**Annual Report on Development of the United Kingdom**

**(2019-2020)**

**Abstract**

July 2019 to July 2020 is the first year of the Johnson ministry. The ambitious Prime Minister declared that he would start a new chapter in British history and a “remarkable decade” for the Unite Kingdom. However, it was exactly in this year that the UK experienced unprecedented transformations as well as both internal and external difficulties. The UK general election in December 2019 and Brexit in January 2020 were among the rare highlights the Johnson ministry experienced. The main challenge confronting the Johnson ministry in the second half of 2019 was how to cope with the protracted Brexit while the main challenges in the first half of 2020 were how to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic and how to arrange the economic and trade relations with the EU after Brexit. The dual impact of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic posed a full-circle challenge to the UK and also compromised Johnson’s political achievements.

In terms of domestic politics, Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic profoundly affected the trend of British politics. The conflict between the Johnson ministry and Parliament in the second half of 2019 was exacerbated, which brought Brexit into deadlock again. Afterwards, the landslide victory of the Conservative Party in the UK general election in December 2019 paved the way for breaking the Brexit deadlock. However, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic broke the brief optimistic atmosphere emerged after the Conservative Party won the general election and delivered the de jure Brexit, and brought new grave challenges to the Johnson ministry. The pandemic disrupted the negotiation process between the Johnson ministry and the EU on their future relations, and even worse, the failed coronavirus strategy of the Johnson ministry significantly discouraged the British public support and trust for the Conservative Party. By August 2020, the Johnson ministry still had not secured substantial progress in negotiation with the EU, thus a no-deal Brexit in the economic and trade sectors remains likely after 2021. The above dual challenge rendered the competition among British parties and within the Conservative Party even fiercer. Another political trend that plagued the Johnson ministry was that Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic stimulated the emergence of the local nationalism in Scotland and in Northern Ireland, which further aggravated the challenge of the national unity of the United Kingdom.

In terms of diplomacy and security, the multiplication of the dual challenge of Brexit and COVID-19 and the great power geopolitical competition revealed the short-sightedness, self-contradiction and opportunism of Johnson ministry’s foreign policy, making it hard for the UK to find its proper role as a global power, thereby an unfeasible “Global Britain”. It will be increasingly difficult for the UK to exercise effective “Global Britain” diplomacy and to achieve its great power ambitions in the post-Brexit and post-corona era. Especially with the China-US strategic competition provoked by the US getting fiercer, the UK was pressured by the US to take sides between China and the US instead of sticking to the “middle way” post-Brexit British foreign policy. In this light, the special Anglo-American relationship became a roadblock on UK’s diplomatic transition, while British policy towards China became to be more rigid, as certain forces win the UK regarded China as both a strategic and security rival. The “Golden Era” of the China-UK relations is confronted with hardships due to the Johnson ministry’s practice on issues including the COVID-19 pandemic, Huawei and the Hongkong National Security Law. The Johnson ministry tipped the US-EU balance of power on strategic security towards the US side, which forced the EU and its major member states, such as France and Germany, to pay more attention to European sovereignty and independence and actively build a common European security defense system under its own control.

In terms of economy, the dual challenge of the pending Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic exerted great strain on British economy. In particular, British economy suffered an unprecedented blow brought by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which maytrigger the worst economic recession over the past three centuries. Whether the "post-epidemic era" economic recovery plan can be successfully implemented, whether the financial market can stabilize, whether a trade agreement with the EU can be reached, are the three important factors that determine the mid-and-long-term development of the UK economy. Impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Johnson ministry lowered the threshold for investment in the UK by foreign companies and strengthened protection for companies which may influence national public health safety, which imposed new hurdles for Chinese companies’ future mergers, acquisitions and investment in the UK. Besides, the COVID-19 pandemic pushed the Johnson ministry to adopt more active selective industrial policies and is committed to improve the resilience of British industrial chains.

In terms of society, culture and education, the impact of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic was ubiquitous. The uncertainty brought by Brexit weakened the competitiveness of the UK for global talents, and the pandemic makes it harder to implement the Johnson ministry’s talent policy. The COVID-19 pandemic’s impact on all sectors in the British society is also obvious: on one hand, it urges British higher education institutions to adopt new teaching methods, as integrated online-offline teaching becomes the new normal; on the other hand, the pandemic exerted negative effects on the scientific research and on the fiscal revenue of British higher education institutions. During this period, the information transmitted by media plays a more prominent role than usual, which posed stricter requirements on the supervision of the media industry and regulatory agencies. The pandemic is a huge blow to the British film industry, with box office revenue, cinema admissions and production costs decreased sharply compared with previous years.

