at the NPT Preparatory Committee in April 2009. The Government recognises that getting tougher international action on a range of nuclear non-proliferation issues is a critical political challenge. We are therefore playing a leading role in efforts to re-energise the international consensus that must underpin an effective nuclear non-proliferation regime.

13. **We conclude that the G8 Global Partnership Against Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction (WMD) could provide a strong base of political, technical and organisational experience for projects reducing the risks associated with WMD activities in North Korea, when appropriate political conditions are in place. We further conclude that the willingness of the G8, including the UK, to consider expanding the work of the Global Partnership beyond the former Soviet Union is welcome. We recommend that, as part of the discussions that are underway on the future of the Global Partnership after 2012, the Government should consider with its G8 partners – and especially the Six-Party Talks participants Japan, Russia and the US – the possibility of Global Partnership involvement in North Korea. We further recommend that the Government should encourage Global Partnership participants who are also participants in the Six-Party Talks to begin to explore the same possibility with their North Korean interlocutors. (Paragraph 150)**

The Government welcomes the Committee's recognition of the valuable role that the G8 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction (WMD) can play in addressing proliferation risks in countries beyond the former Soviet Union (FSU). The UK worked hard to get agreement at the Toyako Summit in July 2008 to the geographical expansion of the Global Partnership, so that it is able to address the most urgent emerging threats posed by WMD and associated materials in countries whose capacity to deal with such threats is least developed. We have already begun discussions with G8 partners, including those participating in the Six Party Talks, to identify both new recipient and donor countries. There is widespread recognition, which we share, that the Global Partnership could play a key role in addressing the risks associated with WMD activities in North Korea, if appropriate political conditions are in place.

14. **We conclude that North Korea appears to retain an active ballistic missile programme. We further conclude that there is evidence that international efforts to deny North Korea both assistance and customers for its missile**

programme appear to be having some effect. We recommend that the Government should continue to work with its international partners to deny North Korea missile-related materials, equipment, technology and overseas sales. We further recommend that, in its response to this Report, the Government should provide an updated assessment of the impact of current international measures against North Korea's missile programme, including the transport of North Korean missiles and missile components overseas. (Paragraph 161)

The Government continues to play an active part in international counter proliferation efforts, including those carried out through our membership of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Through our involvement in the MTCR, and enforcement of the UK's stringent export controls, the UK helps restrict the spread of missile sensitive technologies to programmes of proliferation concern, including North Korea. We assess that measures taken to date by the international community, including UN sanctions resulting from Security Council Resolutions 1695 and 1718, have limited North Korean imports of materials and components for its ballistic missile programme and exports of ballistic missiles and/or associated technology. We judge that the number of North Korea ballistic missile customers has declined significantly over the past decade, but that North Korea is still seeking new customers. We therefore continue to monitor the situation closely and would consider taking action to halt such trade.

- 15. We conclude that the North Korean regime is one of the worst human rights abusers in the world, that its human rights practice is an affront to the international community, and that the main reason that the issue is not the subject of a larger international outcry is because it remains too little known. We conclude that the work of the FCO in attempting to address North Korean human rights, both bilaterally and with international partners, is to be commended. Although we conclude that human rights abuses are deeply linked to the nature of the North Korean regime, we recommend that the Government's efforts to address North Korea's human rights abuses should avoid language which Pyongyang might construe as threatening, and should be couched in terms of reference to specific obligations under international instruments to which North Korea has signed up. We further recommend that enabling the acquisition of more human rights information from inside North Korea should be a major goal of the Government's work, and that efforts should focus in particular on securing access for the UN Special Rapporteur. We further recommend that the Government should seek to co-ordinate its work on North Korean human rights with that of the South Korean Government, as Seoul's new willingness to raise human rights issues with Pyongyang may come to represent an important strengthening of the international effort in this field. (Paragraph 175)**

We are grateful for the Committee's support for our attempts to raise human rights issues with the North Korean government. We will continue to do so at every opportunity. North Korea's record on human rights is simply not acceptable. One of our priorities is for North Korea to acknowledge the mandate of the Special Rapporteur, and allow him access to the country. The British Embassy in Pyongyang is already looking at ways of opening a dialogue which cannot be construed as confrontational by the North Koreans – perhaps through discussion of human rights issues that are less controversial to the North Korean authorities, such as children's rights and rights of the disabled. This could help to build a basis for wider discussion of human rights issues. We also hope that the UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review process, which will review North Korea's human rights record in December 2009, will be seen by North Korea as a neutral forum for discussion, because it is universal and it would be difficult to construe it as a specific attack on North Korea. Nevertheless, we will need to be absolutely clear with North Korea that there is widespread international concern, and that they are falling short of the international obligations to which they have signed up. Minister of State for Asia, Bill Rammell MP, raised our concerns with the North Korean Ambassador on 17 December 2008. We hope that North Korea will agree to set some human rights objectives that they subsequently act upon.

The British Ambassador in Seoul discussed North Korean human rights with the South Korean Government in November 2008, and the Embassy is also in regular contact with the National Assembly, National Human Rights Commission and NGOs. An Embassy official was one of the speakers at the National Human Rights Commission's conference on North Korean human rights in Seoul in October 2008. We helped to secure South Korean support for the 2008 North Korea human rights resolution in the UN General Assembly. In contrast to 2007 when they abstained, in 2008 they not only supported, but also co-sponsored, the resolution. We also welcomed the creation of a North Korea Committee by the National Human Rights Commission in October 2008. The situation in North Korea, including human rights, is also discussed when UK and South Korean senior officials and Ministers meet.

16. **Given the failure of UN mechanisms so far to achieve any significant improvement in North Korea's human rights practice, we conclude that the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) which North Korea is to undergo at the UN Human Rights Council in December 2009 offers a major opportunity to advance the international effort to secure improvements in North Korean human rights, as well as to establish the credibility of the UPR process. We recommend that the Government should engage actively with Pyongyang and with international official and non-governmental partners to ensure that the potential of North Korea's UPR process is realised to the maximum extent possible. (Paragraph 178)**

The Government agrees with the Committee that the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process provides a good opportunity to engage with North Korea. We hope to take full advantage of the neutral ground which the UPR process offers.

Minister of State for Asia, Bill Rammell MP, raised the UPR with the North Korean Ambassador on 17 December in an effort to persuade North Korea to be open for discussion of the process. We have reminded them that the UK went through this process in 2008, and we will intensify these efforts as the year goes on. North Korea engaged enthusiastically with the UPR's of Japan and South Korea, taking the opportunity to raise some historical issues as well as general human rights concerns in both cases. However, we are concerned that they may well not engage with their own review so proactively. We should not expect the UPR to deliver a breakthrough. The process relies on North Korea consenting to follow up action. The value, therefore, is in the recommendations they accept – and the subsequent follow-up.

