

Does the UK government have any concept of joined-up po..

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After events over the last couple of days, including the sinking of an Iranian ship off Sri Lanka by a submarine that almost certainly sailed from the UK base in Diego Garcia, it is clear that the UK is now fully engaged in an illegal war against Iran, despite opposition from leading members of the Cabinet and the advice of the Attorney General.

Simultaneously, [we have reports](#) of the government announcing a new crackdown on inward migration to the UK.

That raises an obvious question that seems almost entirely absent from the political debate in the UK.

This is that if the government says that reducing immigration is one of its top priorities, why is it simultaneously supporting policies that are almost guaranteed to increase it?

This contradiction is so obvious that it is hard to understand why it receives so little attention. To see why, we need to step back and consider what drives migration.

First, most migration is not primarily about opportunity; it is about necessity. People move when they can no longer live safely or sustainably where they are. War, state collapse, persecution, environmental crisis, and economic destruction are the triggers.

Second, Europe and the UK have already experienced this reality. The conflicts in Afghanistan and Syria created large refugee flows. Many of those who eventually arrived in Europe were fleeing wars in which Western countries had themselves played a role.

Third, migration patterns follow geography and networks. When instability spreads across a region, displacement spreads with it. Iran sits within precisely the same geopolitical region that has already produced large refugee movements.

Fourth, Iran is not a small country. Its population is around 90 million people. Even limited destabilisation in a country of that scale could create large numbers of displaced

people.

Fifth, when such displacement occurs, people move in stages. They first flee internally (as people now are in Lebanon as a result of Israeli threats), then to neighbouring countries, and eventually some move further afield, including towards Europe and the UK.

None of this is controversial. It is how migration has worked repeatedly over the last half-century. And that is why the current UK position looks so incoherent.

On the one hand, ministers claim that immigration is one of the most pressing issues facing the country. They promise to reduce migration. They talk endlessly about controlling borders.

On the other hand, the UK continues to support military and geopolitical actions that destabilise entire regions.

Those two positions cannot both be a part of policy at the same time: the pressures they create oppose each other.

If a government genuinely wishes to reduce migration, the single most effective strategy is straightforward: it is to ensure that people are able to remain safely in their own countries.

That means supporting stability, peace, functioning economies, and viable states.

It means avoiding the destruction of the very conditions that allow people to stay where they live.

It means recognising that foreign policy and migration policy are inseparable.

Yet the UK political debate treats them as if they were completely unrelated.

This is not a minor oversight. The political paradox is, in fact, stark. The same political class that demands lower immigration is actively participating in policies that increase the likelihood of migration. This is not joined-up government. It is the exact opposite.

There are consequences to this failure of joined-up thinking.

One consequence is predictable political hypocrisy. Politicians condemn migrants at the same time as they support the policies that create them.

Another consequence is social division. Migrants become convenient political scapegoats for problems that were, in part, created by policy choices.

A third consequence is the erosion of trust in government. When policies contradict

each other so obviously, voters eventually notice.

And there is a fourth consequence. Human suffering increases unnecessarily because the root causes of displacement are ignored.

None of this suggests that migration is simple to manage. But it does suggest something very important: migration policy cannot be separated from foreign policy.

If the UK government genuinely wishes to reduce migration pressures, the starting points are obvious.

- * It should pursue policies that reduce conflict rather than intensify it.
- * It should support diplomacy rather than destabilisation.
- * It should invest in global stability rather than geopolitical confrontation, and
- * It should recognise that helping people live safely in their own countries is not only humane; it is also the most effective migration policy available. Instead, we appear to be doing the opposite.

Which leaves us with a final question. Does the UK government have any concept of what joined-up policy actually means? At present, it appears not.