

Clare Adamson MSP  
Convener  
Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee  
Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh EH99 1SP

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Dear Convener

## **THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S GLOBAL AFFAIRS FRAMEWORK**

I write to you in relation to the Committee's *Inquiry into the Scottish Government's International Work* and the Scottish Government's *Scotland's Global Affairs Framework*. We are, at this point, decidedly in the post-Brexit era. The United Kingdom has not been an EU Member State for over two and a half years. While governing institutions, business and civil society in Scotland and the wider UK continue to adapt to changed circumstances, Scottish public policy should confront the profound and long-lasting implications of leaving the EU as they exist, regardless of our opinions on an EU membership debate which is long over. At the same time, it is legitimate, and regularly beneficial, for the Scottish Government, the Scottish Parliament and other institutions to engage with European and international colleagues to support and improve policies and outcomes.

The domain of European and international relations is a distinct policy field. It merits substantive analysis, strategy and scrutiny in its own right. While the Scottish Government has undertaken European and global engagement since its inception, more recently it has signalled its intention to enhance its ambitions and efforts in this area – exemplified, for instance, in: *A Fairer, Greener Scotland: Programme for Government 2021-22*. Where the Government increases its attention, it is logical for the Parliament to increase its scrutiny. Beyond headline impressions on the existence of European and international engagement, it is vital to understand and to assess the actual work and policies of the Government in this domain. In that context, I welcome the Committee's recent inquiry, for which I was pleased to give evidence, and its resulting report. That report contains a series of strong and salient recommendations to improve Scottish public policy and strategy on European and international relations. I note the Committee's view, expressed in the report, that "it is essential that both the Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament continue to have a strong relationship with the EU." In a time in which our political debate is frequently so caustic, it is heartening that the Committee has agreed this substantial report on Scotland's relations with the EU and the wider world, and the Government's activities in this field, on a cross-party basis.

Achieving success in the European and global arenas demands adroit strategy. That imperative is particularly relevant for Scotland, as a European sub-state that is part of a "third country", neither in the European Union nor in the European Economic Area. In turn, the Scottish Government should develop cogent strategy to structure its European and international engagement and its related policies. In my European Merchants Insight Report, *Scotland's Global Standpoint: Strategic Principles for Scotland's European and International Relations*, I offer parameters for such strategy, including: well-defined principles and objectives; a long-term perspective; specific prioritisation of states, regions and themes; and a clear foundation for supportive frameworks and plans. The Committee's report references these and other recommendations from the Insight Report. It also identifies "the importance of adopting a strategic approach" and "the need for a prioritisation of policies to flow from that approach" as central concluding themes of the inquiry. In that sense, the Committee's recommendations in its report represent standards against which Government strategy on European and international affairs can be assessed. While I appreciate that this form and level of scrutiny in this area is novel for the Government, it is surely warranted at this stage.

As you will be aware, around one month after the publication of the Committee's *Inquiry into the Scottish Government's International Work* report ("the inquiry report") on 6 April 2022, the Scottish Government published *Scotland's Global Affairs Framework* ("the Framework") on 9 May 2022. The Government later responded to the Committee on the inquiry report in a letter dated 6 June 2022 ("the response letter"). Given the centrality of suitable strategy to the Government's effective and successful pursuit of European and international engagement, it is, in my estimation, important to measure the extent to which the Global Affairs Framework satisfies the Committee's strategy recommendations in its inquiry report. As a political scientist and political analyst with expertise in Scotland's European and international relations; the politics and institutions of the European Union; and international relations, I have considered all the documents which I have mentioned. In brief, I have reservations about the suitability of the Global Affairs Framework as the titular Government strategy for European and international affairs in today's context. In this letter, I provide my assessment of the status of the Committee's strategy recommendations in its inquiry report, in terms of their implementation at this point, and I present further reflections about the content and approach of the Global Affairs Framework, both for the Committee's consideration.

## STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Having reviewed the Committee's inquiry report, I have identified 20 distinct recommendations on the Scottish Government's European and international affairs strategy – of which 13 relate to the Global Affairs Framework and 7 relate to the Government's wider strategic approach. Below, I set out each recommendation (with relevant extracts from the inquiry report) and my assessment of whether that recommendation has been adopted or implemented to date, based on the Global Affairs Framework and the Government's response letter to the inquiry report.

