

# Policy Scotland Round Table Discussion: UK Government's Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy

Transcript of the video available at <https://policyscotland.gla.ac.uk/seminar-uk-defence-foreign-policy-review>

**Des McNulty:** Good afternoon, my name is Des McNulty. I'm Deputy Director of Policy Scotland and I'm delighted to welcome everyone to the event this afternoon which is focusing on the Integrated Review that the UK Government has recently published on security, defence, development and foreign affairs.

So, arguably, the most important review in those areas for the last decade. It focuses on defence issues in particular but recognises that defence is integrated with all these other considerations. And it is wide-ranging. It's been published at the start of the Johnson administration, so it's intended to set the pathway for that administration for the foreseeable future and certainly up until the next election in these policy fields. And it reflects, I think, changing perceptions about the role of Britain in the world. We've come out of the European Community; we're facing new challenges as a result of COVID and there are many concerning other security issues in the world. The intention is to have our panellists speak for approximately 10 minutes each to set the scene and then to carry on into a conversation.

If people want to put questions into the discussion, please use the chat function. Beatrice Heuser, Professor Beatrice Heuser from the University will be analysing the chat and I will ask Beatrice to extract, from the suggestions that are coming up in the chat, questions to put to our panellists to enrich the conversation as much as we possibly can. So, with no more ado I'm going to introduce each of our panellists in turn start with our first panellist, Lord Peter Ricketts. Lord Peter Ricketts has had a fantastically interesting and diverse career. He's been permanent secretary at the Foreign Office, he's also been the government's national security advisor and has held a whole series of other posts; a huge amount of experience and I'd like to invite Lord Peter Ricketts to speak to us as our first contributor.

**Peter Ricketts:** Well, thank you very much indeed, Professor, Des. Delighted to be joining Policy Scotland at this rather important time as you say. And, if I may just say so, we were going to have a fourth panellist - my former colleague Mariot Leslie - who unfortunately was not able to join us today, so I send her my best wishes. So, yes, the Integrated Review, published a couple of weeks ago. In my view it is very comprehensive. It goes well beyond the defence area. It includes a wider range of issues than we have done before. When I was first National Security advisor in 2010, I coordinated the 2010 equivalent document and this one certainly covers a wider field. But despite the valiant efforts of John, Professor John Bew, who at the Number 10 Policy Unit was responsible, I think, for the coordination of this and a lot of the writing. He did try really hard with his team to give a rather disparate set of ideas some degree of coherence and I know how difficult that is but I'm afraid I didn't really find it to be an integrated review or really to be more than a first step in the direction of distilling a genuinely national strategy for the UK post-the-EU. I'll come back to both

those points but it's also striking since we're talking on Policy Scotland how much emphasis is given to the Union particularly at the more political end of the document, the front end, the Prime Minister's foreword and the vision statement. So much emphasis indeed that it sounded rather defensive to my ears, but I look forward to other panellists' comments on that aspect of it.

Let me start with some positives. I thought it described well the global trends. The move towards systemic competition particularly between the US and China and how that is shaping the international landscape. It put welcome emphasis, from my point of view, on the UK continuing to play a leading role in European security, in NATO, and the importance of the US alliance. And also, it emphasised the UK's active role in shaping the future international order. I didn't actually agree with the thesis in the document that up to this point we've been a status quo power protecting the existing order rather than thinking fresh about the future. I think, actually, the UK has been rather good at creative ideas on how to reform the international order. Nonetheless I think it's a good idea that the Government are putting that up front. The Indo-Pacific tilt got an awful lot of advance publicity but when you come to look at the document actually it is a much more measured presentation of the need for an incremental shift of economic, diplomatic and military resources towards the Indo-Pacific area, the fastest growing economic area on the planet. I'm glad it's quite measured because I think you have to be realistic that the UK is never going to be more than a secondary player in Asian security issues or really a secondary partner in economic exchanges across the vastnesses of the Indo-Pacific area. And while on Asia, the passage on China I thought was very interesting. I thought it was a careful balance trying to reconcile the reality that we are both a systemic competitor, if not an adversary, of China in the security area, but a necessary economic partner with them and a partner in tackling issues like climate change. I thought they put the cursor just about in the right place there on China. But my question is how sustainable that is under pressure from 'hawks', particularly in the British Conservative Party and also from Washington, and indeed even since the ink was dry on the Integrated Review, we've had further pressure on the Government to toughen its line on China. But I think I would give them good marks for the effort that they put into that.

The strategic framework which is the heart of the Review also set out two rather interesting and very challenging new objectives for Britain's international policy. One, that we should use our prowess in science and technology as a driver both for strategic advantage and economic benefit. In the rather hubristic terms that this Government often used they declare we shall be a science and technology superpower by 2030. Of course, this builds on the success we've had in the vaccine development. It plays also into the importance of greater security autonomy in the China context, more control over our supply chains and it proposes very interventionist government policy to promote research and development both in the civil and in the military area. My question about it is, 'is that realistic?' The UK's had a long and very successful tradition of invention of creative solutions to some of the outstanding scientific and technical problems but a much less good track record of pulling that through into commercial success which is often being done by corporations in other countries, particularly America. And I also note that the Review is quite silent on the UK financial services sector which after all generates 11% of the tax take in the UK. That was a 'Cinderella' in the Brexit negotiations as well and gets rather little attention in this Integrated Review.

The other area setting a new challenging goal is regulatory diplomacy. The document sees the UK becoming a leading player in the new standards and norms that will govern international cooperation on digital economy and data cyber security for example, and there again the UK certainly does have a very strong track record in norm setting - I'm thinking of the Laws of War for example - but the problem here is that the document is unable really to bring itself to make any

reference to a constructive relationship with the EU for the future. There's one sentence about the contribution of the EU to peace and security in Europe but can we really claim that the UK is going to be the leading power in European security, it's going to be a world leader in science sector and technology, and in regulatory norm setting, if we don't have some sort of functional relationship with the European Union as a whole, and while we're trying to put all the emphasis on bilateral relationships with European countries? Perhaps we can talk about that more in the discussion.

