

Defence Committee

In Search of Strategy — The 2020 Integrated Review

First Report of Session 2019–21

HC 165



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HC 165

Report, together with formal minutes relating
to the report

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The Defence Committee

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Summary

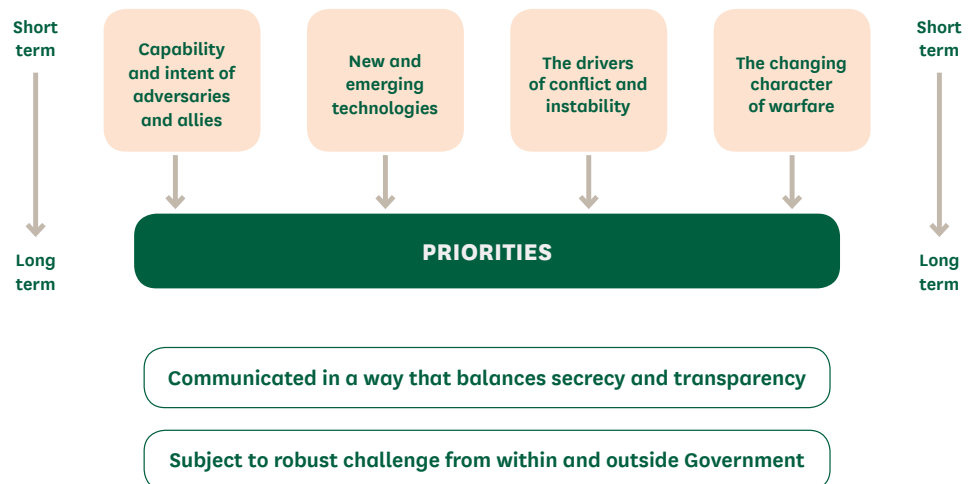
Senior ministerial leadership

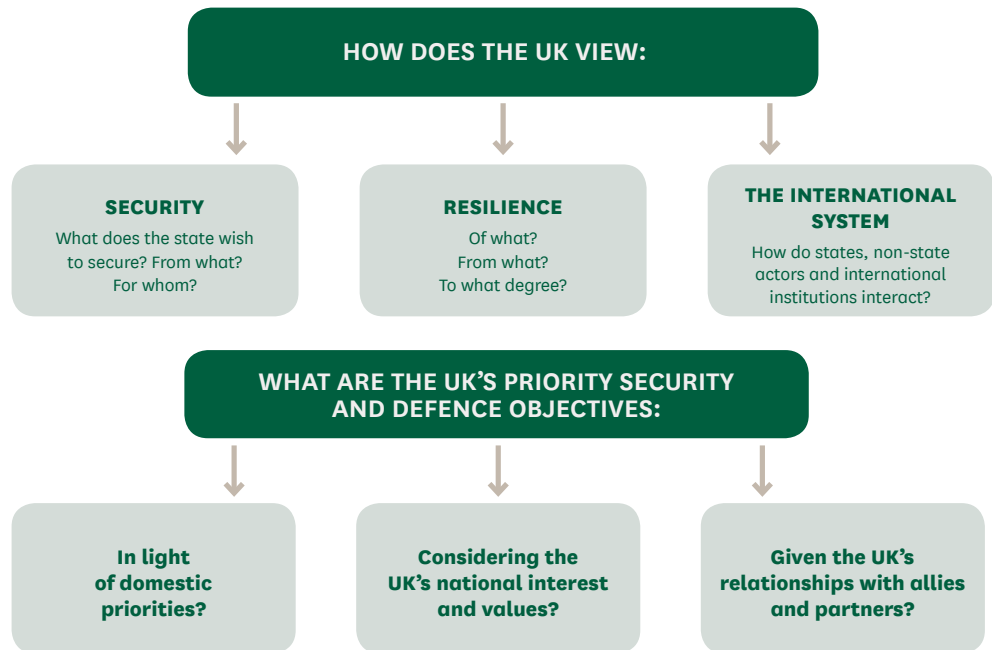
Thematic and regional X-Government
input and ownership



External engagement and review

What are the natural and man made threats and risks to the UK?





**What should the UK's overall defence posture look like?
What platforms, weapons and personnel, readiness
and maintenance are required?**

Capabilities

- To ensure resilience, readiness and adaptability?
- To achieve the "critical mass" required for our Armed Forces to protect the UK?
- To respond to and exploit technological developments?

Resources

- What is the total capital funding required?
- What are the consequences of not making these resources available?

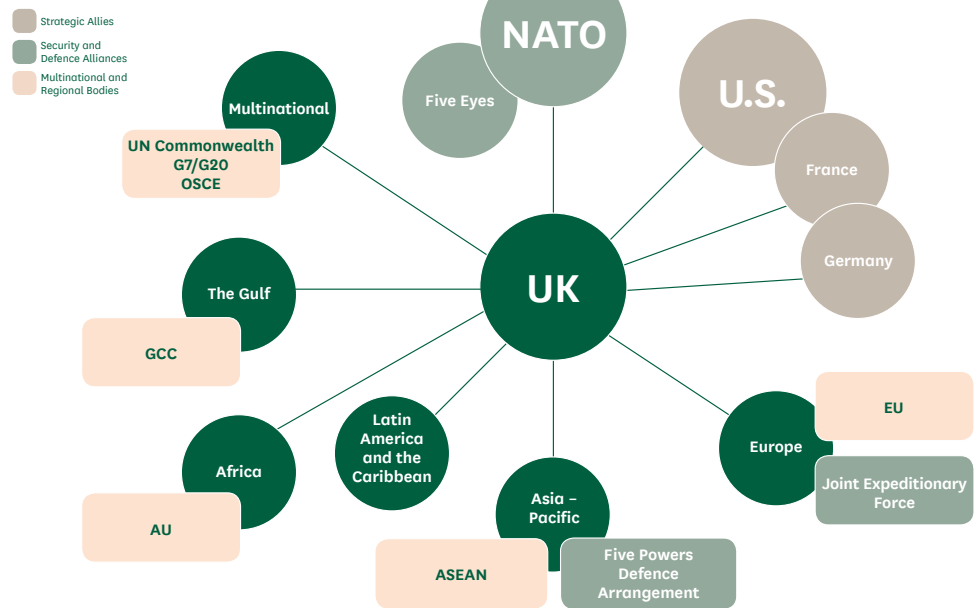
Procurement

- To ensure the resilience of logistics and supply?
- To support the UK defence industry?
- To foster innovation and ensure access to IP?
- Balancing efficiency and sovereign defence industrial capability, if necessary?

Transparent and Structured Engagement and Challenge



International Engagement



1 Introduction

1. During the Queen’s Speech on 19 December 2019 the Government announced plans to conduct an Integrated Security, Defence and Foreign Policy Review. Heralded as “the most radical reassessment of [the UK’s] place in the world since the end of the Cold War”, the Review promises to “cover all aspects of international policy from defence to diplomacy and development.”¹

2. On 24th March, the Prime Minister wrote to the Committee to confirm that the Government was diverting resources from across the Civil Service to work on the COVID-19 response and had scaled back efforts on the Integrated Review.² On 9th April, the Deputy National Security Advisor, Alex Ellis, wrote to the Committee to further explain that “consultation and engagement that we had planned with external stakeholders and Parliament, including private briefings, will be placed on hold until the Review is resumed.”³

3. The Committee welcomed the short delay to the Review in light of the COVID-19 pandemic but were pleased to receive confirmation on the 8th July that the Review had restarted. We recognise that COVID-19 may have implications for the UK’s security, defence, development and foreign policy and therefore understand why the Government has stated that:

...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.⁴

4. The conclusions and recommendations contained within this report are intended to contribute to the Government’s approach to the Review. We will conduct a second phase of this inquiry which will employ the approach described in this report to consider the substantive defence issues that the Integrated Review should address.

5. We have heard that one of the key ways that this Review will differ from recent Reviews is the inclusion of a “foreign policy baseline.”⁵ We have also been told that the UK’s departure from the European Union and an increasingly isolationist United States have challenged the UK’s traditional twin-pillared approach to foreign policy.⁶ Evidence has also stressed the extent to which

1 HM Government, [Queen’s Speech](#), 19 December 2019

2 [Correspondence from No 10](#) to the Chair of the Joint Committee on National Security Strategy and Chairs of the Defence, Foreign Affairs and International Development Committees, 24th March 2020

3 [Correspondence from the Deputy National Security Advisor](#) to the Chair of the Joint Committee on National Security Strategy and Chairs of the Defence, Foreign Affairs and International Development Committees, 9th April 2020

4 [Correspondence from the Deputy National Security Advisor](#) to the Chair of the Joint Committee on National Security Strategy and Chairs of the Defence, Foreign Affairs and International Development Committees, 8th July 2020

5 [Q4](#)

6 [Q73](#)

COVID-19 has focused attention on the vulnerabilities of the Western “rules-based international order” and looks to be leading to increasing inter-state competition and escalating international tension.⁷

6. Within this context, this report recognises that the Review may be the most important that the UK has conducted since the 1940s. As Lord Ricketts told us:

In a sense, this is a fundamental review because this is a change in Britain’s position in the world, a more fundamental change than any time in the last 50 years.⁸

7. We suggest ways in which Government should organise and approach the Review process if it is to rise to this challenge. We present evidence that a Review should be an exercise in prioritisation. We suggest a number of first principles to help to identify the UK’s security, defence and foreign policy in order to ensure that the Review provides a sustainable and actionable framework for the future of defence.

8. Having identified the priority objectives for the UK’s security, defence development and foreign policy, we also highlight the importance of ensuring the Review prioritizes the threats and risks to the UK. It is only by considering these objectives, threats, risks and opportunities that the Review can produce the necessary evidence base to inform the future role, operating concepts and capabilities for defence.

This report is our contribution to clarifying the Government’s approach to the remainder of the Integrated Review.

7 [Q56](#)

8 [Q62](#)

2 Scheduling, Structure and Approach

2.1 A Steady Drumbeat for Defence

9. The 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) included a commitment to undertake a security and defence review every five years.⁹ Witnesses broadly supported aligning Reviews with the start of new Parliaments, given that any new Government will want to evaluate the UK's security and defence policy.¹⁰ However, recent experience demonstrates that if a Review is insufficiently resourced or significant strategic shocks occur within the five-year cycle then it may be necessary to carry out additional interim reviews.

Table 1: Review Fatigue? Recent UK Defence Reviews

Announced	Published	Review
1994 Jul	1994 Oct	Front Line First: The Defence Cost Study
1997 May	1998 Jul	The Strategic Defence Review: Modern Forces for A Modern World
2002 Jul		The Strategic Defence Review: A New Chapter
2003–2004		Defence White Paper (December 2003) Delivering Security in a Changing World: Future Capabilities (July 2004)
2010 May	2010 Oct	The Strategic Defence and Security Review: Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty:
2011 Apr	2011 July	Defence Transformation
2015 Jun	2015 Nov	National Security Strategy/Strategic Defence and Security Review: A Secure and Prosperous United Kingdom
2017 Jul	2018 Mar	National Security Capability Review
2018 Jan	2018 Dec	The Modernising Defence Programme: Mobilising, Modernising & Transforming Defence
Oct 2019	ONGOING	The Integrated Security, Defence and Foreign Policy Review

10. As Professor Chalmers, Deputy Director-General of RUSI, told us:

The 2010 review was followed by the three-month exercise in 2011, because the sums did not add up in the 2010 review. The 2015 review was followed by the NSCR and the Modernising Defence Programme—again, the 2015 NSCR made entirely unrealistic assumptions about efficiency savings, which subsequently proved to be unviable.¹¹

9 HM Government, [A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The Strategic Security and Defence Review](#), CM 7948, October 2010, p 9

10 [ISD0034](#); [ISD0040](#)

11 [Q43](#)

11. Douglas Barrie, Senior Fellow for Military Aerospace at IISS, told us that the frequency of defence Reviews has led to a degree of “review fatigue” within the Ministry of Defence.¹² Professor Chalmers told us that officials involved in these exercises will also be responsible for other areas of policy. As such, he argued that, “there have to be spaces in which the Ministry of Defence is not doing a review, because it takes up significant resources.”¹³ Professor Chalmers suggested that if unrealistic “efficiencies” and “savings”¹⁴ are proposed as part of the Review then “you will end up with supplementary review in 2021 and 2022, in which case you really will have review fatigue.”¹⁵

12. In their written evidence, the Oxford Research Group’s Remote Warfare Programme stressed that lessons should be learned from the time that it has taken for the UK’s international partners to conduct similar Reviews. Informed by consultation with those involved in Canada’s 2015 Review, the Group noted those involved in this process felt that the outcome of public consultation “had not been effectively incorporated as a direct result of excessive time pressure.” The evidence suggests that the fact that the Canadian Review was carried out over 12 months “should serve as a clear warning to the Government that it is likely to struggle to incorporate external expertise into the Review based on the proposed timelines.”¹⁶

13. Reflecting on his involvement in the 2010 SDSR, Lord Ricketts, a former National Security Adviser, explained that the National Security Council did not have time to “look deep down into the difficult issues” during the sixth month Review. Lord Ricketts noted that “at the time we were not in the middle of a global pandemic crisis” but nevertheless suggested that “with hindsight, it would have been better to have had more time to really dig into the detail of some of the difficult defence choices that they had to make.”¹⁷

14. Following the restart of the Review, the Secretary of State for Defence told us that “if there is a silver lining to this outbreak, it is that we have a long time to consider a good Integrated Review.”¹⁸ Following its recommencement, we were informed that the Integrated Review “will remain closely aligned with the Spending Review” which is expected to report in “Autumn.”¹⁹ To date, no further detail of the timeline for the Comprehensive Spending Review has been made public.

12 [Q39–40](#)

13 [Q39](#)

14 We agree with our predecessor Committee that the combined use of these terms is unhelpful and there is a need for “greater clarity as to the difference between genuine improvements and efficiency and cuts in personnel, equipment and capability”. See Defence Committee, First Report of Session 2017–19, 12 December 2017, [Gambling on ‘Efficiency’: Defence Acquisition and Procurement](#), HC 431, p 14

15 [Q43](#)

16 [ISD019](#)

17 [Q38](#)

18 Introductory Session with the Secretary of State, 22 April 2020, HC 295, [Q26](#)

19 [Correspondence from the Deputy National Security Advisor](#) to the Chair of the Joint Committee on National Security Strategy and Chairs of the Defence, Foreign Affairs and International Development Committees, 8th July 2020

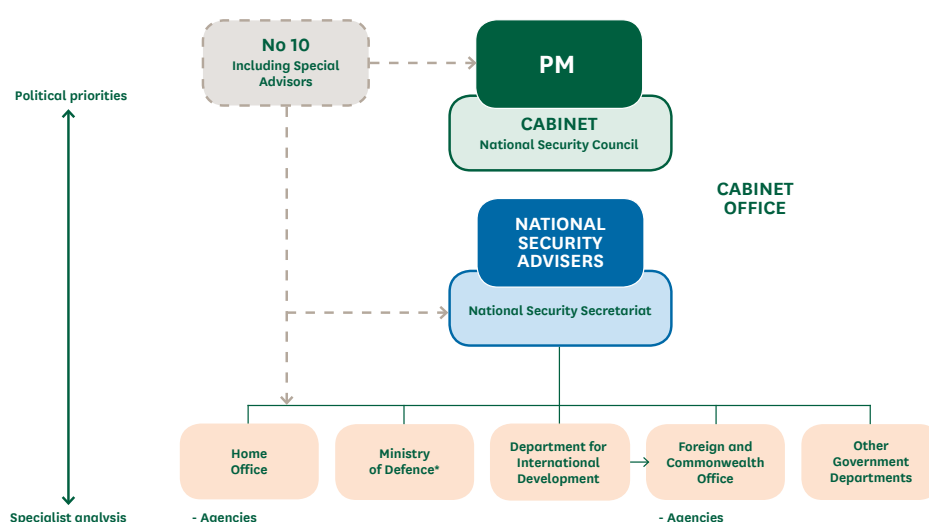
15. Conclusion

Frequently conducting supplementary reviews outside of the quinquennial schedule established during the 2010 SDSR risks undermining the credibility of the UK's security and defence policy and creates undue uncertainty for UK defence planners. Our recommendations contribute to ensuring that the Integrated Review provides a framework for the UK's security, defence, development and foreign policy for at least the next five years.

2.2 Political Leadership and Specialist Analysis

Mapping an Integrated Review

1



* See the MoD's Contribution to the Integrated Review on p 12

16. We have heard that strong political leadership is required to ensure that a Review makes difficult decisions against a backdrop of finite resources. Evidence submitted to this inquiry supports the view that the Prime Minister, Cabinet and the relevant Cabinet Committee—the National Security Council—should be responsible for the Review's outcomes. However, we have also been warned that the level of political involvement throughout the Review process and the structure and scheduling for a range of Government Departments to be involved will be a critical determinant to its success.

17. Tom McKane, Former Director General for Strategy MoD, told us that:

There are some aspects of this Review that will inevitably be handled by the Department or the agency responsible for a particular bit of policy or capability, because the subject matter is specialised. For example, if you were going to review some aspect of defence logistics, you might bring in outside experts.