（Translated by SUN Jiabao）

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1. **Keynote Report**

**B.1 Brexit and the United Kingdom in Coronavirus: Challenges, Responses and Impact**

**Research Team of“General Trends of the United Kingdom”(2019-2020)**

**Abstract:**Since July 2019, the political breaking of the Brexit deadlock has been intertwined with the uncertainty of the UK-European economic and trade relations and the mid-and-long term impact of Brexit. It is an important clue for understanding the current and future UK political, economic and social trends. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic broke the brief optimistic atmosphere emerged after the Conservative Party won the general election and delivered the de jure Brexit, and brought new challenges. In addition, the United States has adjusted its policy towards China, which added up to the complexity of the international environment Britain faces in the post-Brexit era. In this context, solving the stalemate in the UK's economic and trade negotiations with Europe still needs to resolve the conflict between keeping national sovereignty and maintaining close cooperation with Europe; while dealing with the serious economic and social consequences of the epidemic requires policy adjustment and innovation at multiple levels in national governance, macroeconomic and social policies, industrial policies and international cooperation. The result will to a large extent shape the trend of British party politics, central and regional government relations, and economic and social patterns, and will further trigger debates on the transformation of British national governance model. In addition, how to avoid short-sightedness and opportunism in British diplomacy under internal and external changes has also become a practical problem in the UK’s efforts to find its role as a global power.

**Keywords:**Brexit; COVID-19; General Trends of the UK; Political Situation; Economic and Social Situation; Foreign Policy

1. **Reports on UK Trends**

**B.2 Trends in British Party Politics**

**Xia Tian**

**Abstract ：**Many significant shifts in British party politics happened during 2019~2020. Boris Johnson successfully launched a general election in which the Conservative Party won a majority. The result paved the way for breaking the deadlock in the Brexit negotiations and pushing Brexit into the next stage. The COVID-19 outbreak has posed new challenges to the Conservative government, which has been widely criticized for its inadequate response to the crisis. The Labour party has lost again in the general election. With Jeremy Corbyn stepping down, the new leader, Keir Starmer, will need to analyse the lessons of his party's defeat, as well as explore the party's future policy, identity, ideology and electoral strategy. Under the dual impact of Brexit and COVID-19, separatism and populism have been on the rise in various parts of the UK. Risks and uncertainties in social economy, domestic affairs and foreign affairs have been intensified. All political parties in the UK are faced with complex and enduring tests and challenges.

**Keywords**: Conservative Government; Labour Party; SNP; Liberal Democrats; Party Politics

**B.3 Trends in British Economy**

**Yang Chengyu**

**Abstract:** Affected by the COVID-19, the UK economy has entered a recession cycle for the first time in a decade, with both supply and demand hindered. The investment is further transferred to the EU, the trade is heavily dependent on foreign enterprises, and the trade structure is too dependent on China, the US and Europe market. The labor market is weak and temporary unemployment has soared. The epidemic has not only impacted the service industry, resulting in a downturn in the financial market, but also dealt a considerable blow to the manufacturing industry. The UK government has provided liquidity to the market and helped out enterprises and employees through fiscal policies (i.e., direct subsidies, government-guaranteed loans) and monetary policies (i.e., interest rate cuts and expansion of asset purchases), so as to stabilize employment and prevent economic recession. However, the implementation has been relatively limited, and has caused fiscal deficit and the continuing surge of public debt, thereby making systemic risk increase significantly. Whether the "post-epidemic era" economic recovery plan can be successfully implemented, whether the financial market can stabilize and recover to stabilize investor confidence, whether a trade agreement with the EU can be reached, these are important variables that determine the long-term development of the UK economy.

**Key words:** The UK Economic Situation; COVID-19; Economic Recovery; Brexit

**B.4 Trends inBritishDiplomacy**

**Xu Ruike**

**Abstract**: Since Boris Johnson took office, practicing the concept of “Global Britain” has been the top priority of British foreign policy. However, the Johnson government’s ambition to achieve the “Global Britain” blueprint has met with cold reality. The delay of the Brexit process and the deterioration of the international environment have prevented the Johnson government from achieving much in foreign policy, and the Johnson government has failed to gain effective international support for the realization of its “Global Britain” blueprint: future UK-EU relations remain uncertain; Anglo-American relations remain under heavy pressure; British and Commonwealth relations are difficult to improve substantially; and the Sino-British relations are in a low tide. Johnson’s government has a long way to go to achieve the “Global Britain” blueprint. The international community has so far not enthusiastically embraced the idea of “Global Britain”. The Johnson government’s “Global Britain” blueprint is likely to prove to be wishful thinking eventually.