Just to come back, before finishing, to the two weaknesses I flagged up at the beginning. First, I think there is a real disconnect between the words in the Integrated Review and the actions of the Government in certain areas: that's why I don't think it's an Integrated Review. The most obvious example is that while declaring that the UK will be a soft power superpower the Government has demolished DFID [Department for International Development], the Development ministry, it's cut very sharply the aid budget and the cuts have fallen particularly on the bilateral aid programs in fragile states. In another part of the wood the Government has also massively increased the Defence budget by 24 billion pounds over the next few years, it has also flagged up the importance of creating 'ranger battalions' for the army precisely to go and do stabilisation work and build up the armed forces of fragile states and those are exactly the states which are also seeing significant cuts in our bilateral aid funding. I don't see how those two things add up to a coherent strategy and I would point to other areas where the Government has taken action which I think damages Britain's soft power: the threats to break international law over Brexit, leaving the Erasmus programme, not securing good visa arrangements for the UK cultural sector to work in Europe. So that's why I question how integrated it is.

I've also questioned whether it really adds up to a strategy, and there my point is that this Review sets out all sorts of high ambitions and aspirations, but unlimited aspirations have to take account of the fact that resources are not unlimited and hard choices have to be made. And that's particularly true for a middle-sized power. I'm sure Malcolm will talk about his excellent RUSI paper where he calls Britain a reluctant middle-sized power and I think he's right because there aren't any efforts in this review to set priorities. I'm sure there are all sorts of things wrong with the 2010 and 2015 reviews which I was involved with, but they did set out a prioritised list of national security risks as a benchmark against which resource allocation could take place and there is nothing like this in this Review. It is more like a US national security strategy which is a long laundry list of good ideas and aspirations but evading the choices that ministers will have to make given that resources are limited.

I will leave others to talk in more detail about the defence aspects of the Review which are very important as well. Very happy to come back to that in questions but let me leave my opening contribution there. Look forward to the discussion, thank you Des.

**Des McNulty:** Thanks very much Peter, that was fascinating. I wonder how much of the content, the tone of this Review, is an expression of rhetorical politics of a new type. We're unfortunately not able to have Mariot Leslie with us today. It would have been delightful had she been able to join us but unfortunately illness has prevented her from doing so. So, with deep regret about that but on a more positive note can we move on now to ask Andrew Corbett of King's College, London, to speak to us and offer his insights into the defence Review. Andrew.

Andrew Corbett: Thanks very much. I think, like Lord Ricketts, there's much I like in in this Review but and there's a lot of buts .....there's always a lot of buts, I guess. The Review itself does provide a wide view of different issues, all of which are pertinent to national security and it kind of builds on the fusion doctrine. But harking back to what people said about the 2010 Review. The aspiration in the 2010 SDSR, indeed in fact in the 2008 one, was that Government departments would work

together much more closely than they had been previously in order to provide a broader way of dealing with security issues in the round and that has been an aspiration and continues, I think, to be an aspiration rather than something that is really seized here. What we've got is a description of lots of different activities that are going on, or that are projected, without actually really bringing together how they are going to be coherently managed. We've obviously got the National Security Council and there's a kind of an assumption that it'll somehow will muddle through.

The main issues I have with the Review itself, and as you've already heard there's something about the politics in sections 1 and 2 but, for me, that feeds into section three and I find this the biggest, problem. The terminology that's used - I'm a big fan that the words that people use to say things probably says more than they were intending to - and section 3 - the International Environments 2030 - it's written in a neo-conservative manner, if you like. Everything's about power, and competition, and it's almost dismissive of the existing rules-based international order. And taking a long-term view, as Lord Ricketts has just said, the UK is shifting this its mindset from working within or maintaining the status quo, maintaining the existing rules-based international order, and looking to somehow start shaping it instead. And that fits in with the tone in quite a disturbing way. Because the global trends and, you know, you'll have read it as well as I have, they're trends, they're not established facts but the way that the Review exploits them as assertions of 'this is what the world is going to look like in 10 years' time'. Not 'these are the key things that might affect the way the world is going to be' and so therefore this idea that you can shape the trends or shape the outcomes is quite different. If you're shaping trends you can do that, if you like, in a very collegiate or collaborative manner.

Shaping outcomes tends to be 'right, this is the way we want it. We're going to use power, and we're going to use soft power or hard power or science and technology power'. But it's all about that sort of terminology that Thucydides would have recognised or Bismarck. It's about a zero-sum world where everything is about competition and power. And that word just keeps coming up again and again and again. The way that then skews the global trends analysis tends to limit, if you like, the ability of this entire Review to think about these things in a joined-up manner. So, there is very much more focus on defence than on the joining up of the different things. There's an emphasis in there on innovative diplomacy but we've cut back on the capability: we've combined the FCO [Foreign and Commonwealth Office] and DFID and we've cut back on the aid, so the very crises that we were seeking to manage and avoid are being allowed to develop more by virtue of some of the actions that we have been taking in here. So rather than reforming within the rules-based international order we appear to be looking to reform the rules-based international order into something different. At exactly the same time as we recognise that, one of the main threats is that other states, perhaps more powerful than the UK, are trying to do the same and trying to reform the international order in their own image or in a way that that they would desire more so than the one that we have.

Forgetting perhaps that one of the key national interests for the UK must be the current rules-based international order. After all we invented it. It's something that the UK has invested in over 70 years, the whole, the UN Charter, most of the various spin-off organisations are all designed by and operated with liberal democratic states and they perpetuate the sort of world that we would like to live in. And perpetuating that further has to be one of the key interests for the United Kingdom. So that there's a challenge to the very perception of what the UK is trying to achieve in the world and, as I say, the terms that are being used suggest that the world is now viewed as an intensely competitive arena in which the UK is one of the competitors as opposed perhaps to some kind of combination of competitive referee or something where we're trying to maintain the existing order because it's worth maintaining.