17. **We conclude that North Korea's longstanding food shortage is an avoidable human tragedy and a matter of the gravest concern. Provided that conditions are felt to be in place that ensure the receipt of aid by the most needy, we recommend that the international community should do everything possible to respond to the food shortage. We conclude that the recent resumption of US food aid and expansion of World Food Programme access and monitoring in North Korea are to be welcomed. We recommend that the Government should point to the ongoing food crisis when discussing with North Korean interlocutors the possible advantages of further economic modernisation and international opening. (Paragraph 190)**

The Government shares the Committee's concern over the continuing food shortages in North Korea. Owing to good weather and a reasonable harvest in 2008, the situation has not yet reached outright famine, as predicted by some experts earlier that year. The Government's view is that the World Food Programme has had the best access to the widest area, and is therefore best placed to produce a scientific assessment of the situation. There is evidence that vulnerable groups in poorer areas are beginning to go hungry, and the Department for International Development is seriously considering making a modest contribution to the World Food Programme appeal.

The British Embassy in Pyongyang is already seeking to engage with different parts of the North Korean system on the advantages of economic modernisation and international opening. Delegations from the Korean Chamber of Commerce and the Workers Party of Korea have been invited to visit the UK by the British Embassy in Pyongyang in early 2009 with a view to reinforcing these points. In those visits we hope to offer opportunities to exchange views on modern, sustainable agricultural methods.

18. **We conclude that China is in breach of its obligations under the 1951 Refugee Convention as regards its treatment of North Korean emigrants – specifically, its failure to allow them access to a determination-of-status process, and its practice of repatriation without ensuring that deportees will not be subject to persecution, torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading**

treatment or punishment in North Korea. We further conclude that China's practice as regards North Korean emigrants places them in a distressing and dangerous situation. Especially given its view that North Koreans in China include people who are not economic migrants, we recommend that the Government should press harder on the issue of Beijing's treatment of North Korean emigrants, in its bilateral dealings with China, at EU level, and at the UNHCR. We recommend that in this effort the Government should prioritise the aims of: halting forced deportations from China to North Korea; securing access to the Chinese/North Korean border region for the UNHCR; and seeing the development in China of a legal regime allowing the regularisation of the status of North Koreans there, and above all of children with a North Korean parent. We recommend that in its response to this Report, and again in its 2008 Human Rights Annual Report, the FCO should report on the progress being made towards these aims. We further recommend that the Government should ensure that the issue of Beijing's treatment of North Korean emigrants is raised effectively as part of China's Universal Periodic Review process at the UN Human Rights Council in 2009. (Paragraph 209)

The Government continues to press the Chinese authorities to change their treatment of North Korean refugees, and for the UNHCR to have access to the border region. We raised this with the Chinese at the UK-China human rights dialogue in January 2008 and at the most recent round of the dialogue in January 2009. We also supported the Slovenian Presidency in raising this issue at the EU-China human rights dialogue in May 2008. The Chinese continue to consider North Koreans who enter China illegally as economic migrants, and refuse to allow the UNHCR a formal role in offering them assistance. However, there are some small indications of progress. The Chinese now allow children with a Korean parent to be registered as Chinese residents. This allows them access to education and healthcare, although this can depend on the status of the Chinese parent and these children remain vulnerable. We will raise these issues again during China's Universal Periodic Review in February 2009. Our Embassy in Beijing is already in regular discussion with the UNHCR locally, and FCO staff in Geneva are discussing the situation on the ground and future options with UNHCR officials.

- 19. Given what appears to be rising interest in South Korea in pressing the issue of China's treatment of North Korean emigrants, and given South Korea's intimate connection with North Korea and its relationship with China, we recommend that the Government should consult on policy regarding North Koreans in China with the Government in Seoul. (Paragraph 210)**

The British Embassy in Seoul will continue to discuss the situation of North Koreans in China and other countries with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Embassy will also continue to discuss South Korean resettlement programmes for North Koreans with the Ministry of Unification, which runs the Hanawon Resettlement Centre just outside Seoul.

- 20. We conclude that the growing outflow of North Koreans from North Korea is creating an emigrant population in several parts of Asia whose human rights are systematically vulnerable. We recommend that the FCO should ensure that its Posts in relevant locations are aware of the issue and ready to assist both the individuals concerned and host Governments as needed. (Paragraph 214)**

Where we feel that North Korean refugees' human rights are vulnerable, we will ask our Posts to raise with their host government, as we continue to do with China. FCO consular resources are focussed on providing assistance to distressed British nationals. FCO Posts do have procedures for walk-in asylum requests. All claims are considered in line with UK Border Agency (UKBA) asylum policy, and decisions on granting asylum are ultimately made by the UKBA in London. Claims on political asylum are considered in line with the 1951 Refugee Convention and current UKBA asylum policy, and claims for temporary diplomatic asylum are considered in line with international law, the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and UKBA asylum policy.

- 21. We conclude that the absence of market reform in the official North Korean economy contributes to the international risks which the regime represents, by failing to generate incentives for improved relations with the West, and by fuelling the regime's need to generate income from sales of weapons and illegal goods in the absence of alternative exports. We further conclude that, although the forces working against economic reform in North Korea are powerful, the Government should not assume that there is no possibility at all of more meaningful reform under the present regime. We recommend that the Government should remain alert so as to identify and cultivate any elements in the regime which may be open to further economic reform. (Paragraph 228)**

The Government agrees that economic reform is one of the keys to bringing about positive change in North Korea, although North Korea has shown no enthusiasm for following the Chinese route to reform. Our Embassy in Pyongyang is working to build relevant contacts within the limits of what is possible in such a closed society. It will be important that any reforms are genuine, not merely superficial changes that benefit only the elite. We hope to include an economic policy element in any visits to the UK by North Koreans, particularly in the case of the Chamber of Commerce visit scheduled for early 2009.

- 22. Given North Korea's possession of WMD materials, we conclude that the degree of uncertainty surrounding possible future political developments in the country is worrying. We conclude that, given the lessening in the regime's social control since North Korea's last leadership succession, and the apparently enhanced likelihood that Kim Jong-il is suffering from health problems, the international community should have a set of co-ordinated plans in place for sudden change in the situation in North Korea. We further**

conclude that, although the parties to the Six-Party Talks would be the lead states in any international response, the UK and the EU would be likely to be called upon to assist and would have an interest in doing so. We appreciate that there are reasons why it may be sensible not to discuss plans in public, but we recommend that in its response to this Report, the Government should provide assurance that such planning is being undertaken. (Paragraph 234)

We agree that there is much uncertainty over future political developments in North Korea. Sudden change is possible, including scenarios in which the UK and EU might be asked to contribute at short notice to the international response to a humanitarian crisis. But there is no consensus among analysts on how likely this is, what the triggers might be, or what change might look like. This makes it difficult for the international community to plan a response with confidence, although we expect most of the key regional powers to have engaged in some form of contingency planning. Our own planning is informed by monitoring and analysis of internal developments in North Korea through our Embassy in Pyongyang, and contacts with other countries which have a close interest in developments. As in other FCO Posts, contingency plans exist in case it should ever become necessary to evacuate British nationals and Embassy staff from North Korea.

