

Abstract (length: 300 words) for the conference paper ‘The UK in the Post-Brexit Era: Which Way Is the Pendulum Swinging – Towards Brussels or Washington?’ by Dr Sascha Arnautović (Brühl/Rhineland)

11 February 2025

* * *

Abstract:

The UK is still grappling with the negative effects of Brexit. In addition to enormous challenges in terms of home affairs, there are also many uncertainties in British foreign and security policy in order to be a strong and competitive UK again in the future that is capable of playing a significant role in the European and international context. However, in order to achieve this goal, a consistent and sustainable vision for the UK for the coming decade is needed. Now that the Conservative era of the Tories has come to an end, it is up to the Labour Party under PM Starmer to initiate the hoped-for turnaround. But the reality is different: Disappointment and dissatisfaction among the British population is growing steadily, so that Reform UK, a Eurosceptic and right-wing populist party led by Nigel Farage, is the beneficiary of this development.

Against this backdrop, it is hard to imagine a turnaround in home affairs, foreign and security policy. It therefore remains unclear how London is to succeed in stabilising and strengthening the UK domestically and positioning the island state in terms of foreign and security policy in such a way that it remains an attractive partner for both the EU and the US. It is also difficult to predict which way London’s pendulum will swing, whether in the direction of Washington and an unpredictable US President Trump or in the direction of Brussels, Paris, Berlin and Warsaw. Only with regard to NATO does everything seem to remain the same.

The conference paper addresses this worrying finding and tries to show how the UK can manage the challenging balancing act of regaining internal political stability and reaching out to both the EU and the US in terms of foreign and security policy, thereby ensuring a policy of balancing interests.

→ Keywords (5 pieces): UK, effects of Brexit, home affairs, foreign and security policy, policy of balancing interests

→ Personal details: **Dr (PhD) Sascha Arnautović** is a political scientist, self-employed entrepreneur, freelance speaker and lecturer. His research focuses on US foreign and security policy. He is also interested in British foreign policy (main focus: European policy) and British security policy in the post-Brexit era. Dr Arnautović is Chairman and Secretary of the Cologne Forum for International Relations and Security Policy (KFIBS) as well as Head of the Cologne/Rhein-Erft-Kreis/Euskirchen section of the German Society for Security Policy (GSP). E-mail: sascha.arnautovic@kfibs.org