Looking at the strategic framework itself I think the four key parts - the sustaining the strategic advantage through science and technology - again that's a really good idea. I don't agree that you can have a science and technology power - I just don't like the terminology I guess - but in terms of sustaining our strategic advantage, many of the - and they are boasts if you like on which this this sustainment is based - are based on performance up to 2019. And the UK science and technology base has been excellent, that's very true. But it was excellent whilst we were part of the European Union with that free traffic and sponsorship and the European sponsorship of science and technology projects in academia in the UK has been vast, and I'm thoroughly unconvinced that that we're going to see that going forward. So, this aspiration, which is posed more as an assertion and then becomes an established fact, to me feels a little bit woolly.

Similarly, I have doubts about 'shaping international order of the future'. I think 'shaping it' is a is an unfortunate terminology. 'Shaping the trends' maybe but not necessarily shaping the international order. I think we need to be looking to sustain the existing one. As much by our own actions and our own adherence to the rules and norms that we've that we have been establishing over the last 70 years as by anything else.

Strengthening security and defence. Certainly, the review does appear to be strengthening defence and perhaps in questions we can get into it. There are definitely some coherences between smaller, more agile, faster deploying army forces but actually less air transport to do it and that kind of stuff. So, there are incoherences within the defence thing that that come out. And there is a recognition that security is much more than defence. And again, I think, that is that's very welcome and it's certainly been coming; it was in 2008, 2010 and 2015 and to a very great extent in the 2018 capability review. But what it's doing here, or what it appears to be doing here, is a number of stove pipes looking at different areas of security without really understanding how they're all going to be linked up. Nuclear deterrence is an interesting one that caused an awful lot of the press coverage and very much speculation and I don't really want to cover that here but I'm certainly happy to consider that in questions.

And then the last part of this was the building resilience at home and overseas and this comes right back to that point about the investing early on and that intelligent diplomacy and that kind of stuff. If we're going to build resilience, the way it's described is that we and our democratic allies - the developed world - would build our resilience so that we could withstand shocks, and it strikes me that, again, rather than taking the opportunity to consider that building resilience perhaps would be most effective if we could build resilience in the most vulnerable areas rather than making sure that the UK is okay, and then maybe Europe and whatever, then there is a much broader market out there for enhancing resilience across the world which would then have obviously the climate change effects, the migration effects, and many of these, the global health resilience effects, early on. And the problem is, of course, that it's these investments and this work aren't really eye-catching, they're not shiny, it's just the day-to-day grind of actually making the world more resilient.

Trying to wind up what I'm saying, I think the UK is a middle-sized power. We have a very large defence budget. Actually, we seem to have a very large defence budget for what we get for it but that's probably just my view skewing matters, and we have an important role to play in the world. One of the things that strikes me just to finish off here is that the UK says that it's going to exploit - in fact the Prime Minister says in his in his foreword he's going to exploit the convening power of the UK over the next year because it's the chair of various elements of the rules-based international order - and the irony of we want to be changing the rules-based international order or shaping it as opposed to maintaining it, where it gives us the ability to do that in this convening power seems to be lost on the overall logic of the thing. So, it seems to me it's a little bit of a neo-conservative, very

realist, zero-sum, kind of backward-looking review whereas most of the elements when you look at them could be very much forward-looking and much more towards a more cooperative and developing view of the world. Thanks Des.

**Des McNulty:** Thanks very much Andy that was really interesting. I mean, I'm struck by the extent to which the Review is a slightly distorting mirror held up to yourself by politicians through which they project the view of the world that they want to see rather than the world that that is there. Just before we move on to Malcolm, can I remind people of the chat function? if you want to ask questions or make points could you write something into the chat. Beatrice is watching that feed and she'll pull stuff out. Can I now move on to Malcolm Chalmers of the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies. Malcolm can you give us your insights into the Review?

**Malcolm Chalmers:** I'll be very glad to do so, yes. Thank you very much Des, thank you Beatrice for inviting me to this event. It's a great pleasure to be here to be back in Glasgow which is indeed my home city so it's especially good to be here at Glasgow University. Indeed, I spent a happy year at Glasgow University many years ago where I first developed my love for what was then called political economy - I'm not sure whether it's called that now - but a great university and indeed I retain that interest in economics and political economy since that time and I think that will come over in some of the remarks I make about the Integrated Review. Perhaps by way of introduction I could also just say that at RUSI we've written many pieces about the Integrated Review in the build-up to the document itself and indeed in the last fortnight since it's come out. So, most of that is free to view, some of it is for members only, so I would encourage your students to look at that if they are interested. Peter Ricketts said many of the things which I would have said so I won't repeat anything he said except to say that, like him, I welcome the broadening of the Review to cover economics and economic security.

I think the Review is absolutely right to say that economic security and national security are increasingly intertwined. They're intertwined partly in areas where they're very relevant for systemic competition, most of all in relation to China - so many issues there are about economics rather than military competition. But they're also important because the economic crisis which the UK faces and, in particular, the continuing low levels of productivity growth in our country have multiple national security implications. The fact that we have high levels of inequality between different regions of England is a national security issue because it has telling effects on our social cohesion which, of course, was in part responsible for that Brexit vote five years ago. And for me, in many ways it doesn't go far enough in its discussion of economics. There's a strong emphasis on science and technology, this aspiration to be a science and technology superpower - although we actually spend less on research and development than most of our OECD peers as a proportion of GDP - but I missed any real narrative about how the Government's going to respond to what I think will be a significant reduction, is already proving to be a significant reduction, in trade, the volume exports and imports with our former EU partners in the single market, and how that's going to mean that we'll have to do things in different ways.