That is one way, potentially, to make sure that everybody stays honest. The other way that it could be done is by looking at topics that affect a number of different Departments.²⁰

18. Mr McKane went on to suggest that one way to organise a thematic approach to the Review would be to assign ownership of different issues to individuals or Departments that have “an interest in it, but for whom it is perhaps not their predominant interest.”²¹ Mr McKane noted that strong leadership from the National Security Secretariat staff is required to oversee and coordinate such an approach and went on to highlight that it is important that these officials and No. 10 have a close working relationship if the Review is to be a success. Drawing on his experience of previous reviews, Mr McKane told us that this relationship:

...could be mutually reinforcing, but it is possible to see how it could be a less comfortable ride. Given that the Prime Minister will not have the time to personally focus on this, day in, day out, as the review progresses, who in the Cabinet is going to perform that function?²²

Calling something “integrated” does not magically make it so

19. Douglas Barrie similarly warned that fault lines could appear between the different Departments involved in the Review and cautioned that “calling something “integrated” does not magically make it so.” Mr Barrie suggested that if a range of Departments are to provide input into the Review process then there is the possibility that workstreams run “in parallel rather than in a sequential fashion” and that “things could get horribly out of kilter.”²³

20. In their submission, Dr Blagden and Professor Porter note that central coordination from the Prime Minister’s Policy Unit and the Cabinet Office is therefore essential to ensure that Department’s analytical contributions are aligned with the Review’s “fundamental strategic priorities.”²⁴ Given that expertise in the Review’s various policy areas will lie outside of No 10, Dr Blagden and Professor Porter argue that Departmental teams must be “given appropriate intellectual time and space to debate, reconsider, and innovate”, but they also stress that a Review requires “leadership that provides a healthy transmission belt between the centre’s priorities and subordinates’ specialist analysis.”²⁵

20 [Q26](#)

21 [Q27](#)

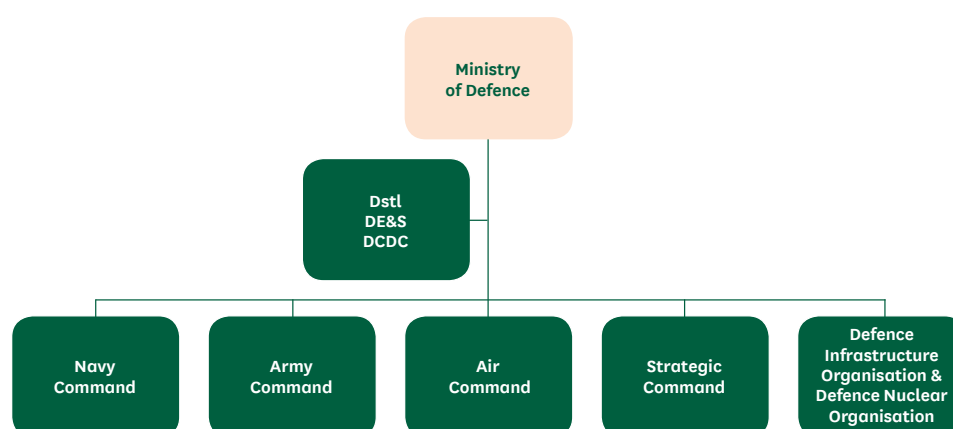
22 [Q48](#)

23 [Q28](#)

24 [ISD0036](#)

25 [ISD0036](#)

The MoD's Contribution to the Integrated Review



21. As well as ensuring that the Review is conducted as a cross-Government exercise, we have heard that the roles and responsibilities of different Departments and the UK's security, defence, development and foreign policy architecture should be considered within its scope.²⁶ As such, it is surprising that the Government announced the merger of DfID and the FCO prior to the Review's conclusion.²⁷

22. The Oxford Research Group note that the Fusion Doctrine introduced as part of the 2018 National Security Capability Review (NCSR) was the most recent initiative to encourage a cross-Government approach to security, defence, development and foreign policy.²⁸ Professor Chalmers explained to us that the NCSR established new structures and processes for cross-government integration. According to the NCSR report, this new approach would allow Government to use the full range of its "security, economic and influence capabilities" to achieve its strategic priorities.²⁹ In particular, Professor Chalmers drew attention to the fact that the NCSR:

...set up senior responsible owners for a series of thematic issues, such as Atlantic security, with heads in one Department but nevertheless with a number of cross-Governmental teams with people from two, three or four Departments sitting together.³⁰

23. When asked in January 2019 by the previous JCNSS how this approach would have more impact than previous attempts at cross-government working, the National Security Adviser, Sir Mark Sedwill, said:

It is strategy-led, and there are three elements to it: strategy-led design of policy and planning; cross-government mechanisms

26 [ISD0028](#)

27 [Correspondence to the Prime Minister](#) from the Chairs of the Defence, Foreign Affairs and International Development Committees, concerning the Integrated Security, Defence and Foreign Policy Review - June 2020

28 [ISD0019](#)

29 HM Government, [National Security Capability Review](#), March 2018, p. 3

30 [Q28](#)

to implement, including senior officials at the three-star level leading cross-government teams to implement the decisions of the National Security Council; and a link between that and capability, through the annual posture reviews and the five-yearly cycle of SDSRs. Those are still developing; it has been in place for only about a year.³¹

24. Whilst these arrangements may be in their infancy, Lord Stirrup, a former Chief of the Defence Staff, told us that:

The crucial issue in terms of security and defence going forward is going to be those processes for working between Departments, so do you routinely consider other Departments' needs when you look at your own? Do you routinely have those kinds of meeting at the highest level?³²

Lord Stirrup warned us that Departments may work well together when under pressure to do so but unless there are incentives in place to foster longer term cross-Government collaboration, this can evaporate over time. His evidence suggests that whilst new arrangements such as the National Security Strategy and Implementation Group described above may be helpful, there is also a need for high-level political leadership to drive integration.³³

25. *Recommendation*

In its response to this report, the Government should set out how and when the Prime Minister and other Cabinet Ministers will be involved in the Review process. Additionally, we seek clarity regarding:

- a) ***Which Cabinet Minister will chair the Review process in the Prime Minister's absence***
- b) ***What role the No 10 Policy Unit and Specialist Advisers will play in the Review process***

The Government should:

- c) ***Set out the respective roles and responsibilities of the NSC and its relevant sub-committees, the Cabinet and Government Departments in the Review process***
- d) ***Explain what role the National Security Adviser and NSC(O) will play in the Review process and what role the National Security Strategy and Implementation Group will play in driving integration at an official level, and***
- e) ***Explain whether thematic workstreams have been identified.***

31 Oral evidence taken before the JCNSS on 28 January 2019, HC (2017–19) 625, [Q34](#)

32 [Q68](#)

33 [Q68](#)

26. *The Review should assess and report on the effectiveness of existing Government structures and policies designed to facilitate cross-Government collaboration. This should include a review of the National Security Council and associated policy frameworks and funds, such as the Fusion Doctrine and the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund. If existing collaboration is inadequate, the Review should identify ways to ensure greater cross-Government collaboration in the future.*

2.3 Capturing Lessons Learned

27. Evidence to this inquiry has highlighted that the Integrated Review should learn lessons from recent Reviews, the security, defence and foreign policies that flowed from them and recent military operations. A recurring theme in the evidence we received is that earlier Reviews failed to match ambition with the resources required to realise them. As written evidence from the Royal Aeronautical Society notes:

History is littered with inadequately costed Defence reviews, not least the Strategic Defence Review in 1998 where the Ministry of Defence subsequently played financial catch-up for the next decade.³⁴

28. This example is particularly noteworthy given that we repeatedly heard the 1998 SDR described in a favourable light: “the last time there was a significant change not driven primarily by money—it was driven more by a shift in foreign policy.”³⁵ Whilst the inclusion of foreign policy in the forthcoming Integrated Review has been welcomed as an opportunity to bring clarity to the aims and objectives of “Global Britain”, it is clear that the outcomes of this exercise will only be implementable if properly resourced [See Chapter 5].

29. We have also heard that the Review should capture lessons learned from existing security, defence, development and foreign policy strategies, policies and programmes and engage with internal Government stakeholders involved in their delivery.³⁶ Similarly, several written evidence submission have described the importance of ensuring that the Review reflects on the strategic consequences of Operations Herrick, Telic, Ellamy and Shader.³⁷ Where Government has captured lessons learned from these operations, such as in the Ministry of Defence’s “The Good Operation” guidance published in response to the findings of the Chilcot inquiry, they should be reviewed and

34 [ISD0012](#)

35 [Q44](#)

36 [ISD0028](#)

37 [ISD0019](#), [ISD0031](#)

feed in to the Review process.³⁸ Previous inquiries from our predecessor and other Select Committees can also contribute to Government's understanding of the successes and failures of previous Reviews.³⁹

30. Conclusion

To ensure lessons are learned from previous security and defence Reviews, the Integrated Review should engage with a wide range of stakeholders who were engaged in or scrutinised previous Reviews and the policies, programmes and military deployments that flowed from them.

Recommendation

The Government should review how far these activities were aligned with or deviated from the outcomes of previous Reviews, in order to better understand how to ensure the Integrated Review provides a sustainable and actionable framework for the future. In response to our report, if it has not done so before, the Government should:

- a) *Explain how existing lessons learned will inform the Review*
- b) *Set out what new analysis will be carried out*
- c) *Ensure that there are effective mechanisms for implementing the Review, and*
- d) *Explain how the Review's successes or failings will be measured.*

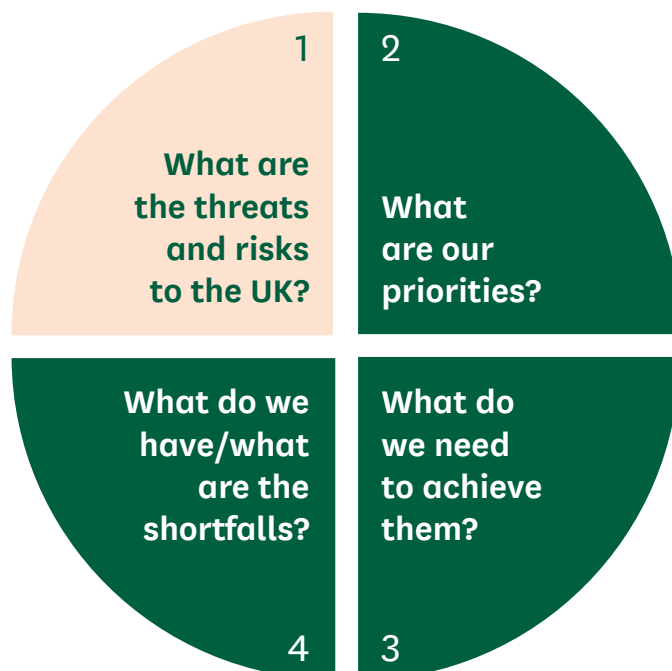
³⁸ [ISD032](#).

³⁹ E.g. Defence Committee, 7th Report of Session 2017–19, 18 June 2018, [Beyond 2 per cent: A preliminary report on the Modernising Defence Programme](#), HC 818. Joint Committee on National Security Strategy, 4th Report of Session 2017–19, 21 July 2019, [Revisiting the UK's national security strategy: The National Security Capability Review and the Modernising Defence Programme](#), HL 406 | HC 2072.

2.4 Challenging the “Ways, Ends and Means”

Senior ministerial leadership

Thematic and regional X-Government
input and ownership



External engagement and review

If you are to have a strategy that is worth the name, you must address ends, ways and means together

31. The initial announcement of the Review stated that it would be the “most radical reassessment of our place in the world since the end of the Cold War.”⁴⁰ Later statements claimed that the Government would conduct “the deepest review of Britain’s security, defence and foreign policy.”⁴¹ Whilst this ambition is to be welcomed, we have heard that if the Integrated Review is to be truly strategic, it must go beyond political rhetoric and adhere to first principles.

32. From a Defence perspective, recent Reviews have been understood as an exercise in identifying the “means” (resources) and “ways” (courses of action) which are needed to deliver the “ends” of national security identified in the National Security Strategy.⁴² As Lord Stirrup, a former Chief of the Defence Staff, told us:

We argue about the value of the various reviews that have been undertaken over the years, but in my view one thing is crucial: if you are to have a strategy that is worth the name, you must address ends, ways and means together. Means in this case

40 HM Government, [Queen’s Speech December 2019: background briefing notes](#), 19 December 2019, p 141

41 HL Deb, Volume 801, [Column 178](#), 8 January 2020

42 Ministry of Defence, [How Defence Works](#), December 2015, p 14

are essentially the defence budget. If you do not do the whole package, including the money, together, then you do not have a strategic review.⁴³

33. Whilst the ways/end/means formulation is ingrained in Defence thinking, the Committee has received evidence in confidence from a former official involved in previous Reviews highlighting the limitations of this approach in practice. They told us that whilst the MoD sees Reviews as the cornerstone of its planning process, politicians do not always recognise it as such and instead seek political compromises to keep as many interests and constituencies as possible happy.

34. The former official also warned us that whilst the 2011 Levene Reforms were intended to improve Defence's ability to develop and maintain military capability, the single Services' increased responsibility, accountability, and authority for their capability programmes may exacerbate existing tendencies for them to approach Reviews as an exercise in resource competition.

35. Written evidence from Dr Harlan Ullman, Chairman of the Killowen Group, stressed that "no strategy or policy can overcome mistaken or erroneous assumptions." Dr Ullman's evidence suggests that institutionalised challenge and "red teaming" are necessary to ensure that the "ways, ends and means" identified in the Review are built on solid foundations.⁴⁴ Ivanka Barzashka, co-director of King's Wargaming Network, told us that the establishment of the Defence Wargaming Centre within the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL) and a Strategic Net Assessment Unit within the MoD suggests that the Government recognises the need to robustly analyse strategic problems. However, her evidence noted that it was unclear to what extent such bodies will be involved in the Review process and argued that the Review could benefit from employing novel analytical approaches that are not currently being utilised.⁴⁵

36. Conclusion

We welcome the Government's ambition to conduct the "deepest" and "most radical review since the Cold War." At a time of such geopolitical and economic uncertainty, it is vital that the Review involves thorough consideration of the desired "ends" of the UK's security, defence, development and foreign policy as well as the "ways" and "means" required to achieve them. To realise its ambition, Government must identify and overcome the factors that contribute to a Review becoming a "business as usual" exercise. By answering the questions

43 [Q59](#)

44 [ISD0001](#)

45 [ISD0033](#)

laid out in this report, the Review can overcome the tensions inherent in the Review process and identify and question assumptions at the heart of the UK's security, defence, development and foreign policy.

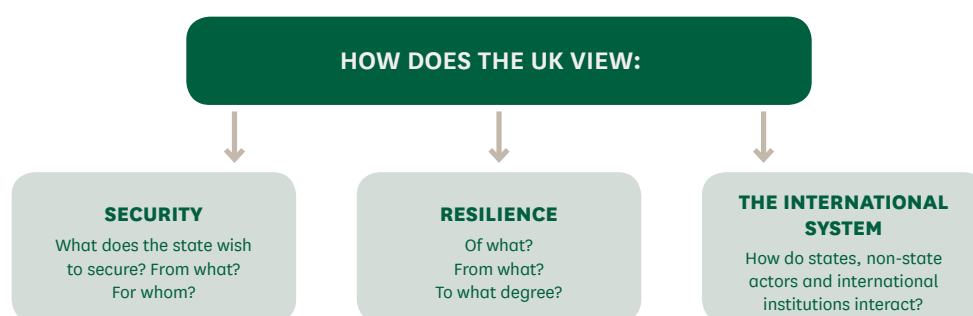
Recommendation

In response to this Report, Government should:

- a) ***Set out the mechanisms and approach to challenging assumptions underpinning the UK's defence strategy***
- b) ***Explain what role the Dstl's Defence Wargaming Centre and MoD's Strategic Net Assessment Unit will play***

3 Identifying Priorities and Setting Objectives

3.1 Approaching Security, Resilience and the International System



37. Dr Laura Cleary, Director of Oakwood International, told us that it is easier to determine the “ways, ends and means” for defence when a Review includes an adequate definition of the concept of security. To develop such a definition, Dr Cleary suggests that the Review should answer a series of interlinking questions, including:

What does the state wish to secure? From what? For whom?⁴⁶

38. Different answers to these questions will have consequences for the overall framing of the Review. Citing Professor Posen, Ford International Professor of Political Science at MIT, written evidence from Dr Blagden and Professor Porter suggests that “grand strategy is, in essence, a state’s theory of how it causes security for itself.”⁴⁷ However, we have also received evidence which argues that a Review should go beyond considering how to secure the state, to consider the role and wellbeing of society and the individual.⁴⁸

39. Some witnesses suggest that even if the Review does develop a clear concept of what security means, this may not provide an adequate framework for developing a foreign policy and defence strategy. The Henry Jackson Society argue that “security-driven thinking” may lead to a Review becoming a reactive “bottom up” exercise, instead of developing a “top down” vision of the role that the UK wants to play in the world.⁴⁹ They believe that “in a world of large, competing powers, an approach driven by the enhancement of national security will prevent Britain from engaging strategically with its peers, even near-peers” and that China, Russia and the United States have developed “increasingly offensive and fully-integrated strategies that seek to

⁴⁶ [ISD0015](#)

⁴⁷ [ISD0036](#)

⁴⁸ [ISD0014](#)

⁴⁹ [ISD0034](#)

maximise their national power and focus it geographically.”⁵⁰ They argue that the UK should take a similar approach and establish “a vision of where it wants to be in the world, what it wants to achieve, and with what instruments.”⁵¹

40. If the Review is to contribute to a strategic defence posture it must clarify what is meant by resilience. We have heard that resilience has been an increasingly prominent component of recent Reviews and as Lord Ricketts told us, “our modern societies are now so fragile that resilience planning is bound to get more attention” in the forthcoming Review.⁵² Lord Ricketts went on to suggest that the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic “has to have consequences for the way the Government plans in the future”, however, he also noted the tendency for the concept to become unhelpfully broad. As such, he suggested that for resilience to be a useful concept to guide the UK’s security, defence and foreign policy strategy, it is important to clarify what the strategy is seeking to build resilience against.⁵³

41. The announcement of the Integrated Review recognised that “countries all over the world are challenging traditional international structures” and pledged to consider how the UK “will be a problem-solving and burden-sharing nation.”⁵⁴ Evidence submissions to this inquiry have welcomed this ambition, however, we have also been told that the Review must clearly articulate exactly how the UK views the international system if it is to contribute to a meaningful strategy. As Professor Chalmers told us:

Despite the fact that the phrase, “the rules-based international system” was used more than 20 times in the 2015 SDSR...when you ask officials, “What does it mean?”, they find it difficult to describe what it means.⁵⁵

42. Conclusion

It remains to be seen whether the foreign policy aspect of the Review will produce a distinct Foreign Policy Strategy or whether this will be combined with a National Security Strategy. Whether the Review produces one, two, or three documents, we have heard that it must first clearly identify the desired “ends” of the UK’s security, defence, development and foreign policy. It is only by developing a detailed conceptual framework for the UK’s security and foreign policy that the Review will be able to identify and question current assumptions and provide an evidence-base to make decisions about the UK’s future defence policy and posture.