1. *Recommendation: The Framework "sets out its values and objectives (linked to the domestic agenda)."* Assessment: The Global Affairs Framework is structured on seven themes, which have their own merits in some respects. It references a values-based approach to external action, which is positive. However, the Framework is predominantly comprised of sweeping statements and vague aspirations. It offers no new specific principles, objectives, priorities, goals, targets or reference points to define or structure the Scottish Government's European and international relations for years ahead. Commitments and intentions in the Framework are framed with such a high level of generality that they have little degree of measurability and hold minimal practical utility. It is unclear what objectives underpin external action.
2. *Recommendation: The Framework "provide[s] a foundation for all other relevant frameworks, strategies and policy documents in that sphere."* Assessment: Since it articulates no specific principles or objectives to guide European and international engagement, the Global Affairs Framework inherently does not provide a robust foundation for supportive frameworks and plans in this domain. While the Framework mentions some related strategies and plans, it does so only tangentially and not in a coordinated fashion. Existing documents, such as the Arctic Policy Framework and the Nordic – Baltic Policy Statement, are not included at all. Promised documents, such as the Cultural Diplomacy Strategy and International Education Strategy, are not connected to overarching objectives and are given no strategic anchor. The Global Affairs Framework does not contain the strategic depth necessary to serve as the central frame of reference for Government action on European and international relations.
3. *Recommendation: The Framework "stipulates a long-term timeframe (e.g. for the remainder of the 2020s)."* Assessment: The Global Affairs Framework establishes no timeframe of any kind. The document gives no indication of the envisaged duration of the strategy and it sets out no time-based plans or targets. It avoids any new substantive commitment related to time. The absence of time references compounds the difficulty of measuring the effectiveness of Government action in this domain, since its performance cannot be compared to specified time horizons. Any aspirations have no time-related benchmarks for progress or delivery.

4. *Recommendation: The Framework “prioritises countries, regions and policy themes.”* Assessment: The Global Affairs Framework establishes no governing prioritisation of countries, regions or themes to shape Government policy or action on European and international relations. It makes a single reference to focusing engagement on “our nearest neighbours in Europe and North America, including the Arctic”, without giving any further information. In fact, the Framework appears to treat the European Union as a monolithic bloc, instead of a complex union of Member States (and sub-states). It provides no clarity on which of those European states and sub-states should be priority partners for Scotland. While the document mentions “build[ing] our links with China, Japan, India and Pakistan” and “an increased focus on the Global South, including across Africa, Asia and South America,” it offers no corresponding detail. Given that, taken together, these general pledges cover most of the world, they do not amount to much of a prioritisation. The Framework repeats a small number of areas for EU engagement, but with no indication of the core priorities that define Scotland’s relationship with the EU. Moreover, those areas were derived as a reaction to the strategic agendas of the European Commission and European Council, not as the proactive priorities of Scotland.
5. *Recommendation: The Framework “provides a clear rationale for that prioritisation” of countries, regions and policy themes.* Assessment: Alongside its absence of prioritisation of countries, regions and policy themes to structure European and global engagement, the Global Affairs Framework equally provides no substantive rationale for its purposes or orientation. The document does not indicate how Scotland’s values, interests and needs are translated into specific objectives and priorities for Government policy and action in this field. It gives no definitions or frame of reference for how the Government will balance Scotland’s values versus Scotland’s interests where they conflict in the European and global arenas. Further, it offers no parameters or guidance on how the Government will deploy its limited resources to best effect in the service of the core principles and objectives of a well-defined strategy.
6. *Recommendation: The Framework “integrates international offices into its strategy.”* Assessment: The Global Affairs Framework states that the Government’s representative offices are “vital to promoting Scotland’s international profile, and protecting and enhancing Scotland’s interests in the EU and beyond.” It also lists a series of general functions which the offices could or do perform. However, the Framework does not indicate how the offices relate to the core principles and objectives of a strategy. The Framework make no differentiation between its offices in EU national capitals, its office in Brussels and its office in London, each category of which undertakes different functions. It does not set out how the offices (numbering nine in total, to date) form a coherent network. Moreover, it does not establish how the offices operate in the service of wider strategic objectives for external action.
7. *Recommendation: The Framework “[includes an approach] to maximise its engagement with the Scots diaspora and (as described by the Cabinet Secretary) aspirational Scots.”* Assessment: The Global Affairs Framework makes a general pledge to “engage with the Scottish diaspora around the world.” It also, more or less, adopts a broad definition of the diaspora, which is positive. However, the Framework provides no details of a substantive approach to enhance diaspora engagement or the tenets which should underpin diaspora relations. It does not indicate how calendar opportunities such as St Andrew’s Day can be utilised to best effect.
8. *Recommendation: The Framework “links to relevant aspects of economic, cultural and education policy.”* Assessment: The Global Affairs Framework references some parts of Government policy on the economy, culture and education, such as its *Scotland’s Vision for Trade* report. It pledges to enhance “Scotland’s international profile, reputation and attractiveness as a tourist destination.” Nevertheless, the Framework once again speaks only in general terms, with no formulated objectives or targets. It promises a Cultural Diplomacy Strategy and an International Education Strategy, but makes little mention of what those strategies should contain or how they connect to the core principles and objectives of the central strategy.