- 23. We conclude that a breakdown in relations between North and South Korea would bring to an end opportunities for valuable human contacts, and increase insecurity on the Korean peninsula. We further conclude that it is legitimate for South Korea to attach conditions to its co-operation with the North. We recommend that the Government should continue to support North-South engagement. (Paragraph 250)**

The UK supports North-South Korean engagement to reduce tensions and insecurity on the Korean Peninsula. This is a message that British Ambassadors in both Seoul and Pyongyang continue to stress with their host governments. However we do not see engagement as an end in itself. We respect South Korea's decision to attach conditions to economic assistance to the North although we do not think preconditions should be set for humanitarian assistance, other than those relating to fair distribution and monitoring. We regret North Korean moves in December 2008 to close transport links to the Kaesong Industrial Complex and to expel 70% of the South Korean staff from the site.

- 24. We conclude that the current arrangements for the Kaesong Industrial Complex (KIC) – which allow South Korean firms to escape the International Labour Organisation standards to which they are subject at home, while providing non-transparent transfers of hard currency to the North Korean regime – are far from ideal. However, we also conclude that the contact between North and South Koreans, and exposure of North Koreans to South Korean business practices, which take place at the KIC are to be welcomed; and that the KIC offers much better pay and working conditions than are available elsewhere in North Korea. We recommend that the Government should seek to use the**

leverage which is afforded by South Korea's wish to see the KIC included in the South Korea-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to encourage improvements in the position of workers at the KIC, within a context of what is realistically achievable, and without jeopardising either the FTA or the continued operation and expansion of the Complex. (Paragraph 268)

North-South relations have entered a difficult period and, on 1 December 2008, North Korea introduced a number of measures restricting crossings into the Kaesong Industrial Complex (KIC) and Mount Kumgang Special Tourism Zone. Measures were also taken to restrict the numbers of South Korean staff permitted to work in the KIC, which resulted in 70% of them returning to the South. The long-term viability of the KIC, and its ability to attract further investment in the future, is therefore in some doubt.

We share the Committee's concerns that the current working conditions in the KIC are far from ideal, although they are better than elsewhere in North Korea. We would like to see improvements in line with International Labour Organisation norms. The Government will press hard to ensure that the EU uses the leverage offered by the FTA negotiations to promote improvements in conditions for workers in Kaesong.

- 25. We conclude that, while the UK is not in the frontline of the international effort to secure North Korea's denuclearisation, it occupies a special position as a close US ally which has diplomatic relations with Pyongyang. Especially given the difficulties into which the denuclearisation process ran in August-September 2008, we recommend that the Government should ask both North Korea and the US whether, coming to the process as a fresh element, it could facilitate any meetings which would help to strengthen the process. (Paragraph 273)**

The Government has regularly stated its support for the Six Party Talks and that we would give serious consideration to any request from the Six Parties for assistance. We will continue to do so. However, we consider that the current structure of the Six Party Talks offers the best approach for now. We do not believe that there is a need at this stage for other states, including the UK, to seek to facilitate additional meetings.

- 26. We conclude that the Government is correct to make the aim of exposing North Korea's people to alternative ways of life its top policy goal with regard to engagement with that country. However, we also conclude that the restrictions on relations which the Government has introduced, to try to leverage progress on denuclearisation and human rights, may be undercutting this goal. We recommend that the Government should think more creatively about ways in which it might increase contacts with North Koreans without simply benefiting the regime's elite. We recommend that the FCO should discuss with interested higher education institutions possibilities for hosting North Korean students. (Paragraph 287)**

The British Embassy in Pyongyang already has a number of small projects in place outside the capital city, for example links with a collective farm and orphanage, which enable contacts with North Koreans who are not in the elite. We are looking at ways to expand this project activity into more provinces, within the limits of what the North Korean authorities and our own resources will permit. We have also proposed to the Ministry of Education that we would like to expand our English language teaching project beyond Pyongyang. The Embassy has also recently begun a dialogue with North Korean officials on the possibilities for student exchanges between the two countries. The small-scale visits to the UK by North Koreans from the Korean Workers Party and Chamber of Commerce are further examples of ways in which we are seeking to broaden our contacts with North Koreans, while still putting utmost priority on progress on denuclearisation and human rights.

27. We conclude that the work that the British Council is doing in North Korea is to be commended. We recommend that the British Council should expand its work there if possible. (Paragraph 288)

We welcome the Committee's positive comments about the British Council's English language teacher training activities in North Korea. The British Council aim to continue to support teacher training at the three prestigious universities with which they collaborate in North Korea: Kim Il Sung University, Pyongyang University of Foreign Studies and Kim Hyong Jik University. The programme is currently being expanded to cover the provision of 'Business English' lessons to the North Korea Chamber of Commerce. Work is also in train to assist the North Koreans to design a new English language teaching curriculum.

The British Council would be able to consider expansion of its work in North Korea, especially in provincial areas of the country, subject to an evaluation of the success of the project, and providing there were additional resources from other sources. The project is currently 60% funded by the FCO. The British Council are also exploring ways of co-ordinating with other Anglophone countries the setting up of English teaching projects in North Korea.

28. We conclude that the existence of a British Embassy in Pyongyang brings diplomatic benefits to the UK, in terms of both bilateral dealings with North Korea and the UK's position in regional and international North Korea policy, and we recommend that its staffing and resources should reflect its value. (Paragraph 290))

We believe that our staffing at the British Embassy in Pyongyang is currently at the right level, but will continue to review this as part of the FCO business planning process. The budget resources available to the Embassy have been increased in 2008/9 to fund a programme of Chevening Scholarships. The plan is to award two scholarships in 2009. The Embassy is continually seeking ways to expand its activities within the confines of the severe restrictions that it faces both in access to North Korean people and travel outside Pyongyang.

- 29. We conclude that the UK's participation in the UN Command Military Armistice Commission represents an important British commitment to peace and security on the Korean peninsula, and we recommend that it should be maintained. (Paragraph 296)**

The UK Government recognises UNCMAC's importance in maintaining stability on the Korean Peninsula, as witnessed by the UK's continuous commitment over the past 58 years. The UK plans to maintain its presence in UNCMAC, with representation from our Embassy in Seoul.