50 [ISD0034](#)

51 [Ibid.](#)

52 [Q87](#)

53 [Q87](#)

54 HM Government, [Prime Minister Outlines new Review to define Britain’s Place in the World](#), Government Statement, 26 February 2020

55 [Q12](#)

Recommendation

We therefore recommend that the Review explains how the Government views risk, includes clear and detailed definitions of how the Government understands key terms such as “security” and “resilience” and provides answers to the following questions:

- a) *What is the UK’s understanding of the concepts of national, international and human security and the relationships between them?*
- b) *What does domestic resilience mean and how is it related to the UK’s foreign and defence policy?*
- c) *What security and defence priorities emerge from an analysis of the UK’s domestic priorities? In what ways are they complementary and in what ways do they conflict?*
- d) *How does the UK view the international system and its place within it?*

3.2 Defining our Interests and Values



43. We have heard that the Review should clearly explain the interests and values that guide the UK’s foreign policy within the context of security and resilience. As Professor Chalmers told us, “the decision about exactly what our national interests and priorities are is inherently a political process.”⁵⁶ On the other hand, Tom McKane told us that:

It ought to be possible to identify the national interest in a way that would command widespread support. Even if consultation is limited, it should be possible to come up with a set of interests that would be agreed by most people.⁵⁷

56 [Q9](#)
57 [Q14](#)

44. Professor Chalmers has written that the Review is an opportunity to reflect on the UK's role as a middle power in an increasingly multipolar world and has suggested that the UK must focus its foreign and security policy on activities and capabilities that deliver real benefits for national prosperity and security.⁵⁸ In our first evidence session, he told us that:

...we should not see foreign policy as something that is separate from, and bearing rather little relationship to, the interests in the security and prosperity of the British people. It should start with the security and prosperity of the British people and try to work out how best to use this variety of instruments to pursue them.⁵⁹

Doing good, not feeling good, needs to be the guiding narrative for the ethical dimensions of UK foreign policy.

45. Additionally, Professor Chalmers has argued that “too often, the ‘values’ element of foreign policy is reduced to virtue signalling and symbolism.” Instead, he has argued that “doing good, not feeling good, needs to be the guiding narrative for the ethical dimensions of UK foreign policy.”⁶⁰ This does not mean that values should not play a role in the UK's foreign policy. Indeed, we have received evidence that has stressed the importance of explaining the values guiding the UK's foreign policy in the forthcoming Review. Professor Amelia Hadfield and Christian Turner of the Centre for Britain and Europe at the University of Surrey argue:

There is a risk that unless we explicitly state within this Review what we as a country believe in and link these beliefs to how we act on the world stage at a strategic, operational and individual level, then our values could be unconsciously downgraded over time. If this happens, over the lifespan of this review, the world is less likely to associate us with what we believe, and we will have lost one of our most important commodities.⁶¹

46. Recommendation

We have heard that in order to identify the desired “ends” of the UK's security, defence, development and foreign policy, the Review must clearly articulate the UK's interests and values. Whilst scrutiny of the UK's foreign policy falls to the Foreign Affairs Committee, from a defence perspective we believe that the Review should answer the following questions:

- a) ***How does the UK define its national interest abroad?***
- b) ***What role do values play in the UK's foreign policy?***
- c) ***How will the UK pursue its objectives through hard and soft power instruments?***

58 Chalmers, M [“Taking Control: Rediscovery the Centrality of National Interest in UK Foreign and Security Policy”](#), RUSI, 10 February 2020

59 [Q9](#)

60 Chalmers, M [“Taking Control: Rediscovery the Centrality of National Interest in UK Foreign and Security Policy”](#), RUSI, 10 February 2020, p 1.

61 [ISD0032](#)

3.3 With Whom, not to Whom

47. We have also heard that it is critical that the Review reflects on the nuances and complexities of the UK's international relationships and partnerships if it is to set realistic objectives for the UK's security, defence and foreign policy. Witnesses suggest that the Review should consider the strengths and weaknesses and advantages and disadvantages of the UK's bilateral relationships, multinational alliances and relationship with regional groupings. Understanding the nature of these relationships will not only ensure that the UK sets realistic priorities for what it wants to achieve but can also help develop an understanding of how allies and partners can contribute to mitigating the threats and risks to the UK. As Lord Stirrup told us:

One of the most important judgments that we have to make is, “With whom we do things?” not “To whom do we do things?”⁶²

48. As General Sir Nick Carter, the Chief of Defence Staff, told us:

...it is allies and our relationship with our allies that is our centre of gravity from a military perspective and, of course, from a national perspective as well. That is something we should reflect long and hard on.⁶³

49. Written evidence stresses that this aspect of the Review must be based on a sober assessment of changes in the UK's international partnerships and a realistic judgement of what to expect from them in the future. As Lord Stirrup told us:

The bedrock of our defence policy in years gone by has been a bilateral relationship with the United States, and our membership of NATO. Those have to be looked at again. Are they going to continue to hold good into the future?⁶⁴

50. When asked for his view of these relationships, the Chief of Defence Staff told us that “it is a reasonable assumption that we will never fight without allies”, “that we are most likely to fight within a NATO context” and “that our most likely partner will be the United States.”⁶⁵

51. Written evidence further stresses that the UK's relationship with the United States is a critical determinant of the UK's defence posture and that this should be vigorously examined during the Review.⁶⁶ However, Professor Chalmers warned that the Review should not become preoccupied with potential short-term changes in the United States' security and defence policy:

62 [Q90](#)

63 Oral evidence: Work of the Chief of Defence Staff, Tuesday 7 July 2020, HC 295, [Q1](#)

64 [Q90](#)

65 Oral evidence: Work of the Chief of Defence Staff, Tuesday 7 July 2020, HC 295, [Q42](#)

66 [ISD0012](#)

It is more about ensuring, in the sort of timeframe over which you have to construct defence capabilities, which is a decade or longer, that we are hedging against a range of possibilities in that time period.⁶⁷

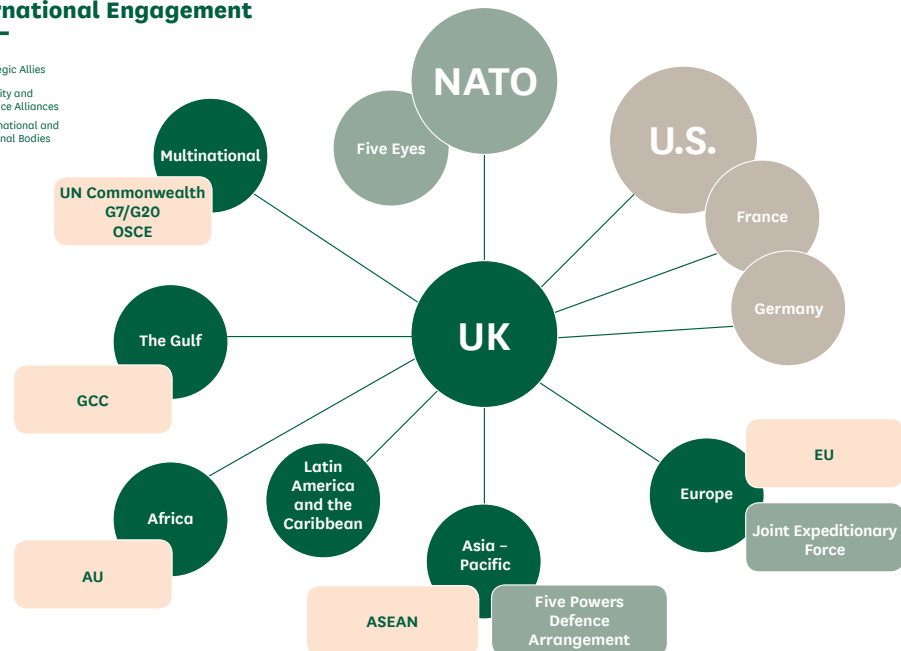
52. Asked whether the current threat landscape and resource constraints meant that the Review should look closely at the role of NATO in contributing to the defence of the UK, Tom McKane agreed that, “in the current circumstances, one would hope that more attention would be given to the alliance and the alliance’s planning processes.”⁶⁸ Professor Chalmers agreed with this, and suggested that the Review should consider what measures the UK can proactively take to enhance NATO’s contribution to the defence of the UK:

We need to challenge the way in which NATO force goals are set. Too often, for all the rhetoric from Allied Command Transformation about the importance of new technologies, agility and so on, NATO’s core force goals are still set almost in a cold war context—counting up brigades, divisions and so on, even if they cannot actually get to the battlefield within the first couple of years. There should be a vigorous debate as an important part of this review. One of the reasons it will take a bit longer, should it be longer, is that we need to talk to our key allies.⁶⁹

These relationships should not be seen as “goods” in their own right

International Engagement

- Strategic Allies
- Security and Defence Alliances
- Multinational and Regional Bodies



67 [Q10](#)

68 [Q30](#)

69 [Q35](#)

53. Some witnesses believe that the Review should consider how to enhance bilateral relationships with key EU-member states, including France and Germany, as well as making decisions about the UK's future security and defence relationship with the EU.⁷⁰ Evidence has also stressed the importance of engagement beyond Europe with non-NATO allies and other regional alliances such as the Five Power Defence Arrangements and allies such as Japan and South Korea.⁷¹ Finally, we have been told that the Review should particularly reflect on the UK's ambitions for the Commonwealth and United Nations and the role that it wishes to play within them.⁷²

54. Dr Blagden and Professor Porter argue that these relationships should not be seen as “goods” in their own right but rather be understood within the context of their contribution to the UK's security, defence and foreign policy priorities.⁷³ As such they suggest that the Review should “rank and prioritise such commitments to assess which ones Britain has greatest (a) need and (b) ability to positively affect.”⁷⁴

55. A related point was made by the Remote Warfare Programme of the Oxford Research Group, which discussed the UK's approach to partnered military operations in detail. Their evidence suggests that the Review is an opportunity to consider the strategic effectiveness of the UK's approach to partnered military operations:

It must ensure it is not duplicating the efforts of other international actors; and that it is filling actual gaps in the international effort, and is matching UK capabilities to the weaknesses and shortfalls partners have actively identified.⁷⁵

56. Finally, we have heard that it is important to recognise that the Review's presentation and framing of the UK's foreign policy will itself have consequences for the future of the UK's international partnerships and relationships. As Lord Ricketts told us:

To my mind, too much emphasis on British distinctiveness will not be helpful because it will encourage the thought that as soon as Britain is back out there in the world, everyone will be waiting to hear what we have to say. We need more emphasis on working with friends and allies through old alliances, but possibly through newer ones as well, and co-operation among democracies—finding ways of working with France and Germany and with the Commonwealth countries where we have shared interests and can do things together—without overrating our overall weight or what we can achieve on our own.⁷⁶

70 [ISD0032](#)

71 [ISD0005](#)

72 [ISD0007](#), [ISD0027](#)

73 [ISD0036](#)

74 [ISD0036](#)

75 [ISD0019](#)

76 [Q75](#)

57. Conclusion

Particularly at a time of such geopolitical uncertainty, it is vital that the foreign policy aspect of the review reflects the UK's understanding of, and ambitions for, its international relationships and partnerships. Our colleagues on the Foreign Affairs Committee are conducting an inquiry into the foreign policy aspects of the Review, but, from a defence perspective, the politics and power involved in international relationships are an essential reference point for understanding the threats and risks to the UK's national and international priorities and the defence capabilities which are required to defend and protect them.

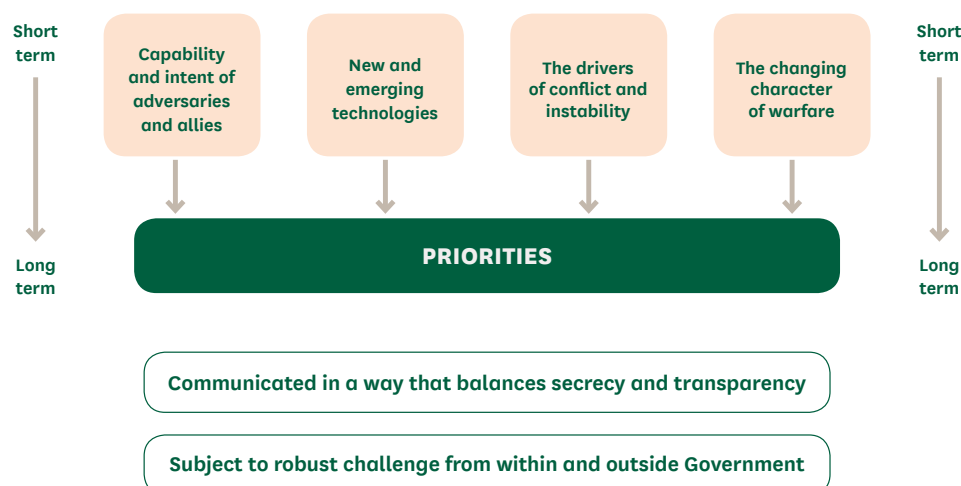
Recommendation

The Review should therefore include a clear and detailed analysis of the UK's approach to:

- a) *Bilateral relationships (notably, with the U.S. and key EU member states)*
- b) *Multinational security and defence alliances (notably, NATO and the Five Eyes)*
- c) *Relationship with the European Union and the U.N, Commonwealth, G20/G7 and other regional groupings.*

4 A Threat and Risk Assessment for Defence

What are the natural and man made threats and risks to the UK?



58. Witnesses argued that after establishing the priorities for the UK’s security, defence and foreign policy, the Review should next identify the threats and risks to achieving them. As Lord Ricketts told us:

Unless you start with the country’s interests and then look at the risks and the threats you are trying to face, you cannot really [know what] capabilities you need.⁷⁷

59. Witnesses broadly support the National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA) methodology introduced in the 2010 SDSR. Whilst Dr Blagden and Professor Porter note that the approach is not without its flaws,⁷⁸ they nevertheless told us that the NSRA provides a valuable “handrail for prioritisation.”⁷⁹ As explained by Laura Cleary of Oakwood International, the NSRA methodology assesses the severity of risk based on calculating its likelihood and impact and “employs a range of analytical tools (e.g. PESTLE-S, SWOT, quantitative risk assessment)” which, she argued, are “sound and used by a number of countries and business organisations.”⁸⁰

60. The announcement of the Integrated Review did not include any reference to updating the NSRA and it remains to be seen whether this approach will be used. What is apparent from the evidence submitted to this inquiry is that this process should address threats alongside risks and that there are a number of key principles which it should follow if it is to provide a useful tool to inform a defence strategy.

⁷⁷ [Q61](#)

⁷⁸ Blagden, D, ‘The Flawed Promise of National Security Risk Assessment: Nine Lessons from the British Approach’, *Intelligence and National Security* 33:5 (2018), 716–36.