And I think there's still a sense - I mean one of the things that's come out to me in discussions with those involved in the Review - there's still a real sense on the economic side that it's basically Treasury orthodoxy with a bit of flavouring from Dominic Cummings thrown in. And, I think, quite indicative of that is the fact that the Government really, in the month almost coinciding with Integrated Review, abandoned the industrial strategy which it had inherited from the May administration without replacing it with something, at least as yet. So that lack of an industrial strategy, a lack of thinking about how to take advantage of some of the opportunities provided by Brexit was, I think, a big gap in in the Review. But let me give most of my remaining remarks to, on

the one hand, defence issues and, on the other hand, some specifically Scottish issues which I think might be useful for me to say something about in Mariot's absence.

I think, of course, it's possible to read this document in many different ways. On one level I think it contains quite an elegant description of the Government's aspirations for Britain's role in the world and, of course, it's very important to remember that the nature of foreign policy, as distinct from domestic policy in important regards, is that so much depends on what others do. I think one of the criticisms of the review which some of my recent colleagues have made is there are too many 'wills' in this Review: 'the Government will develop closer ties with country x or country y'. Well, that depends on country x or country y as well as ourselves and it's the nature of foreign policy - Peter, a long-term practitioner of this knows this so well - that it has to be flexible. There need to be principles, there need to be priorities but time and again the policies of major powers have changed as a result of what others have done. The United States has talked about that pivot to East Asia for the last 20 years at least. George W Bush came to power in 2001 calling for a pivot to Asia-Pacific and then 9/11 happened. So, we need to be very well aware of that - the pandemic, that COVID pandemic over the last year and a bit, a very clear shock which none of us could have anticipated but has thrown a lot of these issues into flux.

Even when it is possible to make decisions on strategy those are, I think, most important in a Review like this in terms of capabilities. The balance between different areas of spending, where we at the moment want to put our resources, where we want to put fewer resources. One of the guidelines which people like me have always put forward for reviews of this sort is that they should take place in parallel with a long-term spending review. But, I think, for quite understandable reasons last autumn the Chancellor decided that the spending review would only be for one year with the important exception of defence. And therefore, in every other part of this Integrated Review whether it's in relation to levels of research development, or development assistance, or many other areas - police funding, resilience funding - the spending settlements are primarily only for one year.

If you read this Review, it reads as if the aid budget hasn't been cut. I think there's a one reference in that whole document to the cut in aid spending, and no discussion about the strategic priorities, the prioritisation that has been done in terms of where to make the biggest cuts and where not to make cuts. The people involved in it, they've written the document as if we're still spending 0.7 this year and it's still possible that, newspaper reports this morning indeed suggest the Prime Minister still wants to restore 0.7% but the Treasury is resisting that. My own view is that it will be hard to restore that 0.7% this summer in the spending review that's going to start within the next four months or so because it's going to be a very tough spending review, the number of competing requirements on the public purse are going to be very substantial indeed. Health and education are going to be right at the top, ever greater demands for resources, especially for the NHS and social care, many other issues in relation to infrastructure. It's going to be very tough but in a way it's very hard to judge the credibility of this Integrated Review until you know what the resources are to support the decisions made. The important exception to that, of course, is defence. Defence was given a four-year spending settlement last November in the spending review and the decisions made at that time are almost more important than any of the details in the Defence Command Paper, which was published just after the Integrated Review because, first of all, it made a decision that there would be a sharp increase in capital spending for the Ministry of Defence but resource spending, day-to-day spending, would be more or less frozen in cash terms. And out of that decision so much else in the Defence Review flowed.

It meant, on the one hand, I think, that that big increase in capital spending meant that some of the over-commitment the Ministry of Defence had ended up with it has been resolved. They're not

going to have to be the big cancellations or postponements of major projects that would have happened otherwise. And it's also, I think, a response to the domestic political pressure, industrial pressure, to invest in manufacturing and services in the north of England and indeed in Scotland. So, there's a sort of domestic political aspect to it there. There's been a lot of publicity in relation to new technology, cyber space, and so on, drones, but the reality of where that extra capital spending is going to go is most of that extra spending is going to go on platforms which would be very familiar: on new submarines; a new nuclear warhead; new armoured combat vehicles Ajax and Boxer; and - towards the end of a decade, probably the biggest project of all - a new generation of fighter aircraft currently called Tempest, which is not spending an awful lot by defence in defence terms - only a few hundred million a year over the next four years but then it's going to increase very rapidly after that.

And on the other hand, the running costs, because they're frozen in cash terms there's going to be some really difficult decisions there, not least in relation to the size of the regular army which is being cut by 10,000 from its previous target. And was there an alternative Defence Review which involved more people and less kit for the army? Yes, there was such an alternative, I think. I'm not sure it would be a better alternative because I think one of the things about the UK which is different from our continental neighbours is that we are by nature an expeditionary power. Unless we actually base tens of thousands of soldiers in Poland or the Baltic republics permanently, in the event of a major crisis with Russia, we'd have to get our soldiers there and they'd have to be able to operate there when they got there and therefore having large numbers of soldiers sitting on these islands in the UK without the capacity to move to where crisis is, with the kit to do the job, it doesn't make much sense. Historically the UK has tended to rely less on its army than continental powers for good geographical reasons and I suspect we're beginning to move step by step back in that direction to a country whose contribution to NATO is maritime more than it is on the ground, though that will still remain important.