- 30. We conclude that although there had been some risk of a disjunction opening up between the evolution of the bilateral South Korean-US military relationship and the formal responsibilities of the wider UN Command for peace and security on the Korean peninsula, under UN Security Council Resolution 84 and the Armistice Agreement, the UN Commander and his team are making efforts to avoid this risk, and that this is to be welcomed. We recommend that the Government should participate actively in UN Command preparations for the transfer of operational wartime command to South Korea in 2012. (Paragraph 305)**

The UK Government will continue to participate actively in UN Command preparations for the transfer of operational wartime command to South Korea in 2012 through involvement at three levels: routine attendance by the British Ambassador at the monthly UN Command Ambassadors forum; maintenance of a permanent seat on the Military Armistice Commission through the offices of the Defence Attaché to Seoul; and by continued provision of a National Liaison Officer to UN Command, a post currently filled by the Political Counsellor at the Embassy in Seoul and augmented where necessary by the military Staff Assistant.

- 31. We conclude that the Government's continued willingness to send officers to serve in the UNCMAC Joint Duty Office and at the UNC Rear Headquarters in Japan is a welcome expression of the UK's commitment to the UN Command. We conclude that the agreement reached among the Command's participating states to ensure the continued provision of an international officer at Rear Headquarters is to be particularly commended. (Paragraph 306)**

We value the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between the UN Command and Japan, together with the role played by the international officer based at the UN Command's Rear Headquarters.

The UK agrees with the proposal for UN Command participating states to fill this post on an annual rotational basis in the future, in the interests of burden sharing. Under this arrangement, the UK is next scheduled to provide the international officer in 2015.

The UK has also, in the past, provided junior officers on an ad hoc basis to the UNCMAC Joint Duty Office. We remain willing to do so in principle. UK Armed Forces commitments elsewhere have meant, however, that there have been no officers available for this attachment since January 2008.

Japan and South Korea: International roles

- 32. We conclude that Japan has offered valuable support to the international community through its very generous funding of peacekeeping and reconstruction activities, not least in Iraq and Afghanistan. We further conclude that the Japanese Government has displayed political courage in deploying Japanese ground and air forces to Iraq, and Japanese naval forces to assist in refuelling coalition vessels conducting operations in the Indian Ocean, and that these deployments are to be welcomed. We recommend that the Government should continue to engage with Japan as a co-operative partner in promoting international security and the fight against terrorism, and to encourage Japan to expand its participation in UN peacekeeping and international military missions as far as permitted by its Constitution to do so. (Paragraph 326)**

Japan is a valued partner for the UK on international security. The UK Government welcomes Japan's commitment to international peacekeeping and reconstruction activities, including its significant contribution to the UN peacekeeping budget. We also recognise the political courage displayed by the Japanese Government in deploying the Self Defence Forces to Iraq and the Indian Ocean given the domestic political context.

Notwithstanding its constitution, there exists scope for Japan to play a greater role in international security. With its well-trained and well-equipped Self Defence Forces, Japan has real potential to make a significant contribution to international peace support operations and maritime security operations, which would be welcomed.

The Defence Section in the British Embassy in Tokyo has been active in sharing UK experience with the Japanese Ministry of Defence (JMOD) while they undergo a period of reform. The Ministry of Defence regularly discusses defence issues with JMOD such as joint operational planning, defence procurement reform, and the higher-level management of defence and operational doctrine. The UK and Japan also engage on defence and international security issues through annual Defence Policy and Staff Talks which were most recently held in the UK in November 2008.

- 33. We conclude that South Korea's growing willingness and ability to deploy its forces in international peacekeeping and peace support operations are to be welcomed. We further conclude that South Korea continues to make valuable contributions to the international efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq in which the UK is also engaged. We recommend that the Government should continue to encourage South Korea to participate more extensively in international peacekeeping and peace support operations and to enhance its capacities to do so. (Paragraph 333)**

South Korea is seeking ways to strengthen its participation in UN peacekeeping operations. They have dispatched a 350-strong contingent to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and are considering legislation to facilitate participation in peacekeeping operations.

South Korea is an active and important contributor to international peace support operations, with well equipped and capable Armed Forces. South Korea was the third largest contributor to the coalition effort in Iraq after the invasion, with 3,000 troops based around the town of Irbil in the Kurdish north. The mandate expired at the end of 2008, however, and these personnel have now been withdrawn. South Korea also contributed 200 troops in Afghanistan, as part of the Parwan Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), although the bulk of these were pulled out in December 2007. Thirty civilian personnel and five soldiers remain in a PRT at Bagram, including medical staff, government officials and vocational training experts. South Korea also intends to make its planned Rapid Reaction Force available for UN operations.

The UK continues to encourage South Korea to participate even more extensively in international efforts, including through bilateral defence engagements. In June 2008 the UK and South Korea jointly co-hosted a conference on United Nations peacekeeping operations in Seoul and we welcome South Korean participation in the November 2008 London G8++ Clearinghouse Conference.

34. We recommend that the Government should, with its EU partners, continue to work with Japan to develop a common approach on developing realistic proposals for a reduction in emissions and other measures to tackle climate change. (Paragraph 341)

As the largest single economy to have taken on mandatory commitments under the Kyoto Protocol, Japan is a crucial partner for UK and EU objectives on climate change. Japan also has a major role to play in influencing other countries in the region – notably China and South Korea – on the international climate agenda.

Japan's Presidency of the G8 helped to bring about a substantial shift in its domestic and international response to climate change in 2008. We welcome the ambition Japan has shown on its domestic goals, including a 60-80% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2050; and its commitment to international measures, such as a \$1.2 billion contribution to the World Bank Climate Investment Funds.

The British Embassy in Tokyo has been engaging intensively with Japanese officials and business on the merits of emissions trading. In 2008 the Embassy supported visits by emissions trading experts from Japan to the UK and vice versa. In September 2008 the Ministry of Environment signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) for further collaboration on carbon offset methodologies and practice. This work will continue with a visit by Department for Energy and Climate Change officials in January 2009, to introduce the Carbon Reduction Commitment to national and local government officials, parliamentarians and businesses.

The Low Carbon Society is another key theme of UK-Japan collaboration. The third and final Low Carbon Society Workshop took place in February 2008, led by researchers from DEFRA and Japan's National Institute for Environmental Science. The British Embassy in Tokyo is actively looking at how to make

progress on research on the kind of social changes necessary to move to a Low Carbon Society, and at how to deepen scientific collaboration on low carbon technologies, particularly carbon capture and storage and hydrogen fuel cells.

The British Embassy in Tokyo also launched two new projects in 2008 funded by the FCO's Strategic Programme Fund. The first is a partnership with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government to spread its ground-breaking low carbon policy frameworks to other local authorities in the greater Tokyo area. The second builds on the successful visit of the Prince of Wales' Corporate Leaders Group on Climate Change in October 2008, to develop a similar network of Japanese companies that desire a more ambitious policy framework.