⁷⁹ [ISD0036](#)

⁸⁰ [ISD0015](#)

61. Several written submissions compare the NSRA’s “risk-based” approach to a “threat-based” approach which assesses the intent and capability of adversaries.⁸¹ Dr Blagden and Professor Porter argue that the Review should restore “the language of ‘threat’ (politically relational) alongside ‘risk’.”⁸² Dr Cleary agreed with this approach, however, she also warned us that in the past the “threat-based assessments used in isolation were insufficient to predict seismic systemic change (e.g. the collapse of the Soviet Union).” She proposed that:

We need, therefore, to employ a mixed methods approach of qualitative and quantitative analysis and accept that, yes, the global security environment is uncertain and complex, but it is made so by individual actors, state and non-state. Monitoring trends is important, but so too is understanding the context in which actors respond to those trends.⁸³

62. On 8th July, Deputy National Security Advisor, Alex Ellis, wrote to the Committee to explain that the Government had conducted “new horizon scanning and fresh analysis” in light of COVID-19 and has focused on “intensified geopolitical competition” following the pandemic.⁸⁴ Within this context, it is important to consider how hostile foreign states may utilise the pandemic to their advantage. As Dr Ullman told us at the beginning of our inquiry:

States such as Russia and China are employing disruption as major tool and vulnerabilities to cyber, pandemics and other transnational threats are assuming more importance in protecting and defending the nation.⁸⁵

63. Dr Ullman told us that the Review should be informed by as “complete knowledge and understanding” of “national security environments and circumstances” as possible. He argued that the recent U.S. National Defense Strategy made the mistake of calling for “strategic competition” with near-peer competitors without defining the activities that the strategy was seeking to “deter” them from carrying out, in which areas the US sought to “compete” and what “defeating” these states militarily would actually look like. Dr Ullman argued that “understanding of China and Russia...have often been distorted by undue analytical emphasis on potential military threats” and that it is important to consider the full range of their economic and diplomatic activities alongside their military posture. Critically, we were told that any assessment of the threat posed by Russia and China must also account for the internal political dynamics of these countries, if it is to provide a useful guide for how they may behave in the future.⁸⁶

81 [ISD0015](#)

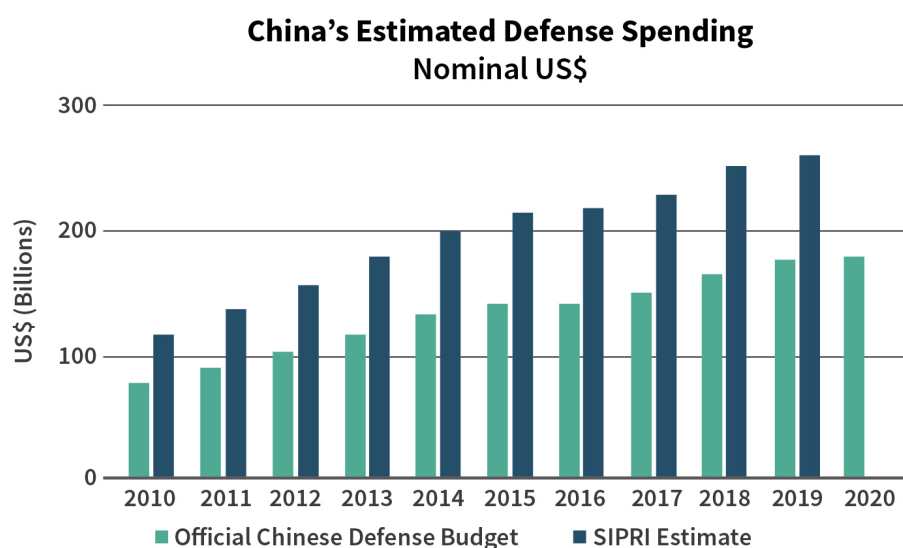
82 [ISD0036](#)

83 [ISD0015](#)

84 [Correspondence from the Deputy National Security Advisor](#) to the Chair of the Joint Committee on National Security Strategy and Chairs of the Defence, Foreign Affairs and International Development Committees, 8th July 2020

85 [ISD0001](#)

86 [ISD0001](#)

Figure One: China's Defence Spending⁸⁷

Sources: Chinese Central Government; Stockholm
International Peace Research Institute

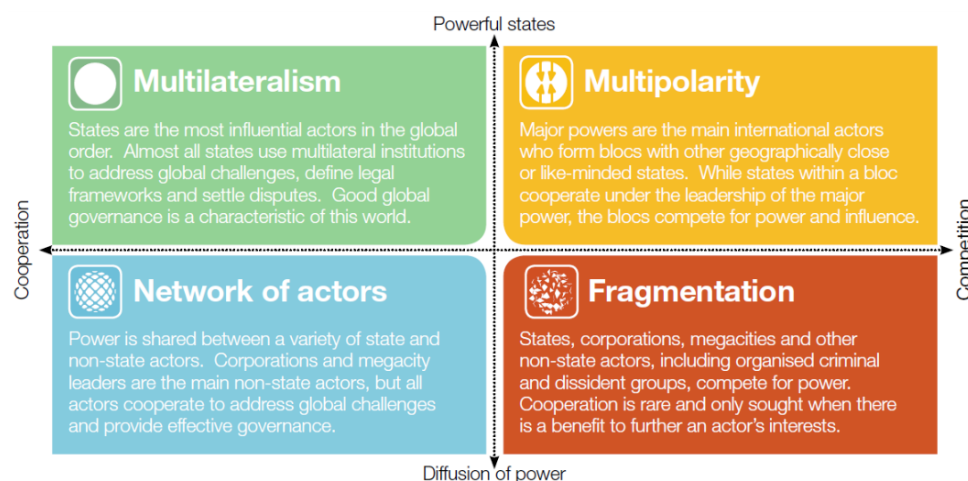
CSIS | CHINA POWER
PROJECT

64. Witnesses highlight the importance of ensuring that a threat and risk assessment uses a wide range of sources. Dr Jie Sheng Li told us that the MoD's think tank, the Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre (DCDC) produces a number of existing resources such as the "Global Strategic Trends (GST), the Regional Survey and Future Operating Environment series", which should inform this aspect of the Review.⁸⁸ On 7th July, the Chief of Defence Staff told us that the DCDC's Global Strategic Trends series is aligned to the sort of timeframe that the Integrated Review seeks to cover and that DCDC "have very much been involved in the process and their input has been helpful."⁸⁹

87 Glaser, B S, et al, [Breaking Down China's 2020 Defense Budget](#), 22 May 2020, CSIS. Source: Chinese Central Government and SIPRI

88 [ISD0005](#)

89 Oral evidence: Work of the Chief of Defence Staff, Tuesday 7 July 2020, HC 295, [Q38](#)

Figure Two: DCDC's Global Strategic Trends - "Four Future Worlds"⁹⁰

65. Evidence from ADS, the Defence industry trade association, welcomes the fact that in recent years bodies such as the Joint Intelligence Organisation have increasingly engaged with external partners. However, ADS argue that as well as engaging with think tanks and academia, threat and risk assessments could benefit from engaging the defence and security industry. They point out that industry “can often tap into sources of information that are not readily available to the Government” and suggest that “by working together through formalised channels to share sensitive threat information, the Government can ensure that the conclusions its analytical bodies reach are robustly tested.”⁹¹

66. Professor Chalmers told us that a Review need not entail a detailed analysis of the tactical strengths and weaknesses of different adversaries but could involve a higher-level assessment to identify key threats:

In the current environment, that involves having a sense of the key technological risks over the period of the review that may come about, and the areas in which it is most important to make sure that we are in the right place as a country.⁹²

67. Rethinking Security suggest that as well as focusing on “threats to people, both within the UK and globally”, the Review should consider “opportunities to improve security and wellbeing.”⁹³ The suggestion that the Review should consider “why other actors pose a threat to the UK and how this might be influenced or reinforced by UK actions” echoes evidence submitted in confidence that stresses the need for the UK to take a more strategic approach to understanding and addressing the root causes of conflict.

As well as focusing on threats the Review should consider opportunities to improve security and wellbeing

90 Ministry of Defence, Development, Concepts and Doctrines Centre, [Global Strategic Trends](#), Sixth Edition, 2 October 2018, p 21

91 [ISD0025](#)

92 [Q29](#)

93 [ISD0014](#)

68. We have also heard that the Review’s threat and risk assessment should consider the changing character of warfare. As Lord Stirrup told us:

The fundamentals of warfare have not changed over the millennia—if they had, we would not all be quoting Sun Tzu—but the ways of achieving those ends have altered fundamentally, and continue to alter fundamentally. That is what has to be explained.⁹⁴

69. Several witnesses have told us that an overarching objective for the Review’s threat and risk assessment should be to provide a clear and realistic prioritisation for Government. As Tom McKane explained, this is “always going to end up in quite tricky calculations as to whether you focus more on what is more likely, or what is much less likely, but if it came to pass would be more damaging.”⁹⁵ Lord Ricketts told us that the level of detail that this assessment produces has implications for prioritisation:

...if you are too general, it is no useful guide to allocating resources. If you want to make choices—and I come back to the point that strategy really is about making choices—then you do need to have some priorities, recognising that you cannot predict what events will happen, but you need to have some areas that you are going to give priority to.⁹⁶

70. He explained that the top tier risks identified in the 2010 and 2015 SDSRs were drawn from a wider analysis of over 80 risks on the Government’s National Risk Register.⁹⁷ He believed that this analysis should inform the forthcoming Review and suggested that

I do not think we need to go to square one too much on that, because it is quite good to have some stability in the threats that you decide are the important ones, but they certainly need to revisit that and see whether they want to change the priority order in the light of what has been happening in the world.⁹⁸

71. Professor Chalmers argued that criticisms of previous risk assessments for failing to predict later changes to the threat environment ignored the fact that these assessments would have been updated. He suggested that the role of assessments in the Review process is to provide a broad direction of travel

94 [Q103](#)

95 [Q29](#)

96 [Q86](#)

97 Drawing from the 2015 NSRA, SDSR 2015 identified four main challenges and the NSCR added a further two: 1) the increasing threat posed by terrorism, extremism and instability; 2) the resurgence of state-based threats; and intensifying wider state competition; 3) the attack on the rules-based international order, making it harder to build consensus and tackle global threats; 4) the impact of technology, especially cyber threats and wider technological developments; 5) the ongoing growth in serious and organised crime and its impact and; 6) diseases and natural hazards affecting the UK.

98 [Q86](#)

*Alliances are
an absolutely
critical
intermediate
variable*

A decent threat assessment in relation to a review will make some broad-brush assessments of where to go. If you are in a situation, as I think we were in 2014, when there was a radical change in our assessment of how important Russia was as a threat, then clearly you do need to have major change, but a lot of the other changes don't perhaps really fundamentally change the relative threat assessment.⁹⁹

72. He added that “alliances are an absolutely critical intermediate variable” when considering what capabilities are required to address these threats and risks. He noted that “you cannot read easily from threats to UK capabilities, because in relation to many of the threats that we are talking about, we would operate with alliances, or we would at least have to interrogate the assumptions about which of the threats we would want the capability to counter without allies.”¹⁰⁰

73. Some witnesses were concerned that the NSRA did not appropriately take into account longer term emerging threats.¹⁰¹ The importance of ensuring that the Review's threat and risk assessment is open to scrutiny and challenge from both within and outside Government has also been stressed throughout the evidence that we received.¹⁰² Whilst witnesses recognise the need for aspects of this assessment to remain classified, we heard that part of the value of conducting such an exercise lies in the ability to communicate concerns across and beyond Government.¹⁰³

74. **Recommendation**

It remains to be seen whether the forthcoming Review will include an update to the National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA) or whether a new approach will emerge. Whether or not the Review uses the terminology of the NSRA, we suggest that if this aspect of the Review is to provide a useful guide to inform the UK's defence posture, it should adhere to the following principles:

99 [Q29](#)

100 [Q29](#)

101 [ISD0008](#)

102 [ISD0015](#)

103 [ISD0036](#)

Input	Output	Review
• Draws on a wide range of sources • Considers the capability and intent of the UK's adversaries and allies • Considers the impact and threats posed by new and emerging technologies • Recognises the drivers of conflict and instability • Takes account of the changing character of warfare	• Establishes broad threat and risk categories • Distinguishes between short term and long-term risks and threats • Includes a clear and realistic prioritisation	• Subject to robust challenge from within and outside Government • Communicated to Parliament and the public in a way that balances the need for secrecy with the benefits of transparency

75. We welcome the Review's focus on intensifying geopolitical competition in light of COVID-19. To deliver a robust assessment of the capabilities and short and long term ambitions of hostile foreign states, the Review must consider the full range of Russia and China's economic, diplomatic and military activities and include a thorough assessment of their internal political dynamics.

5 The UK's Future Defence Posture

5.1 The Limits of Existing Funding Commitments

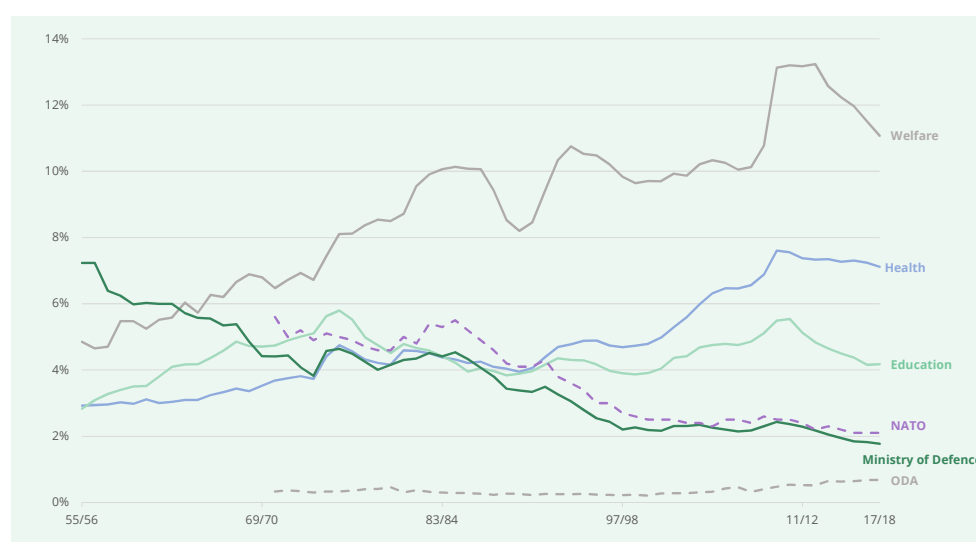
Resources

- What is the total capital funding required?
- What are the consequences of not making these resources available?

76. The current Government promised to “exceed the NATO target of spending two per cent of GDP on defence and increase the budget by at least 0.5 per cent above inflation every year of the new Parliament.”¹⁰⁴ The Government has stated that the Review will be “underpinned” by the UK’s existing commitment to adhere to the NATO spending target to commit 0.7% of GNI to international development, and to maintain an independent nuclear deterrent.¹⁰⁵

77. Our predecessor Committee recognised that the target of spending 2% of GDP on defence represents an important political commitment to NATO but warned that the target “does not guarantee security if allocated ineffectively, inefficiently or without due regard to emerging threats.”¹⁰⁶ That same report noted that in real terms, defence spending has dramatically declined as a percentage of GDP, in relation to other areas of public spending, in the last 60 years:

Figure Three: UK expenditure on Defence, Health, Education, Welfare and Overseas Development Assistance as a percentage of GDP¹⁰⁷



¹⁰⁴ [Get Brexit Done Unleash Britain's Potential](#), The Conservative and Unionist Party Manifesto 2019

¹⁰⁵ HM Government, [Prime Minister Outlines new Review to define Britain's Place in the World](#), Government Statement, 26 February 2020

¹⁰⁶ Defence Committee, 21 April 2016, Second Report of Session 2015–16, [Shifting the goalposts? Defence expenditure and the 2% pledge](#), HC 494, p3

¹⁰⁷ Defence Committee, 21 April 2016, Second Report of Session 2015–16, [Shifting the goalposts? Defence expenditure and the 2% pledge](#), HC 494, p3

78. Written evidence from the Royal Aeronautical Society notes that NATO’s own guidance recognises the limits of the 2% GDP target and suggests that the Review is “an opportunity to assess the validity of the 2% of GDP figure and whether this should increase.”¹⁰⁸ Submissions from Defence UK, Defence Synergia and ADS also urge the Government to ensure that the Review looks beyond the 2% of GDP target when considering the financial resources that will be made available to defence.¹⁰⁹

79. On the commitment to increase the defence budget, Professor Chalmers told us that:

...the extra money that Defence has had, over and above the 2015 spending review and the past three years, is very important for a discussion that is going on right now about the settlement for defence for the next spending review and, in particular, whether that extra £1.9 billion provided for defence for 2020–21 will or will not be included in the baseline for calculating defence increases over the next four years. That has not yet been agreed by the Treasury.¹¹⁰

80. During our first evidence session on 10 March, Douglas Barrie warned that GDP-based spending targets might present challenges for defence planning given that the actual resources available may fluctuate:

If GDP falls, which it may well do, then you have an issue, because you have assumed a certain amount that is not actually going to be there, so you have to reshape.¹¹¹

81. As the scale and significance of COVID-19 became clearer during our inquiry, we were increasingly warned of the impact that the pandemic may have on the on the health of the UK economy.¹¹² Recognising that changes to the UK’s GDP may have implications for defence programme obligations “that are often for 20 years”, the Secretary of State for Defence told us that the MoD “will make clear representations to the Treasury” that “it is not as easy as just stopping the cash.”¹¹³ The Secretary of State continued:

What I will commit to is that the Integrated Review that I hope to partly bring before you—because it will be the Foreign Office and No. 10 and everybody else, but the part I play in it—will be an Integrated Review that produces a recommendation that I believe is affordable and realistic. That discussion might not be very comfortable; it might not be everything that you and I want as soldiers or whatever, but it will be, I hope, within an envelope that is realistic.¹¹⁴

108 [ISD0012](#)

109 [ISD0006](#), [ISD0017](#), [ISD0025](#)

110 [Q7](#)

111 [Q8](#)

112 [ISD0017](#)

113 [Q37](#)

114 [Q40](#)

82. Conclusion

Existing spending commitments are a necessary but insufficient basis for approaching funding decisions in the Integrated Review. Whilst the economic outlook for the UK remains uncertain, it is imperative that funding considerations are informed by the Review's strategic analysis and not the other way around.

Recommendation

The Integrated Review should look beyond the NATO target of spending 2% of GDP on defence to consider what financial resources are required to ensure that defence can contribute to achieving the priorities of the UK's security.

5.2 The Strategic Consequences of the Spending Review

83. Following its recommencement, we were informed that the Integrated Review will consider the “additional and pressing objective of setting a strong direction for recovery from C-19, at home and overseas” and “will remain closely aligned with the Spending Review.”¹¹⁵ On 6th July, the Secretary of State for Defence stated that “it is really important that the integrated review reports at the same time as the comprehensive spending review, which is due in the autumn.”¹¹⁶ However, no further details of precisely when the Spending Review is expected to be completed have been made public.

84. Witnesses have told us that the fact that the Integrated Review will “run in parallel to” the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) presents an opportunity for MoD to communicate the strategic implications of defence funding decisions to the Treasury.¹¹⁷ However, we were also warned of the need for clear communication between different parts of Government and for senior political ownership of these processes if they are to be truly complementary.