Final comment, if I may, in relation to the Union, Peter Ricketts has already pointed to the fact that there are quite a number of mentions of the Union, the importance of the Union in this document, some of which reflect concerns about the implications of the breakup of the Union. These are very evident in relation to Scotland, in relation to Northern Ireland. Indeed, the Defence Command Paper provides a special section focusing on the jobs benefits of defence spending in Scotland, and indeed in all four constituent nations. In the absence of Mariot, perhaps I can also say a little bit about how defence and security might fit into the forthcoming debate, if there is one, on a potential Scotland independence referendum. I wrote a lot about this back in 2013 and 2014 in the run-up to the last Referendum. My own view is that an independent state would face many key decisions right at the beginning of its existence, maybe even prior to becoming formally independent. And the broader question for the first Scottish integrated review would be 'what would independent Scotland's foreign and security policy be?'

Let me just give a couple of introductory remarks on that, and we can throw it open to questions if anybody else is interested. First of all, an independent Scotland would still be a British country, not a Scandinavian one, not a continental European one. The relationship between Scotland and the remainder of the UK would be the most important foreign policy relationship for Scotland and, I think, also for the rest of the UK. The debate would be about how rapid the diversification would be. There'd be, as there was in the Brexit debate, a discussion of a spectrum between hard Scotxit or hard independence and a softer version. But even in the hardest version I think that there would be a high degree of interdependence. On defence you can similarly imagine a range of options. On the one hand, one has seen this in the past from some people in the SNP, almost a fixation with creating

an entirely independent Scottish defence force, splitting up inventories of aircraft, identifying those regiments which are Scottish and those which are not, taking, you know, 8% of the Royal Navy's surface fleet and so on and so forth.

But, at the other end, I think you can very easily, perhaps more plausibly, imagine a situation which UK bases and capabilities, in large part, at least on the conventional side, remain in Scotland for an extended period, providing a security umbrella within which independent forces could develop, as indeed has been the case in previous countries which have gained independence from the UK. The hard issue, of course, will be Faslane and the nuclear base there which would not be possible to relocate rapidly and which, I've argued in the past could well provide a strong glue for the two countries forcing them to cooperate because both of them would have a very strong interest in doing so. Over time I think it would become more difficult for the UK to maintain its sole nuclear force in a foreign country and therefore I think there would be a mutual incentive to, over time, to relocate to England but that could be done over a long period of time.

Finally, I would say that there's clearly many people in the UK policy community who are worried about the impact on the UK's international position of a breakup of the Union - rightly worried, I think. On the face of it, the loss of 8% of the population, 8% of GDP would seem to be survivable; after all the Soviet Union lost half its population and still remained on the UN Security Council. But much would depend on whether there was a transition to a strong cooperative relationship which, as we've seen in relation to Brexit, would not necessarily be easy after a close and bitter campaign. So, I think it's right that if we have another referendum over the next decade then security and defence issues should be an important part of that discussion, if only because security and defence is one of the areas which is still - particularly in relation to defence - almost entirely a Union competence and therefore will be one of the areas which should be most affected if our country were to break up. Thank you very much.

**Des McNulty:** Thanks very much Malcolm. Really interesting, as all those contributions have been. Now there are a series of questions coming in but I'm going to take advantage of the chair by posing one initially to our panel. And that's the extent to which the COVID experience has filtered into defence thinking and some of the rhetoric that's actually been put forward here. I'm thinking particularly about the early phase of COVID when it appeared that more open societies or societies where there was a good degree of liberal freedoms, of movements and so on, were less effective at responding, or less able to persuade their populations to give up those personal freedoms, and therefore experienced high degrees of transmission. It was certainly true in the US as well as the UK. Geography played a factor in this - so places like New Zealand were more protected than places like Britain or Europe where there were bigger out- and in-flows of population.

And then in the latter stages of the pandemic you've had that the success or the apparent success of the vaccination program in the UK which has been about the exploitation of scientific expertise to provide a solution to the COVID challenge, which raises a whole series of issues about vaccine nationalism, the interdependency of supply lines and procurement procedures. Within the document there's a moving away from 'competition by default' to the notion of 'prioritising UK industrial capability for national security and operational reasons'. So, my question is, to what extent has the experiences of the last 12 months with COVID shifted the balance in defence thinking, if at all, and do you think that in the implementation of this Review going forward, people will be seeking to learn lessons from the COVID experience and its impact on security issues? I suppose that raises the whole issue about national competitiveness more generally. I'm just wondering who might want to pick that question up first? Peter?

**Peter Ricketts:** Should I take a first shot at that? I think obviously the pandemic has had a huge impact on Government thinking across the board not just in defence and I'm sure in all countries. I mean you're right, I think, that liberal democracies struggled in the first months to imagine the kind of restrictions they'd have to put on their citizens and then to implement those restrictions, so they were slower to impose lockdowns which are unprecedented outside wartime and authoritarian states with all their techniques of control were able to do that more quickly. Whether that's a strength or a weakness of democracies is another matter, but I think they have rallied since then. Of course, what this has done I think, and this is relevant to defence, is put the whole issue of resilience higher up on the security agenda. It was already pretty high. In 2010 we had it as one of the top four national security risks. We talked about the risk of natural hazards like flooding or a pandemic. We were talking about an influenza pandemic in those days and the Government actually didn't prepare very well so I think the whole idea of resilience, of investing now to allow you to tackle something that might happen, but might not, and carving out money for those sorts of risks which are uncertain rather than always just concentrating on the risk that is happening in front of your face, that, I think, is going to be a durable change. We'll have to get better at that.

I hope all the spending won't go into public health resilience because we need to be doing a lot more in climate and making our critical digital infrastructures more resilient as well. I think the idea of autonomy, whether it's European strategic autonomy in the EU or Britain thinking in more nationalist ways about our own autonomy and security areas, has as much, if not more, to do with China actually and the realisation all around Western capitals that we have become dependent on China for all kinds of things that we hadn't actually realised. I mean like 5G telecoms equipment for example, like a lot of high-tech manufacturing, and some low-tech manufacturing like masks and protective equipment for the medical community, and I think the idea that we must think more strategically among Western countries on 'where are we exposed to China as a monopoly supplier or as the leading supplier?', 'where do we want to bring some of that more onshore?'. That's not so much the pandemic has put that into higher focus but it's essentially an issue about confrontation and competition with China in my view.