- 35. We conclude that recent signs that South Korea is coming to see efforts to mitigate climate change as a potential source of growth, not an obstacle to it, are greatly to be welcomed. We recommend that the Government should continue to encourage South Korea to develop its efforts against climate change, focusing on the potential which the development of "green" technologies offers for the country to exploit its industrial and technological strengths to boost growth and reduce energy dependence, but still aiming to secure a concrete national emissions reduction commitment which would help towards the achievement of a global Kyoto successor agreement in 2009. We recommend that the Government should ensure that British companies are aware of opportunities for climate change-related projects which open up in South Korea. We further recommend that in its response to this Report, the Government should update us on progress regarding the implementation of the bilateral Memorandums of Understanding on climate change co-operation which were signed in May 2008. (Paragraph 351)**

The UK Government remains active in promoting a rapid transition to a low carbon, high growth economy in South Korea. In 2008, the Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn MP, Secretary of State for DEFRA, and officials from the Office for Climate Change Stern Team and from DEFRA visited South Korea to promote co-operation on climate change. In addition, officials from the South Korean Prime Minister's office and 20 influential opinion formers including a former Prime Minister have visited the UK to investigate UK approaches.

Climate change remains one of the top two priorities of the British Embassy in Seoul. The Embassy is the only diplomatic mission in South Korea with a dedicated climate change section. Its work has been instrumental in establishing the UK as the partner of choice for the South Korean Government on climate change and allows us to lobby and brief the key influencers in South Korea to a degree no other country can achieve. The UK has also mobilised EU missions in South Korea to be more active on climate change co-operation with South Korea.

Our engagement will increase over the coming year. FCO funded visits are already planned for early 2009 from the City of London and by the Bishop of Liverpool. The FCO also hopes to fund ambitious projects in South Korea through the Strategic Programme Fund.

As part of the implementation of the bilateral Memoranda of Understanding signed in May 2008, the UK has worked closely with the Ministry of Environment on a research project into the economic impacts of climate change on South Korea. We are encouraging the South Korean Ministry of Knowledge Economy, which represents business and industry interests, to make early proposals for areas of co-operation. We are particularly interested in working together on carbon registry and/or emission trading schemes in 2009.

For the financial year 2008-09, environment was also a UK Trade & Investment 'opportunity' sector. A strong case has been made to maintain this for the next financial year, meaning that UK Trade & Investment's Sector Group will develop proactive work which will include climate change elements. In addition, officials are building closer links with the relevant governmental organisations to ensure that specific business opportunities are communicated to British companies.

36. We conclude that Japan continues to play a positive role with regard to development issues. We recommend that the Government should continue to work with Japan in the G8 and other forums to press for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. (Paragraph 357)

The FCO and DFID both engaged extensively with Japan on development issues during 2007 and 2008, in the run-up to and during Japan's G8 Presidency. Japanese policymakers at all levels saw DFID as key collaborators and experts to turn to for views on development policy. This co-operation paid off: Japan committed to double official development assistance to Africa (excluding debt relief) by 2012 at the fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) in May 2008. This set the scene for progress on health, food security and climate change at the G8 Hokkaido Summit in July 2008.

Although the intense period of co-operation related to Japan's G8 Presidency has now eased, the bilateral relationship on development remains important to the UK Government. The Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) was relaunched on 1 October 2008 with control over funds previously held by the Japan Bank for International Co-operation and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It has been billed as the world's biggest bilateral aid agency in terms of budget. DFID is currently considering revisiting previous discussions on a Memorandum of Understanding with Japan in order to deepen collaboration with the new JICA.

Much work needs to be done to turn commitments, initiatives and partnerships announced at the MDG's High Level Event in New York in September 2008 into results. In the medium-term, there is clear support for a formal Millennium Development Goals review summit in 2010 – although less clarity on what it might achieve. Improving accountability for commitments made is critical. Japan will be central to delivering these commitments.

- 37. We conclude that, from a low base, South Korea's growing willingness and capacity to contribute to overseas development assistance are to be welcomed. We further conclude that the Government is correct to encourage and co-operate with South Korea in this area and recommend that it should continue to do so, as an opportunity to shape the development practice of a potentially important donor. (Paragraph 360)**

The UK welcomes South Korea's commitment to increase overseas development assistance. We particularly welcome South Korea's assistance to Africa, which has increased three-fold in the last three years. We hope that South Korea will be able to triple its overseas development assistance to 0.25% of Gross National Income by 2015. South Korea's intention to join the OECD Development Assistance Committee in 2010 is also a positive step. The UK has actively supported South Korea's bid to join MOPAN (the UN's Multilateral Organizations Performance Assessment Network). The Government will continue to work closely with the South Korean government on development issues.

- 38. We conclude that, although the process of United Nations reform is currently stalled, the Government is right in principle to support Japan's case for a permanent seat on the Security Council, on grounds of Japan's economic strength, size of population, commitment to democracy, and ability to make continuing contributions to the finances and work of the United Nations. (Paragraph 364)**

The Government's support for Japan's permanent membership of the UNSC is of long standing. We hope that Japan, along with Germany, Brazil and India, can work creatively to help broker an intermediate solution, given that permanent reform currently seems out of reach. The President of the UN General Assembly has set a deadline of February 2009 to mark the resumption of intergovernmental negotiations.

- 39. We conclude that South Korea's support for the UN and for UN reform is to be welcomed. We recommend that the Government should continue to encourage South Korea to enhance its tangible commitment to the UN. We further recommend that the Government should seek to engage South Korea fully with the UK's ideas for UN reform. (Paragraph 368)**

Already a constructive supporter of UN reform, South Korea is keen to play a more significant international role commensurate with its position as the world's 13th largest economy. An early signatory to the Millennium Development Goals Call to Action in July 2008, it has also committed itself to increasing Overseas Development Aid and support for peacekeeping operations. South Korea was admitted to the Geneva Group in 2006 in recognition of its financial contribution and its reform credentials.

South Korea shares the UK's objectives of seeking to reform the UN to enable it to operate more efficiently, effectively and responsively. It wishes to see a more representative Security Council. It has also supported the initiatives taken by

the Secretary-General to make the Secretariat more accountable, efficient, and responsive. On the issue of reforming global financial institutions, there has been close co-ordination between the UK and South Korea over preparations for the London Summit in April 2009, not least as South Korea will be President of the G20 in 2010.

- 40. We conclude that support for whaling is culturally entrenched in Japan, and that this state of affairs is unlikely to alter in the short term. We further conclude that, notwithstanding this, the Government is right to lobby its Japanese counterparts vigorously on this issue, and to pursue all means at its disposal of dissuading the international community from turning back the clock in relation to the protection of whales. (Paragraph 375)**

Although the UK and Japan have strong ties and can agree on many issues of environmental policy, whaling is a cause for sharp division. It will continue to be a source of disagreement as long as Japan insists on its right under the Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, to carry out large scale ‘scientific’ whaling.

We agree with the Committee that support for whaling is culturally entrenched in Japan, but believe it is important for the UK, and our like-minded partners, to keep up the pressure. The UK Government opposes all forms of whaling, apart from some limited subsistence whaling, and will continue to raise the issue with Japan.