85. On 28 May, Sir Stephen Lovegrove, the MoD Permanent Secretary, was asked by the Public Accounts Committee to explain the continuing unaffordability of the Defence Equipment Plan. He argued that the MoD can continue to “procure efficiently and keep costs down, which we do, and manage the programme dynamically.”¹¹⁸ However he also suggested that:

...the moment at which we can get this thing properly, substantially and structurally back in balance is the moment at which we have an integrated review going alongside a multi-year comprehensive spending review.¹¹⁹

The CSR presents an opportunity for MoD to communicate the strategic implications of defence funding decisions to the Treasury

¹¹⁵ [Correspondence from the Deputy National Security Advisor](#) to the Chair of the Joint Committee on National Security Strategy and Chairs of the Defence, Foreign Affairs and International Development Committees, 8th July 2020

¹¹⁶ Oral Questions to the Secretary of State for Defence, [06 July 2020](#), Volume 678

¹¹⁷ [Q5](#)

¹¹⁸ [Q18](#)

¹¹⁹ [Q21](#)

86. On 6th July, the Chief of Defence Staff told us that:

We are looking forward to a review that is aligned with the comprehensive spending review and that will give us the chance, we hope, to have a programme that is fixed to enable that long-term planning, which is critical for the country.

The bottom line is that what we need is consistency in the budget. We would like to have a settlement that is long term, because then we can live within our means and take the decisions that have to be taken to achieve that effect.¹²⁰

87. Lord Ricketts warned of the consequences of not aligning the CSR and Integrated Review. Reflecting on his involvement in the 2013 French defence White Paper, he told us that:

We spent six months doing some very deep, detailed, conceptual work with lots of long papers, a lot of scenario planning and so on. They evolved, with me playing a small part, into a perfectly coherent strategy. However, late in the day they discovered that the budget was going to be quite a bit less, and there had to be a crunching of gears, going into reverse gear and finding ways to fit the strategy within the available money. That was a bit of an object lesson to me.¹²¹

88. As Tom McKane told us, these processes will necessarily be run by different parts of the Government: while the CSR will be driven by the Treasury, the Review process will be driven by No. 10 and the Cabinet Office: "...as somebody who had taken part in these processes", Mr McKane warned, "they do not always feel completely aligned."¹²² He noted that you do "not have to complete the integrated review in advance of the spending review" but other countries do "complete defence reviews and then spend the next year or so doing the programming of the outcome."¹²³ However, Mr McKane warned that setting the budget prior to a defence review—as was the case for the 2015 SDSR—may mean that "the Ministry might feel that it has lost an opportunity to press for more."¹²⁴

89. Stressing the importance of ensuring that the Review takes into consideration the "ways, ends and means" of the UK's defence in the round, Dr Blagden and Professor Porter told us that funding decisions made as part of the Review should not be seen as "just a 'normal' bureaucratic function of politics, characterised by bargaining between HM Treasury and any given Department of State." Rather, they suggest that the Review:

120 Oral evidence: Work of the Chief of Defence Staff, Tuesday 7 July 2020, HC 295, [Q4](#)

121 [Q118](#)

122 [Q6](#)

123 [Ibid.](#)

124 [Q6](#)

...must review the state's very ability to secure its continued existence in an anarchic international system defined by the ever-present possibility of violent harm.

Reiterating the importance of ensuring high-level political involvement and ownership of the Review process, their evidence therefore stresses:

Only if Cabinet is willing to undertake such prioritisation can fiscal policy and national strategy hope to proceed in anything approaching complementarity.¹²⁵

90. *Recommendation*

To ensure that the Review considers the ways, ends and means of the UK's security, defence, development and foreign policy in the round, the Government must set out the mechanisms that will be used to ensure the alignment between the Integrated Review and the Comprehensive Spending Review and clarify the baseline for increases in defence spending.

91. *Recommendation*

We urge the Government to consider a long-term multi-year financial settlement for defence, in order to ensure that the Integrated Review provides a reliable basis for planning the UK's future defence posture. Without this assurance, ongoing issues with the affordability and availability of the UK's defence capabilities will persist and our role in the world diminished.

5.3 Balanced Capabilities and Clear Concepts

**What should the UK's overall defence posture look like?
What platforms, weapons and personnel, readiness
and maintenance are required?**

Capabilities

- To ensure resilience, readiness and adaptability?
- To achieve the "critical mass" required for our Armed Forces to protect the UK?
- To respond to and exploit technological developments?

92. We have heard that the Review is an opportunity to ensure that the UK has the capabilities required to achieve its security and defence priorities. This first phase of our inquiry did not set out to explore the relative value of different capabilities to achieve the UK's aims but instead to develop a framework for making capability decisions. The second phase of our inquiry will explore the answers to these questions in more detail.

93. Dr Laura Clearly told us that “the concept of ‘Defence Lines of Development’ is now well embedded into the defence capability management and acquisition systems” in the UK.¹²⁶ She notes that “pan-equipment, non-equipment and personnel considerations are now considered the normal way of doing business”, although these capabilities are often managed in different ways.

...confusion arises because some issues (generally equipment) are managed through a project and programme approach whilst others (generally non-equipment and personnel) are managed through normal ‘business as usual’ processes and mechanisms, with the problem exacerbated by the differing Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit (RDEL) and Capital Departmental Expenditure Limit (CDEL)

94. In written evidence, Dr Jie Sheng Li, proposed that existing and in-development capabilities should be assessed against their “a) relevance [to] future threats; b) their imminent out-of-service date (OSD); c) initial operating capability (IOC); and d) full operational capability (FOC).”¹²⁷ Written evidence from the Royal Aeronautical Society provides a broader framework for considering the relevance of any particular capability. It suggests the capability decisions should consider:

- **Operational relevance:** Does capability give the UK a competitive advantage over potential adversaries? Does it do what is expected in the appropriate timeframe?
- **Economic relevance:** Is it affordable and value for money? Can it be procured without unduly distorting the equipment programme and support? Does it provide an economic benefit to the UK?
- **Political relevance:** Can it be employed within the legal and ethical framework of the nation and can its use in conflict be justified to Parliament and the people?
- **Industrial relevance:** Is it an area where we should sustain national capability, or is it one where the industrial context would better suit a collaborative approach?¹²⁸

95. Former Chief of the Defence Staff Lord Stirrup told us that although the threat and risk assessment can play an important role in informing these decisions:

You have to retain a degree of balance across defence as well, because inevitably, in the wars that we have fought throughout our history, we have almost always had to ride the first punch

126 [ISD015](#)

127 [ISD005](#)

128 [ISD0012](#)

and absorb it, and have the resilience to do that, then have the adaptability and agility to respond to the kinds of challenges we face that we did not or could not foresee.¹²⁹

Lord Stirrup continued:

Inevitably, we tend to talk about specifics in these reviews—do we need this capability or do we need that capability—but equally inevitably, the future, as I suggested earlier, surprises us, so the real question is, do you have a system? Do you have a process? Do you have equipment? Do you have people who can adapt and think on their feet, and can change in the face of changing circumstances? That, it seems to me, is the thing that we, institutionally, have been weakest at and need to be strongest at. You can find no better example than the circumstances in which we find ourselves today.¹³⁰

96. Asked about how the changing character of warfare should influence capability decisions, Douglas Barrie told us:

The difficulty that the West faces in general, and the UK faces in particular, is that sometimes we look at that as an either/or. The threat is changing, that is correct, but the problem is that some of the peer competitors, or the Heads of State of the states that present a challenge—whichever language you want to use—do not quite see it like that. At one end of the spectrum is what we call hybrid or grey zone. At the other end of the spectrum is kinetic. They are investing in a lot of interesting areas, but they are not disinvesting in the traditional heavy metal, so it is both.¹³¹

97. Professor Chalmers argued that it can be difficult to predict the importance of new technologies without considering the extent to which an adversary may be moving in to, or away from, the development of new capabilities. He also noted that the development of “countermeasures and counter-countermeasures” must be factored into the calculation. Given the unpredictability and number of variables involved, he concluded that:

What is clear is that we want to avoid, as far as possible, a situation where we get caught out by others—adversaries—doing things that we are not in a position to counter relatively rapidly.¹³²

98. He went on to suggest that there is a need to be realistic about the feasibility of different capability decisions within likely budget constraints:

We can all dream about what our defence forces would be like if we had another 30% or 40% on top of the budget, but, in a realistic budget scenario compatible with the Conservative

129 [Q64](#)

130 [Q69](#)

131 [Q31](#)

132 [Q31](#)

manifesto, with 0.5% real increases over a baseline that has already been established, you will have to make some hard choices.¹³³

99. In his written evidence, Dr Ullman argued that “the best defence is a smarter defence. Money, no matter how important, need not be the only vital ingredient.”¹³⁴ He suggests a number of options for the future of the UK’s armed forces and force structure at different levels of affordability, and argues the most promising of these options may be ensuring a “more agile and deployable military force along with enhanced capacity for dealing with adversarial political, i.e. “active measures” and non-kinetic threats as well as transnational disruptions... in order to protect the public and to deter, contain, engage and defend potential adversaries” but also notes that “a certain level of military power is required to fill a “critical mass” of credibility.”¹³⁵

100. The Chief of Defence staff told us that the inclusion of space, alongside cyber, land, air and maritime in the 2017 Future Force Concept,¹³⁶ was in part due to the recognition that “it is a domain that you need to dominate if you are to be able to operate and fight on a modern battlefield”. As such, he told us that an important part of the Review “will be to make sure that we get the right balance of investment to take space forwards.” However, he also stressed that the “trick is to get the right balance between the different domains” and consider what new alternatives and redundancies may emerge in different domains in the future.¹³⁷

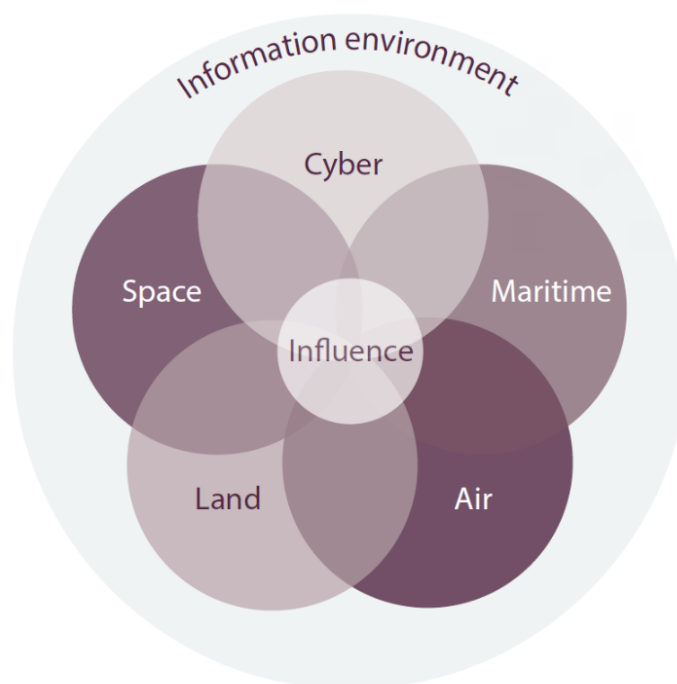
133 [Q33](#)

134 [ISD001](#)

135 [ISD001](#)

136 [Joint Concept Note 1/17, Future Force Concept](#), Ministry of Defence, July 2017

137 Oral evidence: Work of the Chief of Defence Staff, Tuesday 7 July 2020, HC 295, [Q71](#)

Figure Four: The Information Environment and the Five Operating Domains¹³⁸

101. In his annual RUSI Lecture in December 2019, the Chief of Defence Staff confirmed that the integration of all five domains would “change the way we fight.”¹³⁹ This view was supported by Air Marshal Richard Knighton, the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff, in his 2019 Lord Trenchard Memorial Lecture where he argued that “the new operating domains of space and cyberspace offer new opportunities to probe, test, shape, disorientate and ultimately unravel our adversaries.”¹⁴⁰

102. As the Chief of Defence Staff told us on July 8th, a forthcoming integrated operating concept will recognise “that you cannot distinguish between peace and war when you are up against the sorts of opponents” that the UK faces.¹⁴¹ He explained that this new concept “sees the need to compete” and as such, “we would expect the armed forces...to be used in a forward presence and forward-deployed type of way. So the sorts of activities that you might see with capacity building...are exactly the sorts of things that we would expect to provide capabilities that Government would be able to use.”¹⁴²

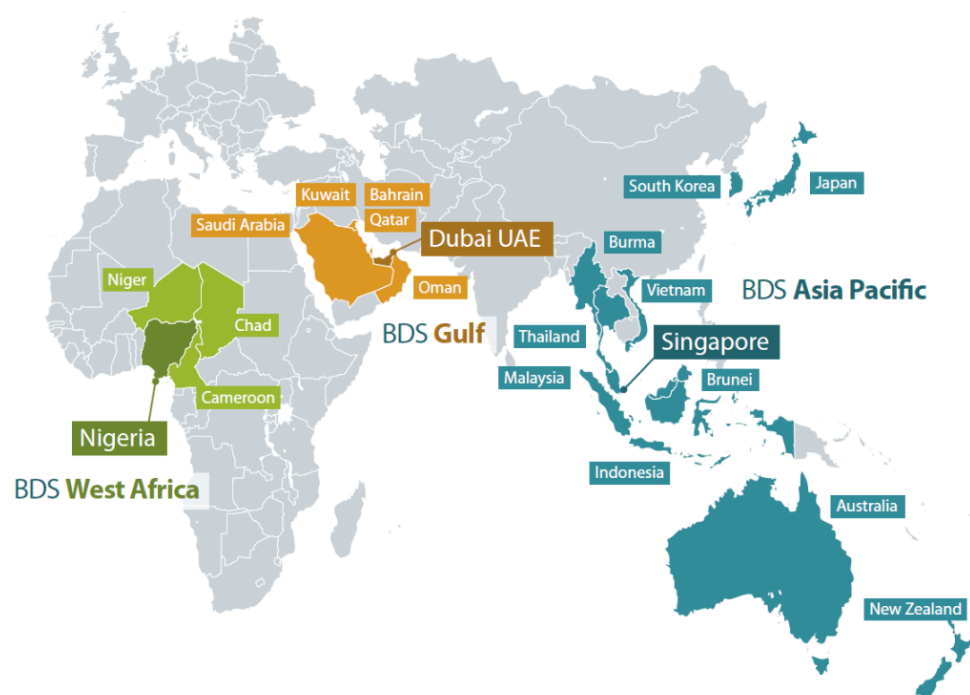
¹³⁸ Ministry of Defence, [Joint Concept Note 1/17, Future Force Concept](#), July 2017, p 19.

¹³⁹ [Annual Chief of the Defence Staff Lecture](#), RUSI, 5 December 2019

¹⁴⁰ [Lord Trenchard Memorial Lecture 2019](#), RUSI, 2019

¹⁴¹ Oral evidence: Work of the Chief of Defence Staff, Tuesday 7 July 2020, HC 295, [Q1](#)

¹⁴² Oral evidence: Work of the Chief of Defence Staff, Tuesday 7 July 2020, HC 295, [Q43](#)

Figure Five: The UK's Defence Network as of 2017¹⁴³

103. The Chief of Defence Staff explained that a future operating concept “will provide us with a path towards the way that we think we should fight in the 2030s” and consider “the sort of digital technologies that will change things.” The development of these “sunrise” capabilities will necessarily have to consider existing force structure and require decisions be made about which “sunset” capabilities can be retired.¹⁴⁴

Box One: “Sunrise” Capabilities¹⁴⁵

- Smaller and faster, low-observable and stealth technologies
- A mix of manned, unmanned and autonomous platforms, integrated into ever more sophisticated networks
- Open systems architectures that enable the rapid incorporation of new capability and the rapid integration into the network
- Less dependent on fossil fuels
- Employing more non-line-of-sight fires

¹⁴³ Ministry of Defence, [International Defence Engagement Strategy 2017](#), February 2017, p8

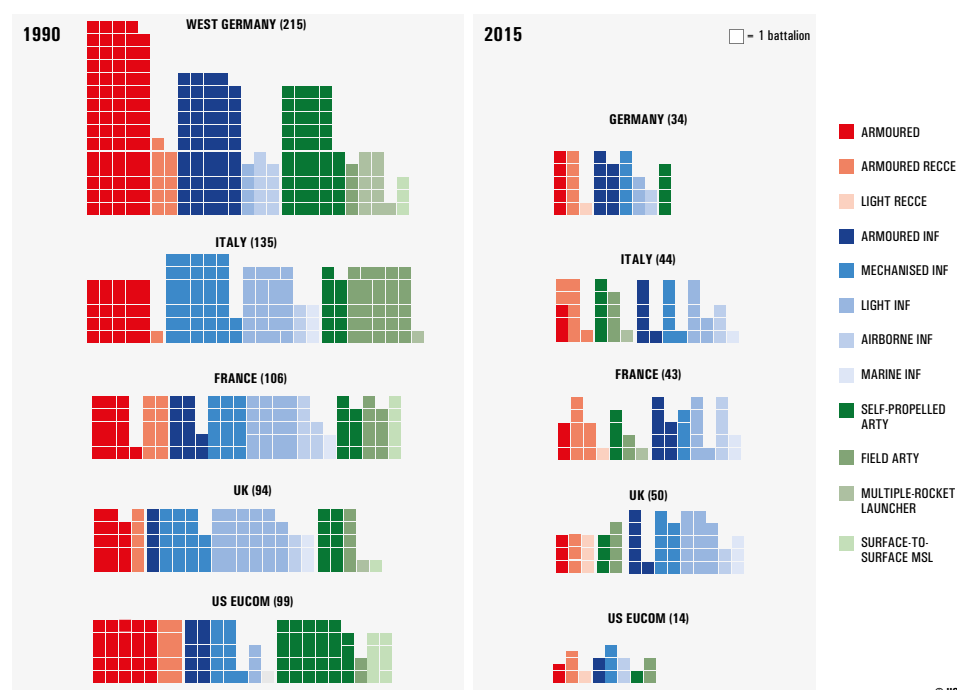
¹⁴⁴ Oral evidence: Work of the Chief of Defence Staff, Tuesday 7 July 2020, HC 295, [Q35](#)

¹⁴⁵ Oral evidence: Work of the Chief of Defence Staff, Tuesday 7 July 2020, HC 295, [Q35](#)

104. While the Chief of Defence Staff recognised that “we will probably trade reduced physical protection for increased mobility”, he also stated:

I will give you assurance on this: to my mind, for the next 10 to 15 years, the ability to generate mass in order to overwhelm people on a battlefield will still be a very important ingredient in future warfare.¹⁴⁶

Figure Six: “Western Europe: the precipitous decline in combat battalion numbers, 1990–2015”¹⁴⁷



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105. Conclusion

The Integrated Review is an opportunity for the Ministry of Defence to explain how our Armed Forces will fight in the future. It is promising that work is underway to develop new operating concepts but it is vitally important that this work is communicated to wider Government stakeholders involved in the Review before its completion. As demonstrated by COVID-19, our Armed Forces are required to fulfil a diverse range of domestic and international tasks. Their concept of operations must realistically reflect what commitments are possible with the resources and capabilities available. These concepts should inform capability and funding decisions made as part of the Review and, given their significance, one key output of the Review should be to formally record these new operating concepts in doctrine.