**Des McNulty:** Malcolm, do you want to come in on this?

**Malcom Chambers:** Yes, I do, and I think Peter's point on China is a very important one. I think the pandemic is accelerating thinking about de-globalization. That's perhaps rather a dramatic term but I think some of the principles are important. The UK historically, for a very long period of time, maybe there is an exception in the interwar period but with that exception, a very long time, we have seen ourselves as the most liberal country of the major powers at least, in relation to international economics. And, of course, Brexit was counter-intuitive in that regard because it was it was increasing economic barriers to trade with our neighbours. But I think there's still a feeling 'well that's an exception'. In every other respect we still feel ourselves as being more open than others and certainly more often than the United States or indeed our European neighbours. But the combined effect of the pandemic on the one hand, the China challenge on the other, and, in a different way, I think, accelerated by Brexit as we've seen in the vaccine nationalism between the UK and the EU, is that that principle, which is still very strong, I think, in the UK Government is being weakened and diluted on a whole range of fronts.

Just to take one example, much of the revolution in renewable energy in Europe and the US has been driven by rapidly reducing prices for solar panels which has allowed us to 'green' our economy more rapidly. Where are those solar panels made at incredibly low cost? They're made in China. Many of them made in Xinjiang. Now are we going now to put sanctions on those? Maybe we should, maybe we should always have thought a little bit more about where things are produced

and not simply where they're designed. The model, the economic model we've had here is one where, and again I think the Integrated Review reflects this, it's a lot on focus on R&D [research and development] but not on manufacturing. But I think the vaccine issue in particular, I mean the vaccine has been a success for us so far, in part because there's been that effort to ensure that there's manufacturing in the UK as well as design. It's not something Oxford scientists designing a vaccine which is then produced in India and China although some of it is produced there but it was that sense of want to control the whole supply chain. And that has costs. It has costs as well as benefits. It's a very complex phenomenon but really important.

I suspect what we'll see over the coming year or two is one area after another which we saw as unproblematic, and a commodity which we don't need to worry about will become politicised and economics will become politicised for better for worse. In many cases I think for the worse, and we will be entering into a debate which is already happening in the United States, happening in the European Union, happening in China – China doesn't want to be reliant on the West in more and more areas. At a time when our economy is relatively small and we're no longer part of a bigger single market, we're going to have to be very agile in that process and make some intelligent calculations. I was concerned about the Huawei debate partly because in the end - I mean, I think it was a fascinating case study of government policy - because we had a situation - and I remember sitting in RUSI being lobbied by all sorts of parties - where our intelligence services, GCPH in particular, were arguing that we could manage the risk involved with Huawei. On the other hand, our major ally the United States, along with Australia, were arguing the exact opposite. Well, I think we're going to have that sort of debate again and again where the balancing between economic cost and security costs is just part and parcel of everyday foreign policy.

**Des McNulty:** Andy?

**Andrew Corbett:** Thanks. On a much lower level, I think one of the things that I think COVID has brought home, particularly to the armed forces, is that when you're talking about resilience quite often it's the things that you learn are really important are really low level. It's lowkey stuff. It's fuel delivery or sewage or the mail. It's that kind of thing. And I think one of the one of the things that and this really is just a feeling from talking to the various folk I work with that many of these things have been adapted and, if you like the resilient solution, is almost becoming the new normal and I think that the very fact that we are in 61 different places having this conversation is an indication of where perhaps the new normal is going to be better than the old normal. But in terms of the military, I think one of the things that I suspect folk in the future won't hear quite as often is mid-seniority officers saying 'I'll just take that on risk' which tended to mean 'yeah, that sounds really difficult, I'm going to do nothing about it and hope that nothing happens in my tenure here' and I think that particular attitude has probably been kicked well and truly out of touch.

**Des McNulty:** Beatrice did you want to identify on the questions from the audience that you wanted to take forward?

**Beatrice Heuser:** Well, I think one has been dealt with which is about the reasons for cutting down the troops and whether that makes sense given the increasing threat level by Ewan Donahue because Malcolm Chalmers addressed that. But there are two questions for a Lord Ricketts which are about his experience with the previous reviews. One of them being was 'were they also used for point-scoring in quite that way?' and the other one was 'when major changes were made from previous postures, how was that discussed? Was that quite deliberate and how were the people, were governments happy to make these big changes, turning points, or was that something that was somehow glossed over?'

**Peter Ricketts:** Two very interesting points. First of all is political point-scoring in these sorts of documents a new phenomenon? Well, I think it would be naive to suggest that government strategy documents, like the 2010 document that I coordinated, didn't have any political presentation in them, political point-scoring. I think all these sorts of strategy documents are documents of advocacy as well as analysis. They are the Government trying to persuade the public that its policies are right. If you like, they are spin, they include spin inevitably. What we tried to do typically is to confine that as much as possible to the Prime Minister's foreword at the beginning of the document, so you get the party-political points there and then you have less of that in the more analytical text which is produced by the civil servants. Even there, of course, a new government will want to put its own slant, its own shape, on the document and in the 2010 document, I mean, there was certainly political interest in the way this would be presented. I remember being told by one senior minister that there was to be no strategic shrinkage even though that they were cutting the defence budget pretty massively at that point. But I think this document, to be honest, goes further in allowing in the main body of the document itself quite a lot of very 'Boris Johnson' hyperbole exaggerated claims and statements about being superpowers in all sorts of different areas. You can almost feel the officials and John Bew pulling on one end of the rope and the politicians pulling on the other in terms of how the document sits between forensic analysis and presentational 'boosterism' to use that term. I think it's gone further in that direction.

