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From Alex Ellis

24th June 2020

Update on the Integrated Review

Dear Mr Reid,

The Government paused its Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy in early April due to the pressing need to focus on COVID-19. I am writing to inform you that the Prime Minister has directed that we formally recommence the review, building on the work already undertaken.

The Government's aim continues to be for an ambitious Integrated Review that is guided by the UK's foreign policy and national security objectives over the next decade. The original goal of the review remains to take the unique opportunity presented to us by our departure from the EU to; reassess our priorities; define the Government's ambition for the UK's role in the world at a time when the global landscape is already changing dramatically; and set out how the UK will be a problem-solving and burden-sharing nation. To this we now add the need to set a strong direction for recovery from COVID-19, at home and overseas, so that together we can "build back better".

Securing our domestic interests and our global influence continues to be essential - ensuring our international action is connected to our domestic objectives, including C-19 recovery. The review will also continue to assess the capabilities and systems reforms that will be needed to support our aims, in addition to seizing the opportunities offered by uniting development and diplomacy under the new Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

We will be engaging with experts beyond Whitehall and wider stakeholders with an interest in our nation's security and prosperity. This includes our allies and partners, building on our discussions with them on C-19 response and recovery. In this way we will ensure that some of the best minds in the UK and beyond are feeding into the review's conclusions and challenging traditional Whitehall assumptions and thinking.

We have been following your inquiries with interest during the pause and we look forward to engaging with your Committee's work.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Ellis
Deputy National Security Adviser - Integrated Review