¹⁴⁶ Oral evidence: Work of the Chief of Defence Staff, Tuesday 7 July 2020, HC 295, [Q61](#)

¹⁴⁷ Barrie, D, et al, [European defence policy in an era of renewed great-power competition](#), International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS), 17 February 2020

106. *Recommendation*

Capability decisions made as part of the Review should be informed by the Review’s foreign policy analysis, threat and risk assessment and defence operating concepts. Defence planning assumptions and the UK’s overall defence posture should be reviewed, and informed by the following questions:

- a) *What platforms, weapons and personnel, readiness and maintenance are required to ensure the resilience, availability and adaptability of the UK’s Armed Forces?*
- b) *What “critical mass” is required for our Armed Forces to respond to the threats and risks to the UK?*
- c) *What investment and innovation are required to respond to and exploit technological developments?*
- d) *Which existing capabilities can be enhanced or retired?*

5.4 Strategic Procurement Policy

Procurement

- To ensure the resilience of logistics and supply?
- To support the UK defence industry?
- To foster innovation and ensure access to IP?
- Balancing efficiency and sovereign defence industrial capability, if necessary?

107. The Government’s announcement of the Integrated Review included a commitment to “look at areas such as the procurement process used by the Armed Forces.”¹⁴⁸ As part of our inquiry, we sought to explore what aspects of defence procurement should be included within the scope of the Review. As highlighted by Air Marshal Knighton, Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Military Capability), the overall funding decisions made as part of the CSR will in part be influenced by the MoD’s procurement practices:

A fundamental part of winning any argument over investment in Defence through a review is demonstrating that we are able to spend taxpayers’ money wisely, and to deliver the best military capability we can for the money we are given.¹⁴⁹

108. Asked for a commitment that the Integrated Review will include a review of the MoD’s procurement processes, the Secretary of State recognised that there was a need to reform organisational culture within the Department and said:

¹⁴⁸ HM Government, [Prime Minister Outlines new Review to define Britain’s Place in the World](#), Government Statement, 26 February 2020

¹⁴⁹ [Q40](#)

...there are absolutely some things that need reforming in the process. There are some things that need reforming about the customer—that is, us—about what we are buying and our optimism.¹⁵⁰

However, Air Marshall Knighton added:

...there have been 13 reviews of procurement and acquisition in Defence over the last 30 or so years. That illustrates that it is a systemic, as well as behavioural, problem. It is not easy. If we are going to do it and make it stick, we really have to put the full weight of the Department's effort behind it.¹⁵¹

109. Witnesses have described how defence procurement is subject to changes in the industrial, economic and technological context which are not synchronised with evolving threats or the five yearly frequency of defence reviews.¹⁵² Professor Cleary therefore suggested that:

...procurement policy should be subject to continuous review as it evolves to adapt to the dynamic environment in which procurement takes place¹⁵³

110. However, we have heard that the Review is an opportunity to answer strategic questions which would provide a robust basis for improving defence procurement in the future. As written evidence from Northrop Grumman argues:

...the review must create the framework for procurement but it does not necessarily need to address the procurement process itself. It is understood that the review will determine the types of capabilities – strategic and tactical – which will need to be procured together with the acquisition priorities, foreign policy context and financial envelope. Requirements for the procurement system are then understood to be a function of this foundational framework.¹⁵⁴

COVID-19 has highlighted the inherent risks in 'just-in-time' resupply

111. Dr Blagden and Professor Porter have suggested that one “strategically fundamental” procurement question that the Review should consider is the choice over “what capabilities the state should produce for itself versus what we can afford to purchase ‘off-the-shelf’ from the wider world – and the trade-off between financial efficiency and strategic autonomy that choice can entail.”¹⁵⁵ Their evidence notes that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the inherent risks in ‘just-in-time’ resupply from global markets which are susceptible to market forces, and note that such disruptions could equally be brought about by “an astute adversary and/or a breakdown in alliance

150 [Q40](#)

151 [Q41](#)

152 [ISD0015](#)

153 [ISD0015](#)

154 [ISD0030](#)

155 [ISD0036](#)

relations.”¹⁵⁶ Nevertheless, they recognise that pursuing complete economic independence “would be grossly inefficient and thereby result in an inferior output of combat power for a given level of available inputs” and suggest a balance should be struck when such choices have to be made.¹⁵⁷

112. Three additional strategic procurement questions that Dr Blagden and Professor Porter suggest the Review should address focus on what approach the UK takes to supporting the defence industry; what level of domestic productive capacity is understood to be required to ensure the resilience of supply and how to ensure logistical supply and technical support to UK Defence.

113. Additionally, ADS, the defence and security trade association, argue that defence procurement should also be considered through the lens of its potential to be a “mechanism to foster innovation and maintain the UK’s technological, strategic and doctrinal edge.” However, ADS also note that much of the work that will impact “the effective delivery of military capabilities are made at levels below that of a Review.”¹⁵⁸ Examples include work currently being done by the MoD on Acquisition and Approvals Transformation and the Defence and Security Industrial Strategy.¹⁵⁹

114. When asked what the Department’s thinking was on how to ensure that the UK defence industry recovers from the economic effects of COVID-19, the MoD Permanent Secretary told the Public Accounts Committee that work around the Defence and Security Industrial Strategy had increased in light of the pandemic:

Since that moment, the requirement to look at our involvement in these industries, as the state and as a Department, has grown rather than diminished. The threat environment is different now, so we need to make sure that we are getting that right. We also know that we are typically the overwhelming source of funds for many of these companies, and we have a responsibility to make sure we have both short and long-term plans in place to support that important part of the country’s industrial base, and to maintain the sovereign capability that we need for the future. It is very, very live at the moment.¹⁶⁰

115. Conclusion

Given that systemic challenges have not been resolved in the previous thirteen reviews of defence procurement, we doubt that the Integrated Review will come up with even a short-term fix. We believe that the Review ought to address the strategic issues that should underpin the UK’s approach to defence procurement, in order to provide a sound basis to address these challenges in the future.

¹⁵⁶ [Ibid.](#)

¹⁵⁷ [ISD0036](#)

¹⁵⁸ [ISD0025](#)

¹⁵⁹ [ISD0025](#)

¹⁶⁰ [Q54](#)

Recommendation

The UK's capability priorities and force structure should inform the answers to the following strategic questions on the procurement process:

- a) *What capabilities and skills must remain sovereign and what can be bought “off-the-shelf”? What are the implications for operational advantage, freedom of action, cost and national prosperity?*
- b) *How does the UK define value for money in defence procurement?*
- c) *How can UK defence procurement ensure the resilience of logistics and supply?*
- d) *How can the procurement process be used to foster innovation and ensure access to intellectual property?*
- e) *Is defence procurement, research and development keeping pace with future requirements?*
- f) *How will lessons from procurement failures be captured and addressed?*

The Committee welcomes ongoing work to review the UK's Defence Industrial Strategy. This strategy should be informed by the strategic decisions made as part of the Integrated Review. The Committee will continue to explore the UK's defence industrial policy in our ongoing parallel inquiry on this topic.

6 External Engagement and Review

116. The Committee has heard that it is vitally important that the Review includes wide and deep external consultation. The Government announced that it “will utilise expertise from both inside and outside government for the review, ensuring the UK’s best foreign policy minds are feeding into its conclusions and offering constructive challenge to traditional Whitehall assumptions and thinking.”¹⁶¹

117. On 8th July, the Government wrote to the Committee to explain that “it has been conducting targeted engagement via departments and from the centre.” Deputy National Security Advisor, Alex Ellis, explained that, “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” and committed to expand engagement as the IR develops.”¹⁶²

118. Evidence to this inquiry makes clear that external consultation:

- a) **Provides a challenge function to the Government’s understanding**
- b) **Provides an early signpost to stakeholders who can contribute to achieving the UK’s security and defence priorities**
- c) **Contributes to the legitimacy of the review’s outcomes**

119. However, written evidence from Adam Smith International echoed concerns raised by other witnesses, that:

There is no published timeline for submissions, no guide for drafting, no indication of what manner and format of engagement in the process the UK Government wishes to receive from its external partners.¹⁶³

120. We have heard that Parliament and the public, civil society and academia, international allies and partners and industry and trade unions should all be involved in the Review process. However, we have also been warned by Professor Malcolm Chalmers that:

...so much depends on how you structure consultation. There can be what is sometimes called the illusion of inclusion: 20 experts are brought together in a grand committee room, and

¹⁶¹ HM Government, [Prime Minister Outlines new Review to define Britain’s Place in the World](#), Government Statement, 26 February 2020

¹⁶² [Correspondence from the Deputy National Security Advisor](#) to the Chair of the Joint Committee on National Security Strategy and Chairs of the Defence, Foreign Affairs and International Development Committees, 8th July 2020

¹⁶³ [ISD0040](#)

they have 50 minutes. They all have the time to make their one point without anybody really framing what the essay question is in any great detail.

What makes much more difference is when those being consulted have more of an idea about what the live issues and choices are, and what issues—whatever is being said—are not really on the table, so that the advice is timely and informed.¹⁶⁴

Transparent and Structured Engagement and Challenge



* See International Engagement on p10

121. When asked whether there was a precedent for those outside of Government to contribute to the Review process, Tom McKane noted that during the 1997–98 review:

There was an almost-permanent panel of outsiders that was used as a sounding board—people from a range of different backgrounds. There were subject matter experts, for example. One I can remember was an expert in the logistics field in the commercial sector and was brought in to advise on that. Former Defence Ministers were consulted. The Chair of the House of Commons Defence Committee was consulted. It was pretty widespread.¹⁶⁵

164 [Q21](#)

165 [Q18](#)

*An informed
and engaged
public is
a security
asset that
can support
resilience*

122. Written evidence to our inquiry has described the participatory approaches that the UK's partners have increasingly taken to developing security and defence policy. As noted by Rethinking Security, Canada has developed a Cross-Cultural Roundtable on Security¹⁶⁶ and Ireland has also recently put public dialogue at the heart of the development of its first national security strategy.¹⁶⁷

123. Furthermore, correspondence received from the Government of Germany describes how the Ministry of Defence employed a “innovative, inclusive and participatory format” to develop the country's most recent Defence White Paper and noted that this was the first time a “key government security policy document had been draw up in this way” [see Appendix 1].

124. Professor Amelia Hadfield and Christian Turner of University of Surrey note that, as well as contributing to public understanding of the aims, objectives and capabilities of UK defence, “an informed and engaged public is a security asset that can support resilience at the community level and actively participate in decisions on the UK's future security.” The evidence stresses that the Review should be seen as an opportunity to discuss “what “Global Britain” means - as a national narrative and in conjunction with cross-departmental security policy and practical aims.”¹⁶⁸

125. Confidential written evidence stressed the benefits of involving both NGOs and private sector actors involved in fragile and conflict affected States in the Review process. In particular, we heard that those organisations with knowledge and experience in contexts where the UK's security, defence and development priorities interact should be involved in the Review process given that they will be able to offer critical reflections on the “integration” of UK policy.

126. Additional written evidence from the Oxford Research Group's Remote Warfare Programme notes that, to be effective, external engagement and consultation in the Review process must include “must fresh perspectives from outside of Whitehall” and be carried out over a long period of time. The ORG warned us that:

[The UK Government] seems content with international and local civil society organizations echoing their buzzwords and priorities, or offering technical ideas on ‘best practices.’ Civil society organizations that want to be included in higher-level discussions often feel they are supposed to leave critical perspectives [...] at home. This kind of echo chamber does not lend itself to improved security interventions, but to groupthink where the same flawed approaches persist despite their clear faults.¹⁶⁹

166 Public Safety Canada, [Connecting with Canadian Communities](#), 13 Nov 2019

167 O'Keeffe, C, [“Public asked for views on Ireland's first national security strategy”](#), Irish Examiner, 06 December 2019

168 [ISD0032](#)

169 [ISD0019](#)

127. Written evidence from Dr Blagden and Professor Porter also suggests that the Review should involve “scholars and analysts of strategy/security in regularised, institutionalised knowledge exchange” and suggests that there are a number of existing bodies that could provide a mechanism for such a dialogue:

An organisation like UK Research and Innovation could assist with that, insofar as they have good reach into universities’ “impact” directorates and may therefore be able to ask scholars to participate in a way that mere press release from the MOD itself (say) might not. The CDS’ Strategy Forum (convened by the MOD’s Development, Concepts, and Doctrine Centre), the Defence Policy Board (created by 2018’s MDP), and/or the MOD’s Strategic Net Assessment Unit (similarly created by the MDP) could provide the necessary institutional vehicles.¹⁷⁰

128. Given the critical role that allies and partners can play in addressing threats and risks to the UK and contributing to the UK’s foreign policy, defence and security objectives, we have heard that they should be deeply involved in the Review process.¹⁷¹ Lord Ricketts warned us that careful consideration of the timing of these engagements is required to ensure expectations of partners are managed and to ensure buy-in to the conclusions of the Review:

In practice, that tends to happen a bit later, because what allies want to know is not blue-skies thinking about what you might like us to say, but what you are going to do and how that is going to impact on us. It tends to be a bit of consultation and a bit of informing as the conclusions form up, but I hope they will be talking to the Americans and probably other close allies such as the French, for example, so there is a no surprises policy and where allies have important points to register, they can get into the process before decisions are taken. It is one of those very difficult balancing acts.¹⁷²

129. The defence industry has also raised its interest in being involved in the Review process and we have also been told that trade unions could also offer a valuable contribution.¹⁷³ Evidence from ADS, argues that “departments should be empowered to conduct their own engagement activities with industry before then reporting back to the IR team within the Cabinet Office” and notes that there existing channels for this engagement in place such as the Defence Suppliers Forum and the Security and Resilience Growth Partnership.¹⁷⁴

170 [ISD0036](#)

171 [ISD0015](#)

172 [Q116](#)

173 [ISD0012](#)

174 [ISD0025](#)

130. Conclusion

We have heard that external engagement in the Review process provides a challenge function to the Government's understanding, can act as an early signpost to stakeholders who can contribute to achieving the UK's security and defence priorities and contributes to the legitimacy of the review's outcomes. External consultation must be structured in a clear and transparent way so that all interested stakeholders can contribute. In some cases, there may be existing mechanisms for Government to solicit the views of external stakeholders (such as the Defence Suppliers Forum, the CDS' Strategy Forum, and the Defence Policy Board) and in other cases new mechanisms and approaches should be explored.

Recommendation

In its response to this report, Government should describe the process by which the following constituencies will be involved in the Review:

- a) *Parliament (including relevant Select Committees)*
- b) *The public*
- c) *Civil society and academia*
- d) *International allies and partners*
- e) *Industry and trade associations*
- f) *Serving Armed Forces personnel of all ranks*

7 Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Frequently conducting supplementary reviews outside of the quinquennial schedule established during the 2010 SDSR risks undermining the credibility of the UK's security and defence policy and creates undue uncertainty for UK defence planners. Our recommendations contribute to ensuring that the Integrated Review provides a framework for the UK's security, defence, development and foreign policy for at least the next five years. (Paragraph 15)
2. *In its response to this report, the Government should set out how and when the Prime Minister and other Cabinet Ministers will be involved in the Review process. Additionally, we seek clarity regarding:*
 - a. *Which Cabinet Minister will chair the Review process in the Prime Minister's absence*
 - b. *What role the No 10 Policy Unit and Specialist Advisers will play in the Review process*

The Government should:

 - c. *Set out the respective roles and responsibilities of the NSC and its relevant sub-committees, the Cabinet and Government Departments in the Review process*
 - d. *Explain what role the National Security Adviser and NSC(O) will play in the Review process and what role the National Security Strategy and Implementation Group will play in driving integration at an official level, and*
 - e. *Explain whether thematic workstreams have been identified. (Paragraph 25)*
3. *The Review should assess and report on the effectiveness of existing Government structures and policies designed to facilitate cross-Government collaboration. This should include a review of the National Security Council and associated policy frameworks and funds, such as the Fusion Doctrine and the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund. If existing collaboration is inadequate, the Review should identify ways to ensure greater cross-Government collaboration in the future. (Paragraph 26)*
4. To ensure lessons are learned from previous security and defence Reviews, the Integrated Review should engage with a wide range of stakeholders who were engaged in or scrutinised previous Reviews and the policies, programmes and military deployments that flowed from them. (Paragraph 30)
5. *The Government should review how far these activities were aligned with or deviated from the outcomes of previous Reviews, in order to better*

understand how to ensure the Integrated Review provides a sustainable and actionable framework for the future. In response to our report, if it has not done so before, the Government should:

- a. *Explain how existing lessons learned will inform the Review*
 - b. *Set out what new analysis will be carried out*
 - c. *Ensure that there are effective mechanisms for implementing the Review, and*
 - d. *Explain how the Review's successes or failings will be measured. (Paragraph 30)*
6. We welcome the Government's ambition to conduct the "deepest" and "most radical review since the Cold War." At a time of such geopolitical and economic uncertainty, it is vital that the Review involves thorough consideration of the desired "ends" of the UK's security, defence, development and foreign policy as well as the "ways" and "means" required to achieve them. To realise its ambition, Government must identify and overcome the factors that contribute to a Review becoming a "business as usual" exercise. By answering the questions laid out in this report, the Review can overcome the tensions inherent in the Review process and identify and question assumptions at the heart of the UK's security, defence, development and foreign policy.