On how you integrate the contradictions. The problem that governments have when they come to do a review like this is that they want to make new proposals, they want to put their own stamp on it. But at the same time, you inherit all the investments that your predecessors have made in equipment, in programs, in people and you can't cut all those and start from a blank sheet of paper so an awful lot of, for example the defence programme, is inherited, will continue and you can't stop that. And that can be awkward. I mean, in 2010 for example, we could conceivably have cut the aircraft carrier programs but the first aircraft carrier was already being built, it would have been a massively disruptive thing to do. But it meant that therefore our strategy had to work around the fact that we were going to have two massive aircraft carriers and latest generation fighters but only in 10 years. We had a 10-year gap in aircraft carrier capability. So that was a bit of a contradiction from the sort of presentation of the country ministers wanted to make but we had to live with it. I mean another example I suppose, is the nuclear deterrent. You could, in extremis, have imagined, you know, not replacing the nuclear deterrent but again in practice that wasn't really an option. So, yes, there will be things that aren't entirely consistent. The National Security Council is the vehicle to try to fashion out of that a coherent narrative it will never be completely coherent but that's where you can do the best job you can.

**Des McNulty:** Thanks very much. Can I highlight the reference to a full spectrum cyber security strategy, including the notion of offensive cyber and reference to malign actors using a wider range of tools without open confrontation or conflict. To what extent is the Government properly recognising the impact of cyber threat but also responding to it by this notion of a cyber offensive, an offensive capability in cyber? Is that something that the UK is well equipped to do? Is it something that we should be doing? Is it something that other people are doing? Is it an appropriate response to what might be seen as a genuine threat?

**Peter Ricketts:** Shall I start briefly and then let others develop it? Simply to say that again this is nothing new. I mean in 2010, we had as one of our top four risks, the risk of cyber-attack and we put some pretty significant money at that point, particularly into GCHQ which is our cyber security centre of excellence in the Government. And I think since then our cyber security, the defensive aspects, protecting the country, individuals, businesses, governments, critical infrastructure from

cyber-attack has been a real strong point in the Government's performance. The creation of the national cyber security centre, for example, which is an offshoot of GCHQ but is public facing has been really successful I think, in translating classified risks and threats into advice to the public and business on how to protect them. Offensive cyber, I mean I don't actually like the term, it means taking the cyber-attack issue to others and using against potential attackers the tools they might use against us. Kieran Martin, the former head of the National Cyber Security Centre has, I think, a very good analogy and he says it effectively means releasing viruses in the hope that the virus will do the job you want it to do in getting inside systems in other countries but also hope that it won't blow back into your own systems in the process since the cyber world is one eco-system in effect. So clearly it has a role, it's growing. My own view is that cyber security and protecting ourselves is the most important thing and the role for offensive cyber is always going to be fairly limited for a country like ourselves but that's a view I put out for discussion.

**Malcolm Chalmers:** Maybe I could just add something to that. I think Peter's absolutely right to say that the main focus has to be in resilience and protection. I think the cyber security is one of those areas where it has an effect on each and every one of us. Every one of us who uses a connected computer is subject to cyber security risks, fraud from a wide range of actors, including states but also others. And I think there's a there's there is a risk in this cyber security debate that it it's sometimes seen perhaps in some of the circles that we move in as being primarily in the same category as conventional military or even nuclear competition. But most of the cyber security risks we face as a country are forms of espionage or ransomware and Kieran Martin, who I respect greatly, he's argued recently in a RUSI seminar that one of the biggest risks he's worried about is the spread of ransomware.

There are things that can be done, and the National Cyber Security Centre has been helping with this - we've published work on that - which affects everybody's bank account and the ability of our public services and private businesses to operate so that's very important. On offensive cyber. Of course, offensive cyber reconnaissance is one thing and seeking damage is another. It's absolutely right to do both but an awful lot of what our cyber security experts and government in particular will be doing is trying to find out what others are seeking to do. If there is an attack by a state-linked actor against the facility in the UK, we'll be able to identify which office block in Moscow or Beijing or wherever it might be is operating that. It's really important and to do that of course you have to go inside the cyber security of another. But I wouldn't rule out a role for it for offensive destructive elements, some of that was used against Islamic State in the campaign there but that's something I think that has to be used with very considerable caution, but it is a tool in the toolbox, and it is one that's being developed as the Integrated Review made clear.

**Des McNulty:** Andy

**Andrew Corbett:** There's two issues I'd like to pick up on here. Firstly, the conversation we're having is indicative of the stove-piping that I think everybody mentioned. Cyber is treated almost as a separate issue within the Review and also just generally. And frankly I don't see it as that. I think certainly in international relations then it's symptomatic, it's a part of, you know, what folk are calling the gray zone warfare or hybrid warfare or this constant competition. Harking back to the point we made earlier about this continuum or this spectrum of confrontation, then cyber kind of fits somewhere down at the bottom end where the malign actor can achieve some kind of malignant effect without necessarily, or perhaps necessarily without, triggering some form of armed response, and I'm thinking particularly clearly of Russian activities on NATO's eastern borders. It tends to then be part of something bigger than just cyber; it would be coordinated with information operations or election interference perhaps. But certainly, it's all part of some kind of messaging that's that is that

is designed to influence or coerce the victim state and therefore as a potential victim state, if you like, then the UK's focus on making sure that we are cyber resilient and defensive or well defended is an important one.

And the second part of the same discussion then would be that, in security operations with Forces where, if that is reached, then cyber becomes part of the environment in which those Forces just have to work. They have to be able to operate and communicate and navigate and do everything that Forces do, under a threat of cyber and I'm not convinced that we're at that yet. I think still when you talk to folk in the Armed Forces about exercises and training and that kind of stuff 'yeah, we did cyber, we did it between 2 and 4 on Tuesday afternoon and then we went back to the war'. It's all part of the same mindset. What we need to be doing is thinking about things like cyber or artificial intelligence in the same way as thinking about CVRN and that sort of chemical threat. It's got to be part of the normal operating environment that the Forces are prepared to prepare to operate in and right now I don't get that feeling.

