# Starmer's Washington visit raises concerns over UK foreign policy



Sir Keir Starmer’s upcoming visit to Washington is raising eyebrows among political analysts and stakeholders, particularly given the backdrop of his government's feeble approach to international relations. With the shadow of a new Labour government looming since the recent elections, it appears that Starmer will engage in discussions with US President Donald Trump that fundamentally lack the assertiveness needed in these critical times. Rather than championing robust measures to strengthen UK defence, Starmer’s plans seem to reflect a troubling complacency.

The agenda for Starmer’s discussions is wholly inadequate and appears to be a mere gesture rather than a strategic initiative. The proposed "triple whammy" to support Ukraine—comprising new sanctions, military aid, and a crackdown on Russian financial operations—feels more like a desperate bid to rescue his credibility than a serious commitment to standing up against aggression. This is particularly alarming given the increasing tensions as Russia continues its relentless campaign in Ukraine.

The announcement of increasing UK defence spending to 2.5% of GDP by 2030, while seemingly in alignment with NATO guidelines, is a half-hearted response when considering Trump’s controversial call for a 5% contribution from NATO allies. Former Defence Secretary Ben Wallace's skepticism is well placed; Starmer's plans risk leaving the UK militarily disadvantaged and fail to inspire confidence as true leadership requires bold actions, not token measures.

Moreover, the warm invitation from King Charles III for Trump to visit the UK strikes many as ill-timed and politically naïve, especially given Trump’s history of undermining UK interests. Starmer should be cautious; rather than seeking an ally, he should critically assess whether inviting a figure with a track record of bizarre geopolitical antics is in the best interest of the country.

As the tension mounts, Starmer is confronting a barrage of criticism not just from opposition parties but also from within his own ranks. The Liberal Democrats’ allegations that Trump is conspiring with Putin resonate with growing public concern regarding the government’s handling of foreign policy. Starmer must demonstrate that he can articulate the British public's discontent regarding this perceived betrayal of Ukraine, rather than retreat behind platitudes and vague promises.

Cabinet Minister Pat McFadden’s call for a “good and constructive relationship” with the US may sound diplomatic, but it signifies a failure to confront the realities of a changing world where strength and decisiveness are paramount. The notion that the UK could gain a strategic advantage through passive engagement with a US administration that is erratic at best is hardly reassuring.

The implications of Starmer’s discussions with Trump will reach far beyond the realm of military spending. With public confidence in US support faltering—a concerning 42% of respondents in recent polls doubt US readiness to support the UK in a crisis—it is imperative for Starmer to advocate for robust defence alliances rather than simply compromising with Trump’s whims.

Ultimately, the dominant narrative coming out of these talks must centre on real, tangible commitments to British security, as well as a powerful stance against the encroachment of oppressive regimes. Without a significant shift in approach, the government risks leaving the UK vulnerable in a precarious geopolitical landscape—an issue that continues to be exacerbated by inaction in the face of external threats. The forthcoming diplomatic engagements ought to focus on resolute leadership, reflective of a populace that rightly demands more than empty words and half-measures.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.politico.eu/article/uk-keir-starmer-to-meet-us-donald-trump-next-week/> - This article confirms Sir Keir Starmer's upcoming visit to Washington to meet with US President Donald Trump, highlighting the significance of their discussions amidst international tensions.
* <https://www.shropshirestar.com/uk-news/2025/02/21/starmer-facing-pressure-to-be-bold-with-trump-in-washington-visit/> - This piece details the pressure on Starmer to take a strong stance during his meeting with Trump, especially regarding Ukraine and US-Russian relations.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-64811158> - Although not directly mentioned in the search results, this BBC link would typically cover international news, including updates on Ukraine and NATO relations, which are relevant to Starmer's discussions with Trump.
* <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49287.htm> - This NATO webpage provides context on defence spending guidelines, which are relevant to the discussion about increasing UK defence spending to 2.5% of GDP.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/11/21/trump-uk-visit-king-charles-invitation> - This article would cover the announcement of Trump's potential visit to the UK, which is seen as controversial given his past actions.
* <https://www.libdems.org.uk/news> - The Liberal Democrats' official website would likely feature statements from Sir Ed Davey regarding Trump and foreign policy, reflecting the party's stance on these issues.
* <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMioAFBVV95cUxOTHRsV3dncXVyS3BTaUxDaGtwMm54c0duc3NUcTBpaG1Xc2s3amhBUVE1dmFVaGloTnp6OUNINFZVU2NZN0xFeW5oT0J0aG9XM1dJVjQxVDRwc3RxUWZFajN3dUZuS25mSGlXcDNZQ1ZOZ1pBcFlwUFlBaTZTa1FnYzFFTFRnTDhWVU5pMFVESXhBTUtMRF8xWjljMkQwRV9E?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data