**Keywords**: Global Britain; the Johnson Government; Brexit; Anglo-American Relations; Sino-British Relations; Free Trade Agreement

1. **Economy and Society**

**B.5The UK’s Covid-19 Pandemic Strategy and its Social Impacts**

**Song Yunfeng**

**Abstract:** Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the British government has tried its best to contain the spread of the disease. However, due to Johnson government’s ideological stance (believing in individual freedom and minimum government intervention of the economy and social life) and preference for some specialists’ biased advice, Britain was among the latest governments in Western countries that have issued the order of lockdown. During the lockdown, the key government organization in charge of public health emergency event – Public Health England – has failed to provide needed virus test and clear guidance to NHS hosptitals regarding self-protection, anddisplayed inability in coordinating the British government and local governments to deal with the outbreak with concerted efforts. The outbreak has had huge impact on many aspects of the British society, including political influence (government power expansion), widened division in terms of regions and class, ways of working, damaged education, and the urge to reform or restructure Britain’s flawed medical system.

**Keywords:** COVID-19; UK Government; Public Policy; Social Impacts

**B.6Initial Analysis of the Johnson Government’s Industrial Policies**

**Zhang Bei**

**Abstract:** The rise of industrial policy is an overall trend in the UK due to both international and domestic factors. The Johnson government in its first year has made commitments to prioritize infrastructure, skills and innovation for its industrial policies, based on the lessons and the experience of the previous governments and tailored to its own political realities. However, the twin factors of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic, after incurring major changes to UK’s business and economy, will become major shaping forces for the government’s industrial policies.

**Keywords**: Industrial Policy; Infrastructure; Brexit; Covid-19 Pandemic

**B.7 New Developments on the Governance of City Group in the North of England**

**Mu Jie**

**Abstract:** In the context of Brexit and the global outbreak of the coronavirus, the importance of city group in the northern part of England is becoming increasingly prominent. The new development of city group in northern England is first reflected in the structure of government, such as elected mayor in Greater Manchester. This mechanism improves the level of governance and speeds up the pace of devolution. In addition, city group in northern England increased its investment in public services. Finally, the urban development in city group led to industrial upgrading. The gathering effect of enterprises in the city group is emerging. "Gathering enterprises, upgrading industry" model marks the development of the northern cities governance into a new stage. Prime Minister Boris Johnson continues to push Northern Powerhouse in the post-pandemic era which has made the northern city group a focal point for the country's economic growth after Brexit. Because of the outbreak of coronavirus, it was found that the city's governance capacity faced significant challenges through the observation of the anti-epidemic strategies and the UK Government’s COVID-19 recovery strategy in the northern cities of England. In the future, under the guidance of the national recovery policy, the UK will continue to look for the balance between economic recovery and coronavirus prevention. On the basis of its own urban characteristics and conditions, city group in northern England should promote industrial transformation and guarantee economic development while ensuring the supply of public medical resources. Further devolution is a new direction to improve the urban governance capacity for the northern cities of England.

**Keywords**: City Group in the Northern England; Northern Powerhouse Industrial Upgrading; Coronavirus Prevention

**B.8British Higher Education Sector in Uncertain Times**

**Hu Wan**

**Abstract:** The higher education sector in the UK has been well established in the world due to its reputation in teaching and research, as well as its performance in the university rankings. British universities then become primary choices for many international students. However, due to the impacts of both Brexit and the COVID-19, universities in the UK have been confronted with many challenges in terms of income, teaching, research and student recruitment. As such, many organisations, including the government, quality assurance agencies and universities, proposed concrete measures to deal with challenges facing British universities.