In previous years, the UK has participated in or led high-level diplomatic representations to Japan when the Japanese whaling fleet set sail. In December 2007, the British Ambassador to Japan took part in a demarche with 30 countries plus the European Commission to the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs to protest against Japan’s programme of lethal special permit, so-called “scientific” whaling. In January 2008, then Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Fisheries Minister Jonathan Shaw MP called a meeting with the Deputy Head of Mission at the Japanese Embassy in London to express the UK’s disappointment and concern over Japan’s plans to kill threatened humpback and fin whales during the Antarctic summer. Also in January 2008, FCO Minister of State for Asia, the Rt.Hon Lord Malloch-Brown, met Japan’s Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura in Tokyo to discuss Japan’s whaling programme. In the meeting Lord Malloch-Brown reiterated the UK’s strong opposition to Japan’s ‘scientific’ whaling programme.

In response to the 2008-09 whaling season, DEFRA issued a statement condemning Japan’s plans to kill 50 fin whales and 935 minke whales.

Human rights in Japan and South Korea

- 41. We conclude that, although there is undoubtedly a high level of public support for the death penalty in Japan, the moratorium on its use in 2005-06, under Justice Minister Sugiura, demonstrates that the Japanese Government is not necessarily immovable on this subject. We recommend that the Government should continue to convey its views on the death penalty to Japan, both**

directly and through EU channels; and that it should encourage the Japanese Government, if it remains committed to the death penalty, to reform the system so as to eliminate the unnecessary secrecy and arbitrary delay to which attention has been drawn by the UN Committee against Torture. (Paragraph 387)

The UK is opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances. We are concerned by the increasing use of the death penalty in Japan and urge the Japanese Government to apply an immediate moratorium on executions, with a view to abolition, as stated in Resolution 62/149 of the UN General Assembly in 2007 and reaffirmed by the UN General Assembly in December 2008. The EU makes regular representations to Japan on the death penalty. Most recently, the EU Presidency issued a statement urging Japan to re-establish the moratorium on executions with a view to abolition following the executions of two prisoners in October 2008. The UK continues to raise the issue in Japan bilaterally, for example when the Ambassador or officials call on MPs (both opposition and ruling parties) and with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Justice. We also raised the issue as part of the UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review of Japan.

The impending introduction of a “lay judge” system in Japan on 21 May 2009 is increasing debate within Japan on use of the death penalty. The creation of a Parliamentary Group looking at the introduction of a real life sentence (i.e. no release) is an important development. Many claim to support the death penalty because the other options are seen to be inadequate punishment for serious crimes.

The UK will continue to work, particularly through the EU, to lobby both against the death penalty and for an improvement in the conditions under which it is currently conducted in Japan.

- 42. We conclude that South Korea’s 10-year record as a non-user of the death penalty is to be welcomed. While we recognise that the issue is subject to considerable domestic debate in South Korea, we recommend that the British Government should continue to encourage the new Administration and National Assembly in Seoul to move to formal abolition, as one of the priorities in the Government’s human rights work with South Korea. We further recommend that in its response to this Report the Government should update us on prospects for passage of abolitionist legislation in the new National Assembly. (Paragraph 395)**

The British Embassy in Seoul continues to hold regular discussions with the Administration, National Assembly, National Human Rights Commission of Korea and civil society on steps toward formal abolition of the death penalty. To mark World Death Penalty Day on 10 October 2008, the Ambassador spoke at a pro-abolition event at the National Assembly, and to mark the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the Embassy hosted a visit to Seoul by capital punishment expert Dr Peter Hodgkinson from 8 – 10 December 2008.

The change in administration has strengthened support for the death penalty within the South Korean Government, and it is therefore a challenging time for the abolition movement in South Korea. However, we are encouraged by the introduction of a draft private member's bill by Representative Park Sun-young into the National Assembly in September 2008 and moves by Representative Kim Boo-kyum to draft further legislation. There is cross-party support for abolition together with a penal policy that addresses sentencing for the most horrific crimes. Following up from Dr Hodgkinson's visit, the British Embassy in Seoul is currently discussing ways of re-invigorating the debate about the death penalty with the South Korean abolition movement and European colleagues.

- 43. We conclude that there is compelling evidence that the 'substitute prison' or daiyo kangoku system in Japan involves significant breaches of the rights of suspects, and is likely to lead to miscarriages of justice. We further conclude that the reforms to the system introduced in 2006 are to be welcomed, but that there remains cause for concern. We recommend that the Government should continue to press Japan to modify the daiyo kangoku system to ensure that detention procedures are consistent with its obligations under human rights law, and in particular to ensure that interrogations are subject to some degree of external monitoring in order to prevent abuses. (Paragraph 402)**

We are concerned by the Japanese use of the Daiyo Kangoku substitute detention system and urge Japan to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture as soon as possible. We raised our concerns in May 2008 about the treatment of detainees as part of the UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review of Japan. We recommended that the Japanese government review the Daiyo Kangoku system in order to ensure Japan's detention procedure is consistent with its obligations under human rights law. We also urged Japan to implement recommendations by the Committee Against Torture with regard to external monitoring of police custody.

We welcome the introduction of recent laws in Japan that increase human rights protection, such as the 2006 Prison Law. We are keen to ensure that British Nationals incarcerated are treated in line with international minimum standards and raise our concerns with Japanese authorities where appropriate.

- 44. We conclude that South Korea has recorded major improvement in its human rights observance since the advent of democracy two decades ago. We welcome this. We further conclude that despite these significant improvements, several human rights concerns remain, such as the policing of demonstrations, the scope of free speech on the internet and the rights of migrant workers. However, we recognise that these issues also pose challenges to many other open societies, including the UK. We recommend that, in a spirit of partnership, the Government should continue to encourage South Korea to address human rights concerns and to ensure that human rights are safeguarded in new legislation and its implementation, prioritising the**

rights of migrant workers, the development of alternatives to military service, and reform of the National Security Law. We further recommend that the Government should update us on the steps which it is taking in these areas in its response to this Report. (Paragraph 408)

The impressive changes in South Korea's human rights record over the last two decades have made it a role model in Asia. The Government welcomes the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission of Korea (NHRCK) in 2001 and continues to support its work. We also welcome South Korea's partnership in the UN Human Rights Council and its willingness to put forward its own record for scrutiny at the Universal Periodic Review in 2008. Through the British Embassy in Seoul we have ongoing regular dialogue with the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the NHRCK on human rights issues. We continue to raise issues of concern including with regard to migrant workers, conscientious objectors and the National Security Law, which we also raised at the Universal Periodic Review. Working with the NHRCK in 2006, we supported a series of workshops on multiculturalism and human rights in education. We continue to engage with NGOs and civil society groups and closely watch issues of contemporary concern, including reports about the Korean Defence Ministry deciding not to introduce alternative service for conscientious objectors and about the future of the Human Rights Commission.