9. *Recommendation: The Framework “recognises the need for a harmonisation of policy between the domestic and the outward-facing” and “ensure[s] alignment between domestic policy and external action.”* Assessment: The Global Framework declares that the Government’s “international work seeks to mirror our domestic priorities and values.” It also states that “the global and regional context inevitably impacts the achievement of domestic objectives.” It is positive that these premises are mentioned in the Framework. However, more relevant is whether those principles are evidenced in the substantive content and approach of the Framework. Actual alignment of domestic policy and external action would demand mechanisms to identify and resolve conflicts between Scotland’s values and interests. Actual recognition of the European and global contexts would require acknowledgement of the challenges which Scotland faces in undertaking successful external action. The Framework includes neither.
10. *Recommendation: The Framework “provide[s] the basis for Scotland to offer leadership and present new ways of thinking about our place and influence in the world.”* Assessment: Regrettably, the Global Affairs Framework does not articulate a sufficient strategic basis for European and international relations – whether for the Scottish Government or for Scotland generally. In consisting mostly of general statements and vague aspirations, it does not serve as a vehicle for an informed and productive conversation on Scotland’s role in the world in the changed post-Brexit context. While Scotland has significant soft power strengths and attributes that could be shaped into a successful and effective global profile, the Framework makes little mention of them in actionable terms. It does not sufficiently capture Scotland’s potential.
11. *Recommendation: The Framework “explores how to better inform the public and media on the importance of Scotland’s European and external relations.”* Assessment: Beyond a commitment to “developing relationships with international media and making effective use of social media channels” to promote Scotland, the Global Affairs Framework makes no mention of how the Government will work to inform the Scottish public and media of the principles, goals or outcomes of its European and international relations – or why that work matters. The proactive provision of useful information by Government is essential to a better debate.
12. *Recommendation: The Framework “is published in draft form for consultation.”* Assessment: To my knowledge, the Global Affairs Framework was not published in draft form or otherwise made available for public consultation prior to its formal publication on 9 May 2022. Its date of publication was Europe Day, suggesting that symbolic considerations were consequential for the Government. That timetable gave it about four weeks to amend the draft framework in view of the inquiry report – to which it responded after the Framework’s publication.
13. *Recommendation: The Framework “takes into account the findings and recommendations of this report.”* Assessment: In my assessment, the Global Affairs Framework fully incorporates none of the twelve previous recommendations made by the Committee in its inquiry report.
14. *Recommendation: The Scottish Government “publishes a clear strategy and priorities in relation to its engagement with the EU.”* Assessment: While the Global Affairs Framework contends that “ensuring the closest possible relationship with the EU” is a “fundamental part” of external action, the Government does not clarify the shape of that relationship within Scotland’s current constitutional arrangements. In fact, neither the Framework nor other Government documents (such as *Steadfastly European: Scotland’s past, present and future*) set out strategic principles or objectives to structure Scotland’s engagement with the EU as part of the UK. The Framework restates a pledge to align “where possible and practical” with EU laws and policies, but it establishes no principles or parameters to guide that formidable task. While it mentions some areas of cooperation with the EU, in response to the Union’s pre-pandemic agenda, the Framework does not present Scotland’s proactive and endogenous priorities for EU relations. By contrast, an effective Scottish EU engagement strategy would delineate the Scottish Government’s own objectives for post-Brexit EU relations over the years ahead.