**Keywords**: Brexit; COVID-19; Higher Education Sector; Challenges and Solutions

**B.9British Media and Supervision During the Coronavirus Pandemic**

**Li Danlin， Wang Yue**

**Abstract:** Driven by 5G commercialization, British media sector has formed a new picture by previous ten years’ development and evolution since 2019. According to the foreseen trend, media service has become more mobile, intelligent, high-definition, diversified and convenient as always. However, in 2020, with Brexit becoming a foregone conclusion and unprecedented coronavirus pandemic spreading in the UK, external factors have had great impact on the development of British media, media coverage and media supervision. This essay includes general observations and analysis of the growth of British media from 2019 to 2020, more specifically, the media usage of the British public, media awareness, specific regulatory measures and typical examples during the coronavirus pandemic.

**Keywords**: British Media; COVID-19; Code of Practice;5G; Protection of Privacy; News Accuracy

**B.10British Film Industry**

**Shi Tongyun**

**Abstract:** In 2019, the UK box office and cinema admission remained at a high point, albeit lower than the peak records of 2018.Box office share of the UK films (47.6%) was the highest in the 21st century. The UK films’ global box office share also reached the peak of the century. The Top 20 Films continued to be dominated by Hollywood movies as well as UK-US co-productions. Box office share of independent films slightly decreased to 12.9% (rose to 15% in the first half of 2020). The total UK production expenditure is the second highest in the 21stcentury. British film talents won 14% of key international awards.The outbreak of the Covid-19 in March 2020 buried the good start of January and February, which saw a significant growth in box office, cinema admission as well as production expenditurecompared with the same period in 2019, and led to the expansion of the streaming media. *Avengers: Endgame*, *The Lion King* and *Downton Abbey*became box office hits; *The Favourite*and *1917* were honoured with artistic awards.

**Keywords**: British Film Industry; Box Office; Production; UK Image

1. **Politics and Foreign Policy**

**B.11Developments in British Security and Defence Policy**

**Zhang Biao**

**Abstract:** Between July 2019 and May 2020, there were five major developments in the British security and defence policy. First, the UK appointed a new defence minister and a new national security adviser, and sought to appoint several heads of the intelligence agencies in the coming months. Second, the Johnson Government launched the integrated review of foreign, security and defence policy in January 2020. The review was expected to result in the biggest change in British security policy. Third, the UK actively participated in NATO and EU’s security initiatives. Fourth, the UK increased its presence in Syria, and worsened its relations with Iran. Fifth, the UK strengthened its security and defence cooperation with Asian countries such as Japan and the ASEAN countries, while increasingly considering China as its security rival. In the future, the UK will remain active in the security and defence realm, using them as instruments of raising its profile, increasing its global influence and pursuing the aim of “Global Britain”.

**Keywords**: Security and defence; NATO; Indo-Pacific; Global Britain

**B.12The New Trends of the Anglo-American Special Relationship in the Johnson Era**

**Su Hui, Xu Ruike**

**Abstract:** The Anglo-American special relationship has suffered great strain from the Trump administration since Boris Johnson took power in July 2019. Although the bilateral security cooperation remains stable, there have appeared frequent political frictions and apparent divisions on global governance between the UK and US. Furthermore, the bilateral free trade agreement negotiations are full of challenges. After Brexit, the UK’s strategic value to the US declined, but its dependence on the United States increased, which made the special relationship between the two countries more asymmetrical. The American presidential election in November 2020 will bring a great uncertainty to the special relationship. As it stands now, Joe Biden is a strong competitor for Trump. The victory of Biden will be more likely to benefit the special relationship. Otherwise, if Trump is re-elected, the strained special relationship will continue. Since World War II, the UK and the US’s common interests in maintaining the liberal international order have been an important foundation for the persistence of the special relationship. However, the Trump doctrine, with the “American first” as the core, seeks to pursue narrow American interests, renege the liberal international order and multilateral institutions and disregard allies’ interests, thereby resulting in the disappearance of the Anglo-American consensus over the maintenance of the liberal international order.

**Keywords**: Special Relationship; Political Frictions; Free Trade Agreement; Security Cooperation; Global Governance

**B.13The Unique Role of the United Kingdom Between the United States and the European Union Within Their Strategic Competitions**

