

DEUTSCH-BRITISCHE GESELLSCHAFT

BONN

lädt ein zu einem Vortrag in englischer Sprache von

Colin A Munro CMG

“The United Kingdom? What next for Northern
Ireland and Scotland?”

am Mittwoch, dem 18. Mai 2022, 18.30 Uhr

FGS Flick Gocke Schaumburg
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In view of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Austro British Society panel discussion on this subject on 27 April was reframed as “**The World has Changed. Where does the UK stand?**”

This lecture will begin with an overview of this **historic shift**. The rules based international order set forth in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe (November 1990) is no more. However the Ukraine war ends, the post 1990 world will not be restored.

Although NATO has rediscovered its raison d’etre, and the EU, as so often in a crisis, has a new elan, **the world economy**, already battered by the pandemic and the struggle to deal with climate change, **is in disarray**: inflation, food and energy shortages, broken supply chains, sanctions and embargoes. The new coalition has upended Germany’s security and defence policy, and will have difficulty in sustaining export led prosperity based on cheap energy.

Brexit would have been **bad for the UK** in a benign political and economic environment. It is even worse now. The predictions of despised experts, including the government’s own, are being proven correct. A 15% decline in the volume of trade. A long term 4% decline in GDP. An increase in dependence on imported food, actual and relative poverty. A health service in crisis. Inflation, energy costs depressing living standards. Boris Johnson and his Ministers blame the pandemic and the war, which allows Conservative supporters to fantasise about Johnson’s neo Churchillian leadership leading the western response to Putin. Uncomfortable questions about London are played down. Breaking the law in No 10 Downing Street against parties during the pandemic is dismissed as fluff. **The incompetence of the Home Office** with regard to Ukrainian refugees and labour shortages is jaw dropping. Slogans such as “Global Free Trade needs a Global Champion” are still proclaimed as policies without regard to implementation. Brexit – take back control of money, borders, and laws - remains the prime example.

The **Labour Party** is recovering under Sir Keir Starmer. Opinion polls predict a hung parliament at the next general election, with Labour probably dependent on SNP and LibDem support, to form a government. Johnson may survive in Downing Street until 2024.

In **Scotland**, the SNP remains the dominant political party, committed to a second referendum on independence next year. However, support for both hovers around 50%. Neither Brexit nor Johnson’s personal unpopularity has moved opinion towards the 60% support for independence, which would compel the UK government to allow a referendum.

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DEUTSCH-BRITISCHE GESELLSCHAFT

- 2 -

At a meeting with the German Chancellor on 8 April the Prime Minister asserted complete agreement on every topic except **Northern Ireland**. The threat to suspend the Protocol remains on the table. Johnson lied when he said there would be no border post Brexit between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. If, as the polls predict, Sinn Fein become the largest party at the elections on 5 May, the Unionists will refuse to share power unless the Protocol is abolished. **A descent into violence is possible. Stasis with regard to Scotland's place in the UK is likely in Scotland in the period ahead. But not in Northern Ireland.**

Colin A Munro CMG

Chairman, UK Citizens in Austria (UKCA)

Ambassador (Retd) Associate The Ambassador Partnership LLP

Born Edinburgh 1946. Educated at George Watson's College, Edinburgh University (Modern Languages) and King's College London (International Studies).

HM Diplomatic Service 1969-2007. After postings in London, Bonn, Kuala Lumpur, and Bucharest, appointed Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy to the GDR in East Berlin (1987-90). Consul General Frankfurt 1990-93. Head of Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) OSCE/Council of Europe Department 1993-97. Ambassador to Croatia 1997-2000. Deputy High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina based in Mostar (2001). Royal College of Defence Studies 2002. Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) 2003-07. Consultancies for the OSCE and other organisations, and lecturing assignments since 2007. Leader OSCE Election Observation Mission to Bulgaria in 2009. Chairman UKCA since 2017.

Main areas of professional interest - promotion of democracy, rule of law and human rights in Central, Eastern, and South Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union. Brexit.

Lecturer and contributor to academic conferences and seminars. Articles published by the Prince Albert Society, Vienna University, and the German Historical Institute in London.

Languages: English, French, German, conversational Croatian, some Russian, Malay, Romanian, and Spanish.

Hobbies: sports, history, listening to music.

Clubs: Rotary (Wien Nord Ost), Reform,

Married to Gertie who is of Sudeten German origin. Two grown up sons. Five grandchildren.

DEUTSCH-BRITISCHE GESELLSCHAFT

- 3 -

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Hiermit bestätige ich meine Teilnahme an der Veranstaltung mit Colin Munro
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