15. *Recommendation: The Scottish Government pursues “wider external engagement... informed by a strategic approach, one with a clear geographical and thematic rationale.”* Assessment: Since the Scottish Government is a sub-state actor, its external action and geographical scope should logically be proportionate to its roles and responsibilities. Scotland is a European sub-state, so the balance of activity, in terms of Government engagement, should be weighted towards Europe. Neither the Global Affairs Framework nor other Government documents provide an overarching strategic approach to non-EU engagement. The Government does have several country engagement strategies for select non-EU partners, which are useful, though mostly around five years old. The Global Affairs Framework speaks of expanding engagement into Asia, Africa and South America, but it provides no rationale for that proposed activity or information on its scope, content or relationship to wider strategy. Equally important, the Framework does not demonstrate how EU and non-EU engagement relate to each other.
16. *Recommendation: The Scottish Government “clarif[ies] its position on the status of the 2013 Concordat on International Relations with the UK Government.”* Assessment: In its response letter, the Scottish Government states that it “[does] not believe that the Concordat has facilitated good working relations on international matters” and that the concordat “has not been superseded.” Beyond those literal clarifications, the Government provides no detail on the operation or effectiveness of the concordat or wider mechanisms for intergovernmental working in this domain. The Government does not clarify whether it supports a revision or replacement of the international relations concordat. It does not propose any measures to improve cooperation with the UK Government on European and international affairs.
17. *Recommendation: The Scottish Government “consider[s] what other options may be available to seek to replicate the benefits of the Erasmus+ programme.”* Assessment: The Framework states that the Government is “committed to the EU’s Erasmus+ programme” and is “exploring ways to maximise Scotland’s access to this scheme.” In its response letter, the Government indicates that it is “engag[ing] in dialogue with the European Parliament and European Commission on how we can maximise our institutions’ access” to Erasmus+. Inherently, seeking to access Erasmus+ is distinct from undertaking work to replicate some benefits via other means. Given that the UK Government has made clear its regrettable opposition to participating in Erasmus+ in the future, and the European Commission has made equally clear that participation is a matter for the UK as a state, it is unclear what outcomes the Scottish Government expects to derive from direct engagement on the matter with the EU institutions. In its response letter, the Government reiterates its commitment to creating a “Scottish Education Exchange Programme”, while providing no detail or timetable for it.
18. *Recommendation: The Scottish Government “provides a detailed justification for any new international offices, including why those locations were chosen and also how they fit with the international offices’ own strategic objectives.”* Assessment: The Global Affairs Framework pledges that the Government will establish new representative offices “in Copenhagen in 2022 and Warsaw in 2023.” The Copenhagen office was officially opened in August 2022. The Framework provides no rationale for why further offices are warranted, why these locations were chosen or how the establishment of these offices will contribute to strategic objectives for European engagement. In its response letter, the Government states that it “undertakes preparatory work to assess the rationale for locating a new Scottish Government office or for focusing on a specific country or location.” It outlines some general factors that might have informed its decision to open the Copenhagen office. Crucially, however, it does not give an actual specific rationale for the choice. In sum, no substantive justification has been provided for the establishment of the Copenhagen and Warsaw offices. It may be that these offices are sufficiently beneficial to warrant their creation, but it is challenging to make any reasoned determination in that regard when their strategic purpose is undefined and their case for establishment is unclear. Given that Scotland is a sub-state and these representative offices are entirely optional, scrutiny of their purpose and rationale is entirely appropriate.

19. *Recommendation: The Scottish Government “undertake[s] to publish an Annual Report setting out the contribution made by the international offices to promoting the values, objectives and priorities” of the Framework.* Assessment: In its response letter, the Scottish Government indicates that it “support[s] the idea of an annual report” on the work of its representative offices. It pledges to update the Committee on the matter on an unspecified timetable. While the Government gives no detail on the form or scope of such reporting at this stage, it is positive that it has accepted the principle of a public annual report – not least because, as the Committee notes in its inquiry report, Government reports on its representative offices to this point “have only ever been published under Freedom of Information requests.”
20. *Recommendation: The Scottish Government “continue[s] to explore how best it can assess the impact and influence of its external affairs work.”* Assessment: In its response letter, the Scottish Government states that it is “committed to a continuous process to ensure that our work is measurable, transparent and available to the public.” Nevertheless, the Global Affairs Framework contains few objectives or targets which can be productively measured. While the Government commits in its response letter to undertaking additional work “to [secure] the maximum benefit for Scotland from our external networks,” it is unclear how such benefit can be assessed in the absence of predetermined priorities and objectives. Moreover, if the Government aims to increase transparency, it should publish relevant documents on European and international affairs proactively and by design, not reactively and in response to Freedom of Information requests. It would not be sensible to publish all internal policy planning documents routinely. However, a new ethos could encourage the Government to produce more “dual-use” documents – for policy-making and for the public.