In response to this Report, Government should:

- a. *Set out the mechanisms and approach to challenging assumptions underpinning the UK's defence strategy*
 - b. *Explain what role the Dstl's Defence Wargaming Centre and MoD's Strategic Net Assessment Unit will play (Paragraph 36)*
7. It remains to be seen whether the foreign policy aspect of the Review will produce a distinct Foreign Policy Strategy or whether this will be combined with a National Security Strategy. Whether the Review produces one, two, or three documents, we have heard that it must first clearly identify the desired "ends" of the UK's security, defence, development and foreign policy. It is only by developing a detailed conceptual framework for the UK's security and foreign policy that the Review will be able to identify and question current assumptions and provide an evidence-base to make decisions about the UK's future defence policy and posture.

We therefore recommend that the Review explains how the Government views risk, includes clear and detailed definitions of how the Government understands key terms such as "security" and "resilience" and provides answers to the following questions:

- a. *What is the UK's understanding of the concepts of national, international and human security and the relationships between them?*

- b. *What does domestic resilience mean and how is it related to the UK's foreign and defence policy?*
 - c. *What security and defence priorities emerge from an analysis of the UK's domestic priorities? In what ways are they complementary and in what ways do they conflict?*
 - d. *How does the UK view the international system and its place within it? (Paragraph 42)*
- 8. *We have heard that in order to identify the desired "ends" of the UK's security, defence, development and foreign policy, the Review must clearly articulate the UK's interests and values. Whilst scrutiny of the UK's foreign policy falls to the Foreign Affairs Committee, from a defence perspective we believe that the Review should answer the following questions:*
 - a. *How does the UK define its national interest abroad?*
 - b. *What role do values play in the UK's foreign policy?*
 - c. *How will the UK pursue its objectives through hard and soft power instruments? (Paragraph 46)*
- 9. *Particularly at a time of such geopolitical uncertainty, it is vital that the foreign policy aspect of the review reflects the UK's understanding of, and ambitions for, its international relationships and partnerships. Our colleagues on the Foreign Affairs Committee are conducting an inquiry into the foreign policy aspects of the Review, but, from a defence perspective, the politics and power involved in international relationships are an essential reference point for understanding the threats and risks to the UK's national and international priorities and the defence capabilities which are required to defend and protect them.*

The Review should therefore include a clear and detailed analysis of the UK's approach to:
 - a. *Bilateral relationships (notably, with the U.S. and key EU member states)*
 - b. *Multinational security and defence alliances (notably, NATO and the Five Eyes)*
 - c. *Relationship with the European Union and the U.N, Commonwealth, G20/G7 and other regional groupings. (Paragraph 57)*
- 10. *It remains to be seen whether the forthcoming Review will include an update to the National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA) or whether a new approach will emerge. Whether or not the Review uses the terminology of the NSRA, we suggest that if this aspect of the Review is to provide a useful guide to inform the UK's defence posture, it should adhere to the following principles:*

Input	Output	Review
• Draws on a wide range of sources • Considers the capability and intent of the UK's adversaries and allies • Considers the impact and threats posed by new and emerging technologies • Recognises the drivers of conflict and instability • Takes account of the changing character of warfare	• Establishes broad threat and risk categories • Distinguishes between short term and long-term risks and threats • Includes a clear and realistic prioritisation	• Subject to robust challenge from within and outside Government • Communicated to Parliament and the public in a way that balances the need for secrecy with the benefits of transparency

(Paragraph 74)

11. *We welcome the Review's focus on intensifying geopolitical competition in light of COVID-19. To deliver a robust assessment of the capabilities and short and long term ambitions of hostile foreign states, the Review must consider the full range of Russia and China's economic, diplomatic and military activities and include a thorough assessment of their internal political dynamics (Paragraph 75)*
12. Existing spending commitments are a necessary but insufficient basis for approaching funding decisions in the Integrated Review. Whilst the economic outlook for the UK remains uncertain, it is imperative that funding considerations are informed by the Review's strategic analysis and not the other way around.

The Integrated Review should look beyond the NATO target of spending 2% of GDP on defence to consider what financial resources are required to ensure that defence can contribute to achieving the priorities of the UK's security. (Paragraph 82)
13. *To ensure that the Review considers the ways, ends and means of the UK's security, defence, development and foreign policy in the round, the Government must set out the mechanisms that will be used to ensure the alignment between the Integrated Review and the Comprehensive Spending Review and clarify the baseline for increases in defence spending. (Paragraph 90)*
14. *We urge the Government to consider a long-term multi-year financial settlement for defence, in order to ensure that the Integrated Review provides a reliable basis for planning the UK's future defence posture.*

Without this assurance, ongoing issues with the affordability and availability of the UK's defence capabilities will persist and our role in the world diminished. (Paragraph 91)

15. The Integrated Review is an opportunity for the Ministry of Defence to explain how our Armed Forces will fight in the future. It is promising that work is underway to develop new operating concepts but it is vitally important that this work is communicated to wider Government stakeholders involved in the Review before its completion. As demonstrated by COVID-19, our Armed Forces are required to fulfil a diverse range of domestic and international tasks. Their concept of operations must realistically reflect what commitments are possible with the resources and capabilities available. These concepts should inform capability and funding decisions made as part of the Review and, given their significance, one key output of the Review should be to formally record these new operating concepts in doctrine. (Paragraph 105)
16. *Capability decisions made as part of the Review should be informed by the Review's foreign policy analysis, threat and risk assessment and defence operating concepts. Defence planning assumptions and the UK's overall defence posture should be reviewed, and informed by the following questions:*
 - a. *What platforms, weapons and personnel, readiness and maintenance are required to ensure the resilience, availability and adaptability of the UK's Armed Forces?*
 - b. *What "critical mass" is required for our Armed Forces to respond to the threats and risks to the UK?*
 - c. *What investment and innovation are required to respond to and exploit technological developments?*
 - d. *Which existing capabilities can be enhanced or retired?*
(Paragraph 106)
17. Given that systemic challenges have not been resolved in the previous thirteen reviews of defence procurement, we doubt that the Integrated Review will come up with even a short-term fix. We believe that the Review ought to address the strategic issues that should underpin the UK's approach to defence procurement, in order to provide a sound basis to address these challenges in the future.

The UK's capability priorities and force structure should inform the answers to the following strategic questions on the procurement process:

- a. *What capabilities and skills must remain sovereign and what can be bought "off-the-shelf"? What are the implications for operational advantage, freedom of action, cost and national prosperity?)*
- b. *How does the UK define value for money in defence procurement?*

- c. *How can UK defence procurement ensure the resilience of logistics and supply?*
- d. *How can the procurement process be used to foster innovation and ensure access to intellectual property?*
- e. *Is defence procurement, research and development keeping pace with future requirements?*
- f. *How will lessons from procurement failures be captured and addressed?*

The Committee welcomes ongoing work to review the UK's Defence Industrial Strategy. This strategy should be informed by the strategic decisions made as part of the Integrated Review. The Committee will continue to explore the UK's defence industrial policy in our ongoing parallel inquiry on this topic. (Paragraph 115)

18. We have heard that external engagement in the Review process provides a challenge function to the Government's understanding, can act as an early signpost to stakeholders who can contribute to achieving the UK's security and defence priorities and contributes to the legitimacy of the review's outcomes. External consultation must be structured in a clear and transparent way so that all interested stakeholders can contribute. In some cases, there may be existing mechanisms for Government to solicit the views of external stakeholders (such as the Defence Suppliers Forum, the CDS' Strategy Forum, and the Defence Policy Board) and in other cases new mechanisms and approaches should be explored.

In its response to this report, Government should describe the process by which the following constituencies will be involved in the Review:

- a. *Parliament (including relevant Select Committees)*
- b. *The public*
- c. *Civil society and academia*
- d. *International allies and partners*
- e. *Industry and trade associations*
- f. *Serving Armed Forces personnel of all ranks* (Paragraph 130)

Appendix 1: Correspondence from the Governments of Australia, France, Germany and Japan

Correspondence from the Australian High Commission, 26 June 2020

At the request of the Joint Chairs of the Defence and Foreign Affairs Committees, this response provides reflections on Australia's most recent reviews of our foreign, defence and development policy. It focuses primarily on our Foreign Policy White Paper 2017 although a Defence Strategic Update has also just been released. A Development Policy (Aid) Review was initiated in 2019 but has been paused in view of COVID-19.

The observations outlined here do not necessarily constitute a roadmap for success, given the particularities of each review process. The UK's proposed Integrated Review brings additional complexity with its aim for a combined assessment of foreign, security, defence, intelligence and development policy. The Integrated Review is being undertaken at an especially difficult and uncertain time. Bearing that in mind, some key lessons from Australia's experience might be useful, others less so. And while our Foreign Policy White Paper remains relevant and continues to underpin our foreign policy settings, we review it regularly in light of changing events. This includes adjusting management of key relationships to reflect evolving circumstances and global dynamics.

Strategic objectives and what each review sought to address

(1) Foreign Policy White Paper 2017

Australia developed its Foreign Policy White Paper (the 'White Paper') with the goals of safeguarding values of freedom, equality, the rule of law and mutual respect among states. The White Paper recognised the changing global environment brought on by factors such as the rise of China and increasing pressures on the multilateral system. Three years later, these challenges have gained momentum, with the COVID-19 pandemic potentially accelerating trends toward greater uncertainty and risk, and a more contested and competitive world. The White Paper also recognised that, in a period of uncertainty and challenge, global partnership and international cooperation remain more important than ever - but that, at the same time, Australia should be sovereign and not reliant. This interconnectedness has become more apparent, and our need to work alongside like-minded partners such as the United Kingdom more pronounced as we strive to limit the exercise of coercive power and support an open global economy and rules-based international order.

The strategic objective of the White Paper was to set out a comprehensive framework to advance Australia's security and prosperity in a contested and competitive world. This framework was then used to guide the deployment of our resources and capabilities. The White Paper sought to address significant trends in the world since Australia's previous foreign policy review (in 2003). These included technological change, challenges to globalisation and the rules-based international order, continued economic dynamism and growth in Asia, shifts in strategic power regionally and globally, Islamist terrorism and climate change among others.

The White Paper recognised the potential for growing strategic rivalries and flaring tensions over trade, and affirmed our continued deep support for US global leadership while also placing priority on positive and active engagement with China. The White Paper identified that our domestic and international policies must work together to maximise Australia's national power and international influence. We consciously looked to build our foreign policy on strong domestic foundations - a flexible economy, strong defence and national security capabilities, and resilient democratic institutions within a cohesive society.

(2) Development Policy Review

The review of Australia's development policy and related foreign aid program is intended to guide support for a secure, stable, prosperous and resilient Indo-Pacific. It will reflect Australian values, including commitment to human dignity, gender equality and inclusive development, and to poverty reduction. It follows earlier work (2013–2014) to integrate our former development agency (AusAID) with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Integration has enabled the aid, trade and diplomatic arms of Australia's international policy agenda to be more closely aligned. The review has been paused with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. On 29 May 2020, the Australian Government announced a partial pivot in our foreign aid program to focus more closely on assisting countries in our region (especially in the Pacific and Southeast Asia) to deal with the pandemic.

(3) Defence White Paper

Australia has recently completed a review of its Defence policy. This review, released on 1 July 2020, assessed Australia's strategic environment, long-term strategic direction and commitments for Defence, as well as setting future defence capability requirements. It has taken into account Australia's national security priorities and ensured that Defence priorities are consistent with these. It provides a new strategic policy framework to ensure Australia is able - and is understood as willing - to deploy military power to shape the environment, deter actions against our interests and, when required, respond with military force. And while the drivers of change in the 2016 Defence White Paper remain valid, the rate of change in the Indo-Pacific strategic environment has necessitated adjusted capability investments to ensure Defence can respond to new challenges as they emerge. The Review also incorporated 2020–2029 funding assurance in response to accelerating geostrategic change and

committed to a program of future investment and opportunity for defence industry. The Defence Strategic Update and Force Structure Plan are available at <https://www.defence.gov.au/StrategicUpdate-2020/>.

Process and elements that worked particularly well

(1) Foreign Policy White Paper 2017

The White Paper formulation process, while led by DFAT, was genuinely whole-of-government and reflected views from broad consultations with the public and key stakeholders. DFAT partnered with outside organisations in roundtables to discuss and elicit ideas. There was good support from think tanks such as the Australian Strategic Policy Institute and the Lowy Institute, from the Australian National University, and from the Asia Society.

Whole-of-Government interaction proceeded well, and proved most worthwhile. The Taskforce established in DFAT made considerable effort to bring other government departments and agencies along throughout the drafting process. This paid off in a better end-product and buy-in for the White Paper through Cabinet processes. Clear lines of communication were developed with chiefs of staff, lead policy advisors and media officers in relevant Ministerial offices. There was early and regular engagement with the Prime Minister's Office (No. 10 equivalent) and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (Cabinet Office equivalent).

It was important early on in the process to articulate rigorously what the White Paper and underpinning process was trying to achieve, how and why. This helped get the major players on the same page and align policies, processes, resources and performance management. The Australian Government agreed on a broad set of principles to guide the drafting of the White Paper. In hindsight, this could have been supplemented by presenting the Government with different options and testing appetite for policy shifts - although policy frameworks were tested as much as possible. Agility, perhaps even more important now in the COVID-19 era, was also vital. It is difficult at any given time to see and anticipate all of the stages and components of a complex White Paper project, and flexibility in being able to pivot quickly to new phases was critical.

Finally, the consultation exercise - including wide-ranging public discussion - paid dividends in promoting wider and deeper understanding of Australia's diplomatic activities and how foreign policy could enhance the security and prosperity of Australians.

(2) Development Policy Review

While currently on pause, the Development Policy (Aid) Review will also incorporate stakeholder consultations to ensure a range of views inform settings. The public, development community, partners and stakeholders in Australian and overseas will be invited to provide input into the new policy and performance framework. Unlike the White Paper, an expert panel will

be formed to provide strategic independent advice on the new policy and performance framework to help the Government communicate the value and impact of Australia's development cooperation program.

(3) Defence White Paper

The strength of the 2016 Defence White Paper process was in the comprehensive effort made to assess the strategic situation, to formulate the appropriate Australian Defence response and, in turn, set out a capability program with a detailed and transparent (bipartisan) funding commitment in the form of a prioritised and costed Integrated Investment Plan. This has been repeated in the 2020 Defence Strategic Update with notable additions including a focus on grey-zone capabilities, a resilient and competitive defence sovereign industrial base, bolstered investment in innovation and a willingness to fund prototyping to responsively embrace emerging technology.

Conclusion

COVID-19 has shown how quickly the international environment can shift, and the challenges this poses to governments in adjusting their foreign policy and international engagement. But while some recalibration might be necessary, it is essential that there be a sound enduring underpinning policy framework to guide pursuit and protection of interests. This is what well-conceived international policy and program reviews can achieve.

In Australia's case, our most recent and current reviews - whether completed or still in train - accept that our security and prosperity, while linked, are not assured; and that our values must not be taken for granted. While Australia is sovereign and has considerable agency, we recognise we are stronger when sharing the load with trusted partners and friends - of which the United Kingdom is one of the very closest. We look forward to continued close cooperation in working together bilaterally and in concert with others to protect and promote those elements of the international order that help support stability and prosperity for all. And we look forward to engaging further with the UK Government as work continues towards its integrated international policy review.

Correspondence from the Embassy of France, 28 May 2020

1. *What were the strategic objectives of your review?*

The 2017 Strategic Review objectives, as set by the President of the Republic's mission statement, were as follows:

- Analyse the current and predictable strategic context pertinent to both France and Europe
- Prioritize our defence and security interests
- Set our defence ambitions

- Provide the requirements for our armed forces, in terms of operational capabilities.

Drawing from the findings of the 2013 White Paper on Defence and National Security and taking into account a more unstable and uncertain international context, the Strategic Review set out to assess France's security interests and how best to address them. Three main threats were identified: terrorism, proliferation, and the return of great power competition. In response to this deteriorating security environment, the Review called for the preservation of our national strategic autonomy based on a full-spectrum, balanced force, including intelligence services and deterrence, with European strategic autonomy as an end goal.