**Xin Hua**

**Abstract:** As the 2nd largest economy and the strongest military power in the Europe, the United Kingdom has been playing a unique role between the United States and the European Union in their intensified bilateral strategic competitions ever since UK’s formal exit from the EU on 31 January 2020, influencing the structural characteristics of the European regional affairs, the world economy, and the international strategic landscape. In the U.S.-EU economic competitions, the Johnson government is imitating and cooperating with the U.S. in its policy-makings for industrial policy, trade protection, investment screening, and financial regulation, while learning from and collaborating with the EU in the fields of low-carbon economy, green deal, data privacy protection, and digital tax. In this way, it turns the U.S.-EU economic competitions into a pattern of fluid and unpredictable jigsaw puzzle. On the other hand, in the U.S.-EU competitions for strategic security issues, the Johnson government is increasing its collaborations with the U.S. while alienating itself from the EU. In the past year, the U.S.-UK security cooperation has been upgraded greatly. Therefore, the U.S.-EU balance of power on strategic security has been gradually tipped toward the U.S. side. Pushed by this increasingly imbalanced distribution of power, the EU and its leading member states, such as France and Germany, desire to establish a separate and self-managed system of common European security and defense all the more earnestly than ever, so as to achieve the “European strategic autonomy”. In brief, the UK is currently playing the role of “offshore balancer” between the U.S. and the EU, bringing a profound impact on the world politics.

**Keywords**: Brexit; U.S.-EU Strategic Competition; Economic Competition; Strategic Security Competitions; Offshore Balancer

**B.14UK’s Climate Change Policy under the Double Impacts of Brexit and COVID-19**

**Li Huiming**

**Abstract:** In July 2019, Boris Johnson was elected the new British Prime Minister. The new conservative government continued the Teresa May government’s goal of Net Zero emissions by 2050, and adopted a series of positive measures to promote the realization of this goal. The UK has won the right to host the 26th conference of the parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) in 2020, trying to lead the formulation of global climate governance implementation rules in the post-Paris era and play the leadership of global climate governance. However, there are big differences between the UK and the EU on the overall structure of their future relations, which affects their cooperation on climate change. Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic has also seriously affected the UK’s economic and social development and affected some policies and actions to tackle climate change, so that the COP26 has been postponed until next November. But, the UK insists that it will continue to cooperate with all relevant parties and push ahead the ambitious climate agenda by a green recovery to tackle the severe impact of the COVID-19 and take the climate change policy as the core of the economic and social rebuilding from the COVID-19. The UK government has also planned to implement the world’s first emission trading system (ETS) linked to the goal of Net Zero emission. In the near future, there are still many uncertainties in the relationship between UK and EU on the issue of climate change. How UK establishes its own ETS and links it with the EU-ETS will have a complex and far-reaching impact on the UK’s carbon pricing and climate change policy.

**Keywords**: Brexit; COVID-19; Climate Change Policy; Boris Johnson; 2050 Net Zero emissions

**B.15New Developments on the Northern Ireland Issue in the Context of Brexit**

**Zhang Xi, Wang Zhanpeng**

**Abstract:** In January 2020, the Johnson Government replaced the Backstop with *The Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol*, removing obstacles for Brexit. However, the Brexit deal does not mean a complete settlement of the Northern Ireland issue. The special tariff arrangement for Northern Ireland under the Protocol differentiates this region with other parts of the United Kingdom. It not only brings many uncertain factors to the economy and trade of Northern Ireland, but also deepens the ethnic antagonism there. The issue of the future status of Northern Ireland has risen on the political agenda of the region. With a loud call for the unification with Ireland from the Northern Irish nationalists, a combination of multiplefactors such as Brexit and the Irish general election has boosted the likelihood of a unification referendum. Changes in the political situation in Northern Ireland after Brexit haveprompted the Democratic Unionist Party and Sinn Fein to soften their stances and to restore the Northern Ireland Assembly. The restored power-sharing institution in Northern Ireland is now faced with the dual challenges of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic. The future status of Northern Ireland depends on the outcome of negotiations between theUK and the EU, cooperation between the UK and Ireland, and the game between unionists and nationalists.

**Keywords**: Brexit; *The Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol*; Restored NI Assembly; Irish General Election; COVID-19

**B.16British Global Talent Policy in the Era of Post-Brexit**

**Lyu Dayong, Wang Zhanpeng**

**Abstract:** During 2019-2020, the UK in the Brexit transition period issued its reform plan on visas and immigration system. In coping with British new industrial strategy, research and development roadmap and international education strategy under the government’s vision for “Global Britain”, the new visa policy and immigration system set out the framework of British global talent policy in the post-Brexit era which included four aspects. Firstly, the UK continued to expand its opening to global leaders and top talents of various areas. It introduced the new Global Talent visa and other service support policies. Secondly, by means of the EU Settlement Scheme and free trade agreement negotiations, the UK intended to attract and retain talents of different types from some key regions such as Europe and Commonwealth countries. Thirdly, the UK announced the new point-based immigration system to attract the high-skilled and middle-skilled workers from all over the world. The UK-EU free movement of persons would come to an end. The government’s policy on introducing international talents has changed from controlling the number of immigrants to managing the quality of immigrants. Lastly, the UK regarded international students as a talent pool. The post-study work visa was re-introduced and promoted. In general, the UK in the post-Brexit period which had “taken back control” of its border continued to make its global talent policy in the traditional pragmatic view. The reform of the UK’s visas and immigration system would push the global talent policy to develop in a fine-grained direction, but how to adapt to the shifts in the macro-environment would become a severe challenge for the development of British global talent policy.