Des McNulty: Beatrice, did you want to pick up any other questions?

**Beatrice Heuser:** Yes, I think there are a couple that should be addressed and one of them would be 'le nucleaire'. My colleague Neil Munro has asked whether 'if in the next elections there are pretty many seats in the Scottish Parliament that are held by people from parties that are against nuclear weapons, will that have a spillover into rest UK politics and would that be something that you think might trigger more of an anti-nuclear sentiment also south of the border. Or is that precisely something that is very distinctive about what's north of the border between England and Scotland?'

**Malcolm Chambers:** Well, maybe I can start with this. I mean that would not be a new position, Beatrice. The SNP, of course, has had a long-standing opposition to the siting of nuclear weapons in Scotland which no doubt will continue although in practice many SNP politicians I think are quite flexible about the timescale on which they would be moved if Scotland were to be independent. So, I'm not sure it would make much difference really to opinion south of the border where, of course, there have also been divisions. I think that the difference between Scotland and England in opinion polling, I think is it's in large measure as a result of the independence element in Scotland rather than the Scots being inherently more anti-nuclear, but Andy probably has got more to say on this as somebody who's been involved as an operator in all this so maybe I can pass over to him

**Andrew Corbett:** I guess it'd be my turn then! I think the Westminster government of whatever ilk for well for about 70 years have had a long tradition of just not engaging in any debate about, well nuclear weapons generally, but certainly it was 'the question that shall not be asked in 2014' in the MOD, 'what happens if Scotland walks?'. But in terms of engaging with the public on this issue it just doesn't happen. You know, my own view is that you can trace this back to hesitation back to retaliatory bombing in the First World War because it deals with a type of warfare that the British Government just doesn't want to talk about, it's just not the British way of doing things, threatening cities, or people, or non-combatants and we've just got into the habit of not talking about it. And the conversation UK-wide is therefore dominated by, or it's led off and dominated by, those who are opposed to nuclear weapons and then tends to fall into either it's something to do with the basing or something to do with the funding and the broader potential benefits of nuclear weapons and the whole idea of nuclear deterrence is just, it's alien to the vast majority of people including the vast majority of folk who make decisions on these - not the specialists - but the folk who make decisions on these things in Parliament, both Scottish and Westminster.

The upshot of that is that in my view, the public just don't care: 'we've got this stuff in the UK, we've got these things, we do this thing called deterrence, I'm not quite sure how well that works but that's fine and we'll just leave that to it'. I don't think that having a, if you're like, a hard-core abolitionist, for want of a better word, Scottish Parliament will make a whit of difference to Westminster and therefore will probably not make much difference within the wider UK community. What will be interesting or would be really interesting is the repercussions of a second Indy referendum that actually voted for independence.

**Des McNulty:** Beatrice?

**Beatrice Heuser:** There's another one from Sebastian Carr, 'how one can involve Scottish voices in politics much more, and in defence politics much more, without making that an issue that becomes all about independence? So how can one do more to make Scotland, to include Scotland, in defence debates, rather than doing defence to Scotland?' I've heard that echoing around Westminster. I'd just like to add to that there's a lovely passage in the Review which is all about this cultural inclusiveness and how everybody, and every single civil servants' association that exists is in future going to be consulted or brought in in some way into debates about defence in order to make this participation very diverse. As an academic I note, of course, that the national security community, as it is called in the defence review, continues to be exclusively made up- and I've inquired about this - of people from organisations that are represented in the national security council so unlike, for example the USA, not for example unlike the USA, where a security community always also includes academics and has a lot of interchange with the academic world because of the revolving door, of course, the United Kingdom's idea of inclusiveness continues to be people across Government that are already in the state apparatus should be included more rather than in some way reaching out to experts outside but this is classically a pro domo argument on my part. But here again, is the question 'how can one make defence debates more inclusive of Scottish choices?'

**Malcolm Chalmers:** It's a really interesting question Beatrice and I think it's hard to resolve at the political level because we're now in the situation, which may or may not continue but we're in it right now, where I think since the 2015 election the vast majority of Westminster MPs from Scotland are - and therefore potential members of a of a UK cabinet - they are SNP and this is a bit like the situation in Ireland before the partition of Ireland in the late 19th century. It was Irish nationalists had the vast majority of seats from Ireland in Westminster and it creates a situation. I mean before that 2015 election both the major parties, the Union parties, Labour perhaps more than the Conservatives but actually both had significant numbers of senior members, disproportionate numbers of senior members, including prime ministers and foreign secretaries and defence secretaries and so on, who represented Scottish constituencies and several others who were born in Scotland had a fairly strong Scottish heritage.

I worry that the fact that that's no longer the case, that the vast majority of Scots in Westminster are from a party whose primary purpose is to break up the United Kingdom does have a corrosive impact because people say 'well, who are the Scots involved in decision making and defence?' Well, of course, there are very few. Michael Gove maybe, in his roving role at the moment has some role there but he's not representing a Scottish constituency. It's a bit like the situation with people from Northern Ireland where because people don't vote there for Union parties, they vote for parties aligned with one or the other of the two main communities there, again they never take part in Government and that's a big worry. Can you can you do more at an official level? {Perhaps you can. I mean one of the one of the side effects of the broadening of the national security agenda beyond defence is it increasingly encompasses areas like resilience and policing, or industrial policy, or R&D policy and so on, where the Scottish Government has a responsibility as well as the Government in

Westminster. In principle it would be good to have that but, correct me if I'm wrong Peter, but I don't think there's ever been any representation from the devolved administrations in the National Security Council even when they're talking about resilience but there may be some subcommittee process where you involve them