

UPF UK: We Did Brexit, Now What? - International Media Association for Peace

Robin Marsh
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Humphrey Hawksley: Former BBC foreign correspondent, author and commentator.

Universal Peace Federation (UPF) – UK held an International Media Association for Peace (IMAP) - UK event entitled, 'Ok, We Have Done Brexit, Now What?' on 25th January, 2021.

The online event featured eminent commentators and journalists who were mostly from the remain perspective of the Brexit debate before but now, resigned to the decision, are analysing the policies the UK is taking since leaving the EU. In conclusion, Peter Zoehrer as the European Coordinator of IMAP, explained its vision. ([Whole Video](#))

Moderator: Rita Payne, Journalist, Moderator and Media Consultant, President Emeritus, Commonwealth Journalists Association. Adviser and Asian Affairs magazine.

Humphrey Hawksley, former BBC foreign correspondent, author and commentator, reflected on the UK Government's Indo-Pacific tilt in foreign policy. He had found a number of foreign diplomats and commentators who saw a lack of depth behind slogans introducing the policy. He encouraged the Foreign Office in particular to steer clear of colonialist attitudes that maybe consciously or unconsciously lingering.

Lord Meghnad Desai, British economist and former Labour politician, views the UK as a wealthy nation with a largely service economy and a small manufacturing base. The UK has a strong knowledge base with higher education, pharmaceuticals, medicine and financial technology.

Lord Desai believes the UK should be a large Scandinavian style country that is technologically advanced, has good human rights and no ambitions to run the world. What we have found in the Covid-19 crisis is that 40% of the population are living dreadful lives. There should not be food banks in a country that is so wealthy. Children should not need to have free meals in the holidays. The UK should improve their people's lives and stop having delusions, about being a great power.

Lord Desai thinks that the Commonwealth is not going to be so UK-centric in future especially without the authority of Queen Elizabeth II who was there from its beginning. If that is not acknowledged by the UK, he believes it will collapse. India is very aware that it is the largest nation in the Commonwealth and

would look for a greater leadership role.

James Willson is the Publisher of European Union Political Report and Board Director of the Brussels Press Club. He is also a Scot, married to a German and living in Belgium, whose loyalties lie with the UK.

Referring to the title 'Ok, We've done Brexit, What Now?' he said, "Unfortunately, it's not over. We have agreed in fact, with this trade and cooperation agreement between the UK and the EU terms for roughly 20% of the UK's trade with the EU. There's a further 80% that still needs to be sorted out over the years ahead. So I'm afraid it's a process that is only just beginning. It's not finished, and as Switzerland has found out these talks, go on forever.'

He considered the greatest challenge facing the UK to be 'that there has been no vision whatsoever from the political leadership, about what we are intending to do, now that we have taken control, and have won back sovereignty.' Like Lord Desai, he would like to see the UK not delude itself that it is a world power but stand for principles of democracy and the rule of law, for example.

He has found that 'there are many examples of excellence in the Commonwealth, which can be brought forward, to ensure that leadership in the Commonwealth is taken by other countries.' At a recent conference on the freedom of journalists in the Commonwealth, the UK was not in the top five. Jamaica was the top and New Zealand was very close. The UK should be more humble and allow the excellence of others to emerge. Then the Commonwealth will flourish.

He would like to see the UK focus on education in which we have been world class. If we focus on engineering and science that supported the UK's development in the 18th and the 19th centuries we will do well in the 21st century as well.

[Peter Zoehrer, the International Media Association for Peace \(IMAP\) Coordinator for Europe and the Middle East](#), presented the vision of IMAP. It is one of six associations within Universal Peace Federation. IMAP seeks to promote a debate on the significance and responsibility of media. Highlighting that media, through reporting the truth, should be a conscience of society that is both free, protected and self-governing. He concluded stating, 'We believe that when media properly exercise their great power and influence, they can help secure freedom and peace for all humankind.'

UPF-UK will be holding a series of conferences considering the UK's future role in the world after leaving the EU. In general for individuals, families as well as nations, Universal Peace Federation emphasises interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values to maintain peace and development. UPF views humanity as one family and its problems cannot be fully resolved without values rooted in God, a divine, Heavenly Parent.