Consequently, in my assessment, the Scottish Government has fully adopted or implemented to date one of the 20 recommendations on European and international relations strategy made by the Committee in its inquiry report (Recommendation No 19). In my assessment, the Global Affairs Framework fully satisfies none of the dedicated framework recommendations made by the Committee. This state of affairs is not favourable for Scottish public policy. The Committee’s recommendations in its inquiry report are sensible and straightforward. Their implementation, particularly in respect of the Global Affairs Framework, would have facilitated cogent strategy for European and global engagement in the post-Brexit era. Such absence in practice is regrettable.

## FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

**STRATEGIC CHALLENGES** – An essential component of effective strategy for European and international relations is sufficient recognition of strategic challenges. Scotland is a European sub-state which is not part of the EU or part of the EEA. For a number of years, the Scottish and UK Governments have had an antagonistic relationship, particularly on EU relations. In the governing debates of European and global politics, Scotland is often a relatively peripheral actor. In turn, while Scotland can achieve success in this domain based on reasonable objectives, it is crucial to recognise and internalise its challenges in the European and global arenas. However, the Global Affairs Framework is defined by its lack of acknowledgement of challenges. Instead, it projects relentless unfounded optimism. Challenges cannot be addressed when they are ignored.

**EUROPEAN UNION** – Arguably, relations with the EU (including the EU institutions, the Member States and sub-states) form the centrepiece of the Scottish Government’s external action. The EU will always have a substantial impact on Scotland, regardless of the formal relationship in place. At the same time, effective engagement depends on adequate appreciation of the internal politics and dynamics of European integration. Nevertheless, the Global Affairs Framework speaks of the EU as if it were a singular state which is ever righteous. It does not reflect the reality that the EU is a complex political union in which values, policies and ideas are contested and debated. To address the consequences of the post-Brexit environment and to maintain a degree of strategic connectivity with the EU, thorough internalisation of the EU’s complexity would be required.

**INDEPENDENCE DEBATE** – While the independence debate permeates nearly every aspect of Scottish politics and policy, European and international relations can be particularly susceptible to such entanglement. External action, in shaping Scotland’s global profile, can be misconstrued as advancement of one constitutional outcome over another. However, the domain of European and international relations is a serious policy field. It should be isolated from the independence debate to avoid such problems. The Scottish Government should take the initiative to separate external engagement and the constitutional issue. Yet, from its opening paragraphs, the Global Affairs Framework links its work with the present Government’s preference of independence. It states a desire for EU membership as if that aspiration should govern current EU engagement. It declares that the Framework is the forerunner of the Government’s future prospectus for foreign policy and independence. The active inclusion of the constitutional issue in ostensible strategy for European and global engagement is counterproductive to the setting and delivery of realistic objectives for Scotland in this field. Current strategy should be based on the current constitution.

**STRATEGIC CLARITY** – The European and global arenas are habitually complex, fast-paced and thankless. Clarity and precision are vital for effective European and international affairs strategy, particularly given Scotland’s strategic challenges in this domain. Nevertheless, the Global Affairs Framework is often instead defined by a lack of strategic clarity. It states that it is “imperative that Scotland becomes more active internationally,” but it does not define why greater action is necessary, where it should be targeted or what priorities should be pursued. It reiterates an aim to “promote Scotland’s reputation” without setting out the core dimensions of that reputation which the Government aims to promote, beyond a vague impression that Scotland is “an open, creative, welcoming and confident nation.” It declares regularly that Scotland should be “a good global citizen” – which, of course, appears a laudable proposition – but it provides insufficient definition to give that phrase strategic purpose or practical effect. The Framework states that the Government is “committed to further strengthening Scotland’s international relationships, presence and voice,” but it is neither robustly clear nor precise on its understanding of Scotland’s global presence, its rationale for improvement or its resulting priorities. In the absence of a substantive basis, such statements lack the strategic clarity required to be practical or effective.