The UK and Japan and South Korea

- 45. We conclude that the UK's trading relationship with Japan is of great importance to both countries. We recommend that the Government should continue actively to encourage British companies to seize the long-term gains that the huge Japanese market offers, despite the initial difficulties of penetrating that market. We further conclude that the FCO is to be commended for its pro-active approach in encouraging Japanese inward investment in the UK, and in particular for its recent successful intervention to ensure that the implementation of the points-based visa system did not act as a disincentive to Japanese investors. (Paragraph 417)**

The Government welcomes this recommendation, and fully agrees with the committee on the importance to the UK of the Japanese economy and Japanese business. In terms of helping British business in Japan, UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) focuses on the areas of greatest potential for business, including specialist engineering, ICT, life sciences, creative, financial and other services, and defence sales. UKTI continues to offer its research, introduction, marketing and promotional services to any UK business with an interest in the Japanese market.

In terms of inward investment, UKTI, together with the devolved administrations and regional development agencies, continues to market the UK as a springboard for Japanese corporate growth, as well as a centre for science and innovation research and development, in Europe and the world. UKTI is assiduous in providing investor aftercare to those 1,500 Japanese companies which already

have operations in the UK. The FCO, UKTI, the Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Department and the Science and Innovation Unit based in DIUS will continue to work closely with the Borders Agency to ensure that any new regulations or methods of working in the field of visas and entry clearance do not inhibit Japanese investment into the UK.

- 46. We conclude that the South Korea-EU Free Trade Agreement which is currently under negotiation is a potentially effective means of securing further opening of the South Korean economy and improved access for UK firms, and that its early and successful finalisation would be of great benefit to the UK and South Korea. We further conclude that the FCO is correct to identify the services sector as a key target for further liberalisation under the planned agreement. We recommend that in its response to this Report, the FCO update us on progress in the negotiations, especially as regards access to South Korea's services markets. (Paragraph 425)**

Negotiations on the EU – South Korea Free Trade Agreement have progressed well since the seventh negotiating round in May 2008, although there remain a number of points to be resolved. Both sides are optimistic that negotiations will conclude in early 2009. For the UK, liberalisation in the services sector remains a key priority. We continue to aim to achieve an ambitious and comprehensive agreement which delivers clear benefits to both the EU and South Korea.

- 47. We conclude that the economic, commercial and research ties which have developed between South Korea and the UK are to be welcomed, and that the work in this respect of UKTI, the Seoul Embassy and other relevant bodies is to be commended. We further conclude that, given South Korea's level of development and rate of growth, and the existence of generally positive sentiment towards UK partners, there is considerable potential for the further development of such links. In this context, we conclude that the lack of UK Ministerial representation at President Lee's inauguration was regrettable. While we welcome the recent Ministerial and other visits to Seoul from the UK that have taken place and are planned, we conclude that a visit by an FCO Minister, and the Foreign Secretary in particular, with a significant economic component to the trip, would be appropriate, in South Korea's 60th anniversary year, and as the South Korea-EU Free Trade Agreement is being negotiated. We recommend that the FCO should take every opportunity with its South Korean partners to identify an early opportunity for such a visit. We further conclude that the FCO and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform should increase the ability of our Embassy to support British business opportunities in South Korea. (Paragraph 430)**

Trade and investment is a priority for the British Embassy in Seoul. UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) has identified South Korea as one of only seventeen high growth markets to which more focus should be given to encourage greater bilateral business. In 2009, South Korea will feature in a number of awareness raising

events in the UK which form part of UKTI's high growth markets programme. A conclusion to the Free Trade Agreement in 2009 would act as a further catalyst to stimulate more UK businesses to look at the Korean market.

As the Committee notes, Ministerial visits also play an important role in building stronger business relationships. High-level visits to South Korea in 2008 included a visit by HRH The Duke of York in his role as Special Representative for UK Trade and Investment. The Rt. Hon Hilary Benn MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and the Rt. Hon Stephen Timms MP, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, also made successful visits to South Korea in 2008.

Planning is underway for a number of Ministerial visits in 2009 including a possible visit by FCO Minister of State for Asia, Bill Rammell MP, in March. This will build on the useful talks that the Minister had with his South Korean counterpart, Vice-Minister Kwon, in November 2008. We also hope that Ministers from the Department for Business, Enterprise, and Regulatory Reform and the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport, and the Lord Mayor of London will visit in 2009.

The Foreign Secretary is not currently scheduled to visit South Korea in 2009. However he had a useful meeting with South Korean Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan at ASEM in October 2008, at which the EU Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was discussed. He also discussed the FTA when he met the UK-Korea Forum for the Future in June 2008. The FCO will use all international fora in 2009 to further develop the dialogue between the UK and South Korea on trade and investment issues.

- 48. Given the economic and strategic importance which the Government attributes to East Asia, and noting the Minister's acknowledgement of the value of university-level specialist regional capabilities, we conclude that the Government should take steps to avert any risk of East Asian studies in the UK again facing a crisis. As the initial Government core funding for the White Rose East Asia Centre is due to expire in 2011, we recommend that the Government should start now to consult with relevant partners in the university and private sectors with a view to developing follow-on core funding that will allow, as a minimum, the maintenance of UK university-level research and teaching on East Asia at its current level. We further recommend that the Government should ensure that public support for the development of regional language and other skills does not focus unduly on China but gives due weight to Japan and Korea, as important economies and cultures in their own right and vital components of China's regional environment. (Paragraph 437)**

The Government supports the work that the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has been doing to sustain strategically important and vulnerable subjects such as languages and language-based area studies.

Funding of £25 million to 2011 has been provided by HEFCE, the funding councils for the Devolved Administrations and through the Research Councils for five centres, of which the White Rose East Asia Centre (WREAC) is one, to support research, and to foster expertise and knowledge of particular regions of the world. One project which exemplifies what is needed is the WREAC programme “MA Advanced Japanese Studies (research methods)” which combines training in post-graduate research methods with the social science based study of modern Japan, enhanced by Japanese language modules aimed at providing the skills researchers require to study Japan through the medium of its own language.

In addition HEFCE and the Department for Children, Schools and Families have provided funding of £8 million to 2011 for the “Routes into Languages” programme to promote languages and their take up through regional consortia of schools and universities; for three language research projects; and for national networks in interpreting and translation.

A key component in considering bids for the centres, and Routes into Languages was that those successful should build sustainability into their bid. We expect this to reduce the need for future funding, which will depend on the next spending review, and will rely on evidence demonstrating the continuing vulnerability and importance of these subjects.

There is no sign that the study of Chinese is being promoted to the detriment of Japanese. The number of universities offering courses in Japanese has remained fairly constant over the last 5 years at around 30, whilst numbers studying the language have grown. Overall student demand for Japanese (at all levels and all modes of study) grew from 1425 to 1720 between 2002/03 and 2006/07 (an increase of over 20%). Similarly, for Asian and South Asian studies there was student growth of 16% from 535 to 620 students. Data on numbers studying Korean is included within the South Asian studies and other Asian studies disciplines, and cannot be separately identified.