Our Review's strategic objectives were thus twofold: framing the context for our Military Planning Act (Loi de programmation militaire), dedicated to forces fit for current and future strategic challenges; and creating a broader impetus in favour of European defence cooperation and the preservation of multilateralism.

2. What process and structure did your country's review follow?

As head of the armed force, the President of the Republic sets out the main strategic orientations of the defence policy. Shortly after his election, President Macron tasked the Minister for the Armed forces with preparing the upcoming Military Planning Act and the associated Strategic Review. European MP Arnaud Danjean was nominated to head the Strategic Review Committee and its 15 members, chosen amongst leading officials from Representative Government Agencies: Secretary General for Defence and National Security, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Ministry for the Armed Forces, and high-level independent experts from both academia and the private sector.

In order to have a comprehensive view, the Committee members carried out more than 100 interviews, ranging from elected officials to public or private stakeholders, in Paris, Brussels, London, Berlin, and Washington. In addition, 12 formal hearings were held during the Committee sessions. The three months-long period dedicated to conducting this Review benefited from existing background work from permanent strategic forecasting structures within the Armed forces ministry – namely the Directorate general for international relations and strategy; Philippe Errera, as Director-General of DGRIS, acted as Secretary of the Committee. Finally, a “young researchers” seminar shadowed the high-level seminar organised by the Strategic Review's Committee sitting members, in order to foster the next generation's hands-on experience.

3. What was the relationship between the review and funding decisions for security and defence?

The mission statement from the President of the Republic setting the committee's work program had early on specified that it was part of the prospect of increasing defence budgets: "the committee shall examine the current and predictable strategic environment (...). Based on the identification and ranking of our defence and security interests, the Review will set our defence ambition. From there, it will infer our forces' required capabilities, aiming for spending two percent of gross domestic product on defence". By shedding light on our security environment, however, the 2017 Strategic Review not only helped prepare the Military Planning Act for 2019–2025, but also paved the way for its quick passing into law in 2018, a mere nine months after the Committee's conclusions were handed to the government.

Therefore, funding decisions made in 2018 were the result of the 2017 Review, written with the firm intention of raising our defence-spending cap. This reflected France's analysis of its security environment and demonstrated French commitment to implementing the 2% Defence Pledge taken by Allies during the 2014 Wales Summit.

4. To what extent did the review involve external engagement? Who was consulted and how?

In addition to the expertise present within the Committee, external personalities were involved in the writing process:

- Around 50 hearings were held in Paris, for Government agencies (among them the intelligence and counter-terrorism coordinator, the General Secretary for Defence and National Security, the Director-General for External Security, the Director-General for Internal Security, the Chief of Joint Operations (CJO), the German Ambassador in Paris, a former Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs), the Academic sector (the deputy head of the Foundation for Strategic Research) and the Industry (the president of Ariane Group);
- Around 60 hearings in London, Washington, Berlin, Brussels with Government agencies, think tanks, etc.

Two seminars (a high-level seminar with 52 participants, a seminar of around fifty "young researchers") supported the analytical work. The constraining deadline imposed on the Review limited the possibility of opening consultations as widely as a White Paper would have required.

5. What aspects of the review worked particularly well?

Two points should be credited to the Review and have helped secure steadily increasing funding: its findings and the answers put forward.

Firstly, the events that have occurred during the past three years have confirmed the overall assessment laid out in the Review:

- In addition to the continued weakening of multilateral institutions and norms, the deconstruction of the security architecture in Europe has amplified with the end of the INF Treaty, then the announcement of US withdrawal from the Open skies Treaty.
- The return of great power competition is now plain, with Russia's assertive and at times aggressive behaviour, China's global ambitions, and the hardening of Washington's position.
- These converging trends risk igniting a new quantitative and qualitative arms race.

Secondly, the Review has paved the way for several focused official reports, such as our Indo-Pacific strategy, or our cyber, AI, and space doctrines. Based on its findings, we also fostered fruitful strategic discussions at the European level (both within the EU and with our closest allies), as evidenced by the creation of the European Intervention Initiative, the European defence Fund, or PESCO.

Correspondence from the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, 20 May 2020

In answer to the main questions set out in the letter by the Chairs of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committees of 26 February regarding review and best practice in partner states, we refer to the process involved in the preparation of the 2016 White Paper. The questions raised are addressed collectively.

Preparation of the 2016 White Paper

Since the last White Paper was published in 2006, three main factors have contributed to the decision to draw up a new White Paper:

1. Radical change in the security environment:

In the past ten years, Germany's security environment has become even more complex, volatile and dynamic and therefore increasingly unpredictable. At the same time, the political, economic and technological spheres have become more interconnected, resulting in far-reaching social transformation processes.

- a. Annexation of Crimea in violation of international law and the ongoing destabilisation of eastern Ukraine linked to hybrid threats and cyber attacks.
- b. Strengthening of Islamic State (IS), and deployments in Syria, Iraq and Mali to combat transnational terrorism linked to the causes and repercussions of the refugee crisis.

2. Germany's readiness to assume greater responsibility for security matters.
3. Growing expectation among our allies and partners that Germany will take on a responsible leading role.

On 17 February 2015, the then Minister of Defence von der Leyen launched the process of preparing the new White Paper before an audience of over 200 internationally-renowned politicians, researchers, media and industry experts.

The innovative, inclusive and participatory format chosen for the compilation process represented a novel approach to the drawing-up of a German White Paper. At the same time, GER was able to draw on and update established ideas:

- The tried-and-tested principle of coordinated action as set out in the 2006 White Paper
- The cultural change in German security policy manifested in the speeches at the Munich Security Conference 2014 ("Munich consensus"): "The Federal Republic of Germany should, as a good partner, be ready for earlier, more decisive and more substantive engagement."

The approach was guided from the outset by an understanding of coordinated security. Recognising crises and conflicts at an earlier stage, forestalling and containing them requires a forward-looking, comprehensive and sustained approach that also incorporates civil society and cultural factors. The development and enhancement of interministerial, strategic foresight therefore became a key element of the 2016 White Paper.

The intention was to get all the departments concerned actively involved from the outset rather than just consulting them at a later stage, and also to allow large sections of society to have input into the drafting process.

This was based on the key insight that bringing a wide range of expertise to bear makes sense in view of the nature of the extended security concept, since nowadays security is not just a military issue but covers a much broader spectrum.

This was the first time a key government security policy document had been drawn up with the continuous involvement of a broad community of experts from the political sphere, academia, civil society and interested members of the public. This phase of involvement centred around ten expert workshops.

Not only was the national security policy community involved. Our international partners were brought on board as well. For the ten workshops alone, more than 50 international (e.g. USA, GBR, FRA, N LO, NATO, EU, OSCE) and 100 national experts agreed to take part as facilitators or participants in the panel discussions. These included representatives of

NATO, EU and OSCE. This enabled us to take into account the international interconnections touched on above, which have increased significantly since 2006.

To put the plan into practice, a project structure incorporating numerous actors/interest groups was created. These included:

Fed. Ministry of Defence and Bundeswehr	Defence Ministry depts. and MilOrg sections, expertise of executive agencies (e.g. defence intelligence, Academy of the Federal Armed Forces for Information and Communication (AIK), Future Analysis dept., Bundeswehr Office for Defence Planning, Bundeswehr Centre of Military History & Social Sciences (ZMS)).
Fed. Foreign Office & Fed. Chancellery	“Key govt. departments” for collaboration on Bundeswehr-related security policy
Other govt. departments	Other fed. govt. departments and their executive agencies (e.g. German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)), to varying degrees (departments more directly affected: Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation & Development, Federal Ministry of the Interior).
Bundestag	While respecting the executive nature of the document. Main contacts: deputy parliamentary party leaders and defence policy spokesmen of the coalition parties
International organisations and partnerships	Principally: EAD, NATO IS Partnerships, to varying degrees: FRA, POL, N LD, GBR, USA as primary partners.
Academia and think-tanks	German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP), political foundations, Bundeswehr universities, Federal Academy for Security Policy (BAKS}, relevant chairs at Ger universities, other foundations and institutes. International think-tanks: IISS, CSIS, GMF, IFRI etc.

Associations	German Armed Forces Association, Reservist Association, Association for Defence & Security Policy (GfW), Clausewitz-Gesellschaft, Federation of German Industries (BDI), Security & Defence Industries Association (BDSV), German Society for Defence Technology (DWT), German Trade Union Confederation (DGB).
General public	Interested members of the public were approached and invited to participate.

These various actors were integrated into the compilation process using a range of participation formats, which are listed in the table below. This phase of participation centred around the ten expert workshops (e.g. Aspects of Hybrid Warfare, Cyber Security, Challenges around Early Crisis Recognition).

Participation as per Federal Government Rules of Procedure	Collaboration on text drafting in line with the Rules of Procedure, through co-revision, co-signing, work input
Editorial meetings	Attendance at meetings prior to or during text drafting
Briefings	Update on current work status by project group
Consultation	Consulting experts or stakeholder representatives in order to take into account their particular expertise/ views
Workshop	Events lasting one or more days, usually for the wider project group, for the purpose of working in depth on specific subject areas together with experts
Public events	Podium discussions or speeches (management level, but also by project group)
Online platform	Permanent online presence to keep the interested public engaged. Challenging in terms of content production and feedback capacity
Expert survey	Structured expert survey in the form of an online questionnaire, allowing the scientifically valid, controllable input of external expertise. Worked well technically for Future Analysis dept., Bundeswehr Office for Defence Planning
Public survey	Representative public survey carried out in conjunction with Bundeswehr Centre of Military History and Social Sciences (internal expertise available, tender necessary)

As a result, the 2016 White Paper was the first time a document was produced under the aegis of the Ministry of Defence and approved by the cabinet and hence continues to guide the actions of all the ministries involved.

The project - and above all the inclusive, participatory compilation process - was widely praised. The compilation process has had a lasting impact on the day-to-day work of the Ministry of Defence. Ongoing dialogue with experts, associations and think-tanks, particularly with a view to the sustained advancement of strategic capability, has been maintained. Numerous event formats have emerged from the process, some of which also allow input from large sections of society. The value generated by this extends beyond the publication of the 2016 White Paper itself and is having a lasting positive impact on the security policy debate in Germany to this day.

Correspondence from the Embassy of Japan, 8 April 2020

1. What were the strategic objectives of your review?

Japan, even amid the realities of security environment it has hitherto never faced, must strive to defend to the end Japanese nationals' life, person and property, territorial land, waters and airspace, and its sovereignty and independence. To that end, the "National Defense Program Guidelines for FY 2019 and beyond (hereinafter referred to as "the NDPGs")" identifies national defense objectives and the means to achieve them and seek to proactively and strategically promote measures with added variety.

In detail, the NDPGs set out three "national defense objectives" as follows: first, to create, on a steady-state basis, security environment desirable for Japan by integrating and drawing on the strengths at the nation's disposal; second, to deter threat from reaching Japan by making opponent realize that doing harm to Japan would be difficult and consequential; and finally, should threat reach Japan, to squarely counter the threat and minimize damage.

The NDPGs seek to strengthen each of the following means by which to successfully achieve these national defense objectives: Japan's own architecture for national defense; the Japan-U.S. Alliance; and international security cooperation.

2. What situations did you seek to address?

The NDPGs recognize that the security environment surrounding Japan is becoming more "testing" and "uncertain" at a remarkably fast speed against the following situations:

While interdependency among countries further expands and deepens, changes in the balance of power are accelerating and becoming more complex, uncertainty over the existing order is increasing.

Inter-state competitions across the political, economic and military realms are prominently emerging.

Against the backdrop of technological advances, contemporary warfare increasingly features capabilities combined across all domains: not only land, sea and air but also new domains, which are space, cyberspace and electromagnetic spectrum.

Qualitatively and quantitatively superior military powers concentrate in Japan's surroundings where clear trends are observed in increased military activities.

3. What process and structure did your country's review follow?

In January 2018, the Prime Minister announced in his policy address that the GOJ would revise the NDPGs.

On December 18, 2018, the NDPGs were approved by the National Security Council and by the Cabinet. The decision was preceded by substantive discussions within the Cabinet, as well as extensive discussions within the Ministry of Defense and vigorous discussions by experts at the "Council on Security and Defense Capabilities" and within the ruling parties.

NSC announced that it had a series of discussions about "the NDPG etc." on October 22, November 22, December 13 and 18, 2018. In addition, NSC discusses national security issues constantly.

Council on Security and Defense Capabilities was held seven meetings on August 29, September 21, October 2 and 19, November 20, December 5 and 11, 2018.

4. Which elements of your review worked particularly well?

The Medium Term Defense Program (FY 2019 - FY 2023), which is a five-year program for defense buildup based on the NDPGs, explicitly states, for the first time, to set the budget window of approximately ¥17,170 billion in FY 2018 prices as the amount of expenses based on contract to implement this program during the five-year term. This is an increase by about 5.6% from the actual expenditure of ¥16,260 billion for the previous Program. The expenditure target over the five years amounts to ¥27,470 billion in FY2018 price. However, by streamlining defense buildup and procurement, the actual defense budget over the five years is expected to be around ¥25.5 trillion.

The NDPGs set out Japan's policies to fundamentally strengthen its own defense capability and further enhance the Japan-U.S. Alliance. Similarly, the US "National Security Strategy" outlines US policies to build up its military strength and value its alliances. We believe that these two strategic documents demonstrate the alignment of policy directions of both countries, and this was confirmed in Joint Statement of the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee issued in April 2019.

In line with the vision of the a free and open Indo-Pacific, the NDPG aim to promote defense cooperation and exchanges with countries such as

Australia, India and countries in South East Asia in order to enhance security cooperation, and in accordance with this policy, defense cooperation and exchanges have proceeded.

Formal minutes

Tuesday 28 July 2020

Members present:

Rt Hon Tobias Ellwood, in the Chair

Stuart Anderson

Rt Hon John Spellar

Richard Drax

Derek Twigg

Rt Hon Mark Francois

1. For decision on publication by the Committee

In Search of Strategy—The 2020 Integrated Review

The Draft Report (*In Search of Strategy—The 2020 Integrated Review*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 130 read and agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

Appendix agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the First Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Report be printed, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 137 (Select committees (adjournment of the House)).

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134

[Adjourned till Tuesday 8 September at 2.00pm]

Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Tuesday 10 March 2020

Douglas Barrie, Senior Fellow for Military Aerospace, International Institute for Strategic Studies; **Malcolm Chalmers**, Deputy Director-General, Royal United Services Institute; **Tom McKane**, Director-General for Strategy and Director-General for Security Policy (2008–14), Ministry of Defence

[Q1-53](#)

Tuesday 17 March 2020

Lord Stirrup, Former Chief of Defence Staff (2006–2010), Ministry of Defence, and **Lord Ricketts**, Former National Security Advisor (2010–2012), Cabinet Office

[Q54-129](#)

Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

ISD numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

- 1 Adam Smith International ([ISD0040](#))
- 2 ADS (Mr Nathan Mathiot, Security Policy Advisor) ([ISD0025](#))
- 3 Airbus (Tom Williams, Public Affairs Manager - Defence, Digital & Security) ([ISD0021](#))
- 4 All-Party Parliamentary Group on Drones (Ms Camilla Molyneux, Researcher) ([ISD0031](#))
- 5 Barzashka, Ivanka ([ISD0033](#))
- 6 Blagden, Dr David ([ISD0036](#))
- 7 The British House (Mr Gregory Janson, Author & Contributor) ([ISD0010](#))
- 8 CBM UK (Ms Rachel Aston, Policy Manager) ([ISD0009](#))
- 9 Centre for Britain and Europe, University of Surrey (Professor Amelia Hadfield, Director) ([ISD0032](#))
- 10 Defence UK (Mr David Wedgwood, Chairman) ([ISD0006](#))
- 11 DefenceSynergia (Mr Dave Tisdale, Founding Member) ([ISD0017](#))
- 12 Dew, Dr Nicholas ([ISD0026](#))
- 13 Eversley ([ISD0016](#))
- 14 Francis, Dr Diana ([ISD0016](#))
- 15 Gabriel, Jane ([ISD0029](#))
- 16 The HALO Trust (Mr Christopher Loughran, Senior Policy & Advocacy Advisor) ([ISD0035](#))
- 17 Hilton, Samuel ([ISD0008](#))
- 18 International Alert (Mr Julian Egan, Director of Advocacy and Communications) ([ISD0028](#))
- 19 Kiely, Mr Mike ([ISD0003](#))
- 20 MacCartan-Ward DSC AFC, Commander RN Nigel ([ISD0013](#))
- 21 May, Lieutenant Commander Lester ([ISD0020](#))
- 22 Nemeth, Dr Bence ([ISD0026](#))
- 23 Northrop Grumman Corporation (Mrs. Kweilen Hatleskog, Strategy Director - UK and Europe) ([ISD0030](#))
- 24 Oakwood International Security (Professor Laura Cleary, Director) ([ISD0015](#))
- 25 Oxford Research Group (Mr Liam Walpole, Policy Manager) ([ISD0019](#))
- 26 Porter, Professor Patrick ([ISD0036](#))
- 27 Rethinking Security (Mr Richard Reeve, Coordinator) ([ISD0014](#))
- 28 Rogers, Mr James ([ISD0034](#))

- 29 Royal Aeronautical Society (Dawn Nigli, Head of External Affairs) ([ISD0012](#))
- 30 The Royal Commonwealth Society; The Council of Commonwealth Societies (Lord David Howell, President and Chairman respectively) ([ISD0007](#))
- 31 Dr Li, Jie Sheng ([ISD0005](#))
- 32 Ullman, Dr Harlan ([ISD0001](#))
- 33 United Nations Association - UK (Ms Enyseh Teimory, Communications Officer) ([ISD0027](#))