**UK GOVERNMENT COOPERATION** – Both the Scottish Government and the UK Government undertake activities to represent Scotland, its values and its interests in the European and global spheres. Inherently, Scotland gains the most when the two governments cooperate well in this domain, regardless of political or policy differences. However, the Global Affairs Framework makes no mention of how the Scottish Government currently works with the UK Government on European and international affairs, or how the governments could cooperate better to achieve common objectives in this field to benefit Scotland. Where the two governments undertook wholly separate, or even competing, operations to represent Scotland in the rest of Europe and the world, that outcome would be unfavourable, as synergies would be lost and resources would not be deployed to best effect. Each government has a role in fostering genuine partnership with the other. In the Scottish Government’s case, the absence of detail on bilateral cooperation in the Framework, its response letter or other Government documents makes it difficult to determine the effectiveness of existing collaboration in this area or to identify avenues for improvement.

**CROSS-PARTY ENGAGEMENT** – Despite differences between political parties, scope nevertheless exists to find consensus on common principles and objectives for Scotland’s European and global engagement in trade, education, culture, tourism and other dimensions. Indeed, the Committee has demonstrated this potential with the publication of its substantial, cross-party inquiry report on the Scottish Government’s external action, laying out strong and sensible recommendations to structure, improve and assess that work. In some European political systems, it is common for cross-party support to be sought on strategy for EU or global relations. Nevertheless, the Global Affairs Framework, beyond not fulfilling many of the Committee’s recommendations, includes no principles or mechanisms to facilitate meaningful cross-party engagement on the Scottish Government’s external action on an ongoing basis or to give real effect to points of agreement.

**SUPPORTIVE STRATEGIES** – In theory, the Global Affairs Framework should serve as the titular strategy to structure the entirety of the Scottish Government’s European and global engagement for a fixed period of years. In practice, the Framework consists of largely general statements and has no defined timeframe, so it cannot genuinely fulfil that mandate. In consequence, it remains unknown how supportive strategies, frameworks and plans in the realm of external action can be collectively integrated with a central governing strategy to produce cohesive Government policy on European and international affairs. Proposed strategies, such as a Cultural Diplomacy Strategy and an International Education Strategy, should complement and derive from the Global Affairs Framework. In reality, however, the Framework does not provide them with a strategic anchor. At this stage, establishing an interlinked approach to external action is far more important than producing further sub-strategies. Notably, the Government’s most recent programme, *A stronger and more resilient Scotland: the Programme for Government 2022 to 2023*, makes no reference to the Global Affairs Framework (in its “Scotland in the World” section or elsewhere), which does not suggest that the Framework serves as the defining strategy for European and global relations.

**SUMMATION** – In my assessment, the Global Affairs Framework regrettably does not constitute the substantive foundation required at this point to structure the Scottish Government’s European and international relations in the post-Brexit context, and within Scotland’s current constitutional arrangements, for the years ahead. While the Framework has some positive attributes, its lack of new and specific objectives, priorities, timetables or targets means that it cannot serve as a frame of reference for the Government, the Parliament or wider society in judging whether potential external action aligns or does not align with its goals. Similarly, it is difficult for the Government to allocate its limited resources to achieve its strategic objectives when the objectives are unclear. Although activity and success in international relations can sometimes be difficult to assess, the Framework is defined by its lack of measurability, in that it contains exceptionally little on which the actual performance of the Government could be reasonably and effectively evaluated. In its style and direction, the Framework gives the impression of being written predominantly for the political audience of the Scottish Government, rather than all of Government, the Parliament, Scottish business and civil society, and European and international observers. Indeed, current and potential EU and global partners will want to understand how they might fit into and how they could benefit from engaging with Scotland – and they will be allergic to being implicated in the independence debate. Given the Global Affairs Framework’s significant departure from the Committee’s recommendations in its inquiry report, and in view of the considerations which I have outlined in this letter, in my assessment, the most productive course for effective Scottish public policy would be for the Scottish Government to supplement or replace the Global Affairs Framework with a new strategic document which fully meets the Committee’s recommendations. I hope that this analysis proves useful to the Committee in its continued scrutiny of European and international relations, which represent a demonstrably consequential and evolving policy field.

Yours sincerely

**ANTHONY SALAMONE** FRSA

Managing Director