



10 DOWNING STREET

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www.gov.uk/number10

From Alex Ellis

8th July 2020

Integrated Review

Dear Chairs,

The Prime Minister thanks you for your letter regarding the Integrated Review (IR) of 30 June, and has asked me to reply on his behalf.

The Prime Minister has directed that the IR take the opportunity presented by the UK's departure from the European Union to reassess our priorities, define the Government's ambition for the UK's role in the world, and establish how the UK will be a burden-sharing and problem-solving nation. This has involved going back to first principles on the UK's foreign policy and national security objectives.

Our first step in the IR process has been to create a policy framework that, once agreed by Ministers, would then set the direction for the rest of the review—that is, the development of detailed policy options and, ultimately, decisions on capabilities and on changes to our system, to support our aims. Prior to the pause necessitated by COVID-19 (C-19) in April, the Government had undertaken much of the analysis required to create the policy framework. This involved: detailed horizon-scanning, covering future trends, opportunities, risks and threats; evidence-gathering and policy analysis; and engagement, all undertaken within a structured cross-Whitehall process.

During the pause, the Government retained a small team in the Cabinet Office and No. 10 to continue this work and to evaluate the course and consequences of C-19. As we return to the policy baseline, we have amended our approach to the IR in order to meet the Government's additional and pressing objective of setting a strong direction for recovery from C-19, at home and overseas. In doing so, the Government has undertaken new horizon-scanning and fresh analysis of key policy areas in a cross-Whitehall process, to further strengthen the evidence base. Our work in this phase has focused particularly on those policy areas that have been especially impacted by C-19. These include:

- intensified geopolitical competition;
- the effect of this competition on our ability to work with others in tackling global issues of strategic importance to the UK, such as global health; and
- domestic and international resilience, such as the security of international supply chains in strategic sectors.

The IR is also now drawing in elements of work initially begun in response to C-19, such as that led by the Department for International Trade on supply chains and that by DFID on providing

support to vulnerable countries, demonstrating how the cross-government process is bringing in departments and agencies where they are relevant to UK national security.

As stated previously, the IR will remain closely aligned with the Spending Review, to ensure that departments are equipped with the resources they need to enact the review's conclusions, including the new international department, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. An announcement on the Spending Review will be made in due course.

Finally, we are working to publish a dedicated page on GOV.UK with up-to-date information on the IR, adding to that previously published via press release and correspondence with Committees. The Government has been conducting targeted engagement via departments and from the centre. Following the review's recent recommencement, we have stepped up our efforts, using a range of mechanisms to engage proactively with stakeholders with an interest in our nation's security and prosperity. These include working with our extensive network overseas, a series of online meetings and workshops, and peer review, working within the constraints created by C-19. We will continue to use these mechanisms, and will expand our engagement as the IR develops.

As was the case before the review was paused due to C-19, the Government is keen to engage with your Committees, to discuss in more detail the progress made so far and to hear your insights and views on policy priorities and debates. I would once again like to offer an informal briefing before the Summer Recess and will work with your staff to arrange this at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Ellis". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Alex Ellis
Deputy National Security Adviser - Integrated Review