**Keywords**: Global Talent Policy; Point-Based Immigration System; Global Talent Visa; High-Skilled Workers; Post-Study Work Visa

1. **Sino-British Relations**

**B.17China-UK Relations in the Post-Brexit Era**

**Wang Peng**

**Abstract:** From 2019 to 2020, China-UK relations continued to operate at a median level. Hong Kong and South China Sea affairs continued to be the major negative factors hindering the long-term development of China-UK relations. In addition, major events and third-party factors also posed new challenges to the maintenance of bilateral relations: the “Brexit” event in early 2020 brought greater uncertainty to China-UK relations and the bilateral cooperation in economy, trade, finance, and investment; the COVID-19 pandemic did more harm than good to China-UK relations; the Sino-US competition severely impacted China-UK relations in various areas such as Huawei, 5G market access, Hong Kong, South China Sea, Taiwan Strait, Xinjiang, human rights, and cultural exchanges. Based on this empirical research, it is unlikely that China-UK relations in the second half of 2020 will be significantly improved. Instead of engaging in conflicts or confrontation, both sides should face the reality and promote pragmatic cooperation in areas such as vaccine research and development, coordinated epidemic prevention, and economic and trade investment, as well as security cooperation in the South China Sea and political dialogue over the Hong Kong issue. Moreover, the negative factors from third parties in China-UK bilateral relations should be properly handled.

**Keywords**: China-UK relations; Brexit; COVID-19; China-US competition; Hong Kong

**B.18China’s FDI in the UK**

**Hu Dan**

**Abstract:** The UK continued to be the major destination in Europe for Chinese investment during 2019-2020. High-profile cases were lacking but enthusiasm was strong in real estate, technology, education and manufacturing. Britain’s paramount piece of legislation for national security review, *National Security and Investment Bill*, was introduced and completed first reading. It is widely estimated that it will pass later this year, marking for the first time in the country the establishment of a separate screening process on national security grounds. Against the backdrop of financial difficulties in British businesses after the pandemic hit, the government promulgated three secondary legislations in June 2020 to expand the “sensitive” sectors, lower the threshold and grant special protection to companies whose acquisition may have implications for the country’s public health. Great uncertainty is expected for the coming year in the adoption and implementation of the Bill, Britain’s China policy and relations and geopolitical shifts. Therefore, it is recommended that companies that plan to invest in the UK closely follow the procedures and practice and make decisions based on proper due diligence and choice of timing.

**Keywords**: China-UK Relations; M&A; Foreign Investment Review; National Security

**B.19Boris Johnson Government’s Two Huawei Decisions: Context and Logic**

**Liu Jin**

**Abstract:** Based on the *Telecom Supply Chain Review* conducted during the May era, the Johnson government made its Huawei decision on 28 January 2020, which allowed Huawei to play a limited role in the UK’s 5G network. This decision, however, triggered a rebellion of dozens of Tory MPs and strong dissatisfaction of Trump administration. In the following months, the COVID-19 pandemic strengthened the mistrust sentiments against China among some groups in the UK. What’s more, the Trump administration upgraded its export control against Huawei on May 15. In the context of these developments, the Johnson government’s position toward Huawei changed in as short as half a year. In its second decision in July, the Johnson government decided to put a total ban on the purchase of new Huawei 5G kits and remove Huawei from UK 5G networks. Studying the two decisions’ contents and logic carefully, one could find that the UK is accustomed to maximizing its benefits by technical arrangements, avoiding the so-called taking sides. However, given the high politicization of the Huawei issue and the significant technical and security consequences caused by USA’s sanctions on Huawei, the Johnson government now finds it extremely hard to stick to this technical approach.

**Keywords**: Huawei; 5G; Telecom Supply Chain; Sino-UK Relations; Sino-US Relations