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Trade Policy as Foreign Policy: EU's Global Trade Agreements with the UK Post-Brexit

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Abstract: *The United Kingdom's departure from the European Union (EU) in 2020, commonly referred to as Brexit, marked a significant shift in European and global politics, economics, and trade. This paper explores the evolving role of trade policy as a tool of foreign policy, with a particular focus on the European Union's post-Brexit trade agreements with the UK. The EU, as a major global economic actor, had to recalibrate its trade strategies in light of the UK's exit, resulting in the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), a comprehensive agreement that governs future trade relations between the two entities. The paper investigates the political and economic motivations behind the TCA, highlighting how trade policy has become an integral part of the EU's foreign policy framework. Specifically, it delves into how the EU used the negotiation of the TCA to protect its economic interests, manage political tensions, and assert its geopolitical influence in the post-Brexit world. Furthermore, the paper considers the broader implications of this shift in trade policy for the EU's external relations with other countries and regions, including the EU's attempts to balance its economic integration with a global trade agenda in a world increasingly shaped by rising geopolitical tensions. Drawing upon primary sources and academic literature, the paper illustrates how trade agreements, like the TCA, are now used as instruments of foreign policy, reflecting the EU's ambitions to maintain its global regulatory power while adapting to the changing dynamics brought on by Brexit. The paper concludes by considering the long-term implications of Brexit for the EU's position in the global trade system and its ability to navigate future international challenges in a post-Brexit world.*

agreement
shift interests
cooperation
departure politics