In the latest Language Trends survey, at secondary school level some 7% of state maintained schools offer Japanese language tuition: 2% at KS3, 3% at KS4, 4% at KS5 and 4% outside the timetabled curriculum. For independent schools the figure rises to 20%. The number of schools responding to the survey was 659 state, and 196 independent schools. Demand for Japanese at GCSE level has grown from 278 pupils in 1997 to 874 in 2007. Figures are not available for Korean.

The Government welcomes the £2.5 million that the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation committed for the development of Japanese studies in October 2007 and the US\$640,000 that the Korea Foundation has provided this year for Korean studies at Cambridge.

- 49. We conclude that the FCO’s practice of ensuring that the UK sends Ambassadors to Japan and Korea who speak the language of their host state is to the UK’s diplomatic advantage. We recommend that the FCO should continue this practice. (Paragraph 440)**

Knowledge of languages, particularly less widely-spoken languages like Japanese and Korean, continues to be a core skill for FCO staff, and has been acknowledged as such by the FCO's Permanent Under Secretary. The FCO's People Strategy (2007-2011) recognises the ability to speak foreign languages as being part of what makes the FCO so valuable to the rest of government. The strategy commits to look at ways to help more Heads of Mission acquire high level skills in the local language and more staff acquire operational ability. There are no plans to change the overall policy of sending staff, particularly senior staff, to Post with the ability to speak the local language.

- 50. We recommend that in its reply to this Report, the Government should set out its assessment of the scope for expanding the British Council's role as a provider of English-language teaching in Japan, to cater for the large market of young people seeking English-language skills. We further recommend that the Government should continue to make efforts in its cultural promotion work in Japan to emphasise the UK as a modern, creative, technologically advanced country, and that it should, where appropriate, utilise the UK's status as Olympic host nation in 2012 as way of highlighting this. We conclude that the British Council in Japan is to be commended for its emphasis on working with young people to deal with the challenges of climate change. (Paragraph 445)**

The British Council highlight a number of challenges in making significant progress in improving the quality of English in Japan. The first is the relatively low priority the Japanese government attaches to English language teaching and Japan's difficult budgetary situation. The second is the lack of native English speakers living in Japan, which makes a large-scale improvement in the teaching of spoken English in particular a daunting prospect for the Japanese government. The low quality of some exams is also a problem in Japan, where there is a strong focus on learning English primarily to maximise exam scores. There are also budgetary constraints, with the declining value of sterling against the yen combined with pressure on the British Council's grant and Education partnership funding.

Notwithstanding the above, the British Council is doing its best to expand its work in what is currently a contracting market. They are experimenting with new models aimed at taking high-quality English teaching to wider audiences, for instance through partnership arrangements with commercial and educational organisations, and are engaging with the relevant Japanese authorities in this area. The British Council's activities through Education UK are also helping to improve the standard of English in Japan, with around 100,000 Japanese students a year taking courses in the UK, of which the overwhelming majority are English courses. The British Council are also participating in a not for profit organisation, newly formed under the auspices of the Japanese Ministry of Education, to improve the quality of exams and are achieving a steady expansion in the market share of the International English Testing System (IELTS).

We welcome the Committee's recommendation relating to the Government's cultural promotion work in Japan. The British Council aims to support cultural interactions of all kinds between the UK and Japan and will continue to focus in particular on promoting work which challenges Japan's deep-rooted stereotypes of the UK, particularly among young people. The British Council hopes to be able to use the Olympics as one strand of this work, noting that there is particular interest in the UK's experience, given that Tokyo is one of the candidate cities for the summer Olympics in 2016.

We are grateful for the Committee's support of the British Council's emphasis on working with young people on climate change. The British Council intend to expand their work in Japan in this area. Japan is a key player on the climate agenda, and we believe young people in Japan can be engaged to urge action on the issue both from their government and from their local communities.

- 51. We conclude that the British Council is correct to identify the potential for increase in the take-up of UK education services among South Koreans, especially in light of the Lee Administration's push to enhance English language provision in South Korea's state schools. We recommend that the British Council should continue to pursue these opportunities, while ensuring that UK universities are aware of the need to demonstrate the value of UK study in a tough South Korean market. We further recommend that, inasmuch as resources allow, the British Council should seek to increase its British cultural promotion work in South Korea, since the existence of a modern and dynamic cultural profile will contribute to the attractiveness of the UK educational offer. Given South Korea's history as an Olympic host nation and its strong showing at the 2008 Games, we recommend that the British Council should consider capitalising on the approach of the 2012 London Games as a means of giving focus to this objective. (Paragraph 455)**

We welcome the Committee's support for the British Council's education work in South Korea. The British Council's education team is working to develop a more comprehensive and sustainable strategy for promoting UK education services in South Korea, and is also embarking on an ambitious programme to increase the scale and impact of its work in English language education. They have developed a policy dialogue on English language with central and local government, and are actively engaging with local education authorities to expand their support for training school teachers of English. They are also working with the Ministry of Education to establish their online English education materials as the preferred option for teachers looking for new ideas in teaching.

The numbers of South Korean students in the UK is continuing to rise, although there may be a difficult time ahead if the overseas education market contracts with the economic difficulties, which are acute in South Korea. The British Council's strategy is to work with UK institutions of higher and vocational education to build sustainable partnerships with South Korean counterparts, which will lead to

a higher profile for UK education in a market dominated by the USA. We believe that this strategy will in turn lead to higher take up of UK education services by South Korean academic staff as well as students, both increasing South Korean student numbers in the UK and the quantity and quality of working partnerships in education and research.

The British Council in South Korea's work in the creative sectors focuses on building effective partnerships with city authorities, which increasingly understand the importance of creative activity in maintaining and increasing their competitiveness. Seoul has been nominated World Design Capital in 2010, and is actively preparing with a range of events on urban planning, architecture and design; the British Council worked with them on the Seoul Design Olympiad in 2008, bringing young UK professionals to share ideas on sustainable design, and will follow up this work in the coming years. The British Council's regional Creative Cities project focuses on developing joint work on the role of the creative arts in enhancing the contemporary city, and South Korea will play an active part in supporting this project. The major cities of South Korea have a lively arts scene, with the British Council supporting and assisting local promoters to ensure that UK arts secure a strong share of the market for visual and performing arts events.

The British Council is committed to working with the London Olympics organising authorities to ensure that the Olympics features strongly in their cultural relations work in South Korea before, during and following the London Olympics in 2012.

52. We recommend that BBC World television should continue to seek opportunities to increase its distribution in South Korea. (Paragraph 457)

BBC World television became BBC World News in April 2008. BBC World News is funded by BBC Worldwide, the commercial arm of the BBC. Consequently the FCO has limited influence over its work. However BBC World News has confirmed to us that they continue to seek opportunities to increase distribution in South Korea.



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