

Penny Mordaunt

Conservative Parliamentary Candidate Portsmouth North



The International Stage

Portsmouth, and the military and humanitarian capabilities it is home to, is one of the main reasons why our country is listened to around the globe. In recent years that capability has been undermined by lack of investment in our armed forces and the erosion of powers away from local and national government.

Europe

We believe in an open, flexible Europe in which countries work to achieve shared goals rather than the ever greater centralisation of power in Brussels .

We believe that in democracies nothing lasting can be built without the people's consent - and yet people have been denied their say on the renamed EU Constitution.

If the Lisbon Treaty is not yet in force at the time of the next general election, and a Conservative Government is elected, we would put the Treaty to a referendum of the British people, recommending a 'no' vote. If the British people rejected the Treaty, we would withdraw Britain 's ratification of it.

But if the Treaty is in force we will be in a different situation. In our view, then, political integration would have gone too far, the Treaty would lack democratic legitimacy in this country and we would not let matters rest there.

A Conservative Government would also amend the 1972 European Communities Act so that any future EU Treaty that transfers powers from the United Kingdom to the European Union would be subject to a referendum of the British people. The British people must be in charge of their future in Europe .

A Conservative Government would never join the euro. Giving up our currency would mean losing a vital tool for running the British economy in the interests of the people of Britain - and that means an unacceptable loss of the independence of this country.

The EU must adapt to the times we live in - and it should act where European countries together can achieve things they cannot do alone. So our priorities for the EU are today's challenges of global competitiveness, global warming and global poverty.

That means:

- Ending the remaining barriers to free trade within the EU
- Taking back control of social and employment policy so we can make our own decisions in these vital areas for Britain 's prosperity and social well-being
- Improving the EU's Emissions Trading Scheme
- Reforming the EU's aid policy so that it is more focused on poverty reduction and less entangled by bureaucracy and administrative short-comings.

Foreign Affairs

A Conservative Government's approach to foreign affairs will be based on liberal Conservative principles. Liberal, because Britain must be open and engaged with the world, supporting human rights and championing the cause of democracy and the rule of law at every opportunity. But Conservative, because our policy must be hard-headed and practical, dealing with the world as it is and not as we wish it were.

We and our allies face our most serious challenges from persistent international terrorism, attempts by Iran to acquire nuclear weapons, and a newly aggressive Russia .

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We must recognise that we are much stronger working through NATO, the UN, or the G8 than when acting alone, and that our moral authority is vital to our success.

Britain enjoys a unique position - it is the place where America, Europe and the Commonwealth meet. Our outlook and responsibilities have always been global, and for Britain to play a full role on the international stage we must:

- Restore cabinet government to our foreign policy decision-making and establish a national security council
- Properly manage our relations with the United States while extending our alliances and trading relationships elsewhere
- Champion reform of the EU and other multilateral or global institutions while simultaneously upholding our own highest values

International Development

With billions of people around the world living in poverty, we have an urgent moral and practical imperative to make our international development policy more effective. Moral, because it is our responsibility to help those struggling with hunger, illiteracy and environmental instability. Practical, because failed and impoverished states are incubators of disease, insecurity, and extremism, and so represent a clear threat to our national interest. A Conservative Government will focus on improving three key areas of international development:

1) Aid

We are committed to achieving the UN target of spending 0.7% of national income as aid by 2013. Our top priority will be to ensure that every single pound of taxpayers' money delivers the maximum impact – so we will establish an Independent Aid Watchdog to monitor the performance of the Department for International Development.

2) Trade

We will put maximum effort into achieving an ambitious, pro-development global trade deal, because trade will do more to eliminate poverty than anything else.

3) Conflict resolution

We will give much greater importance to conflict prevention and resolution – because a nation mired in conflict remains vulnerable until the fighting stops, no matter how much aid or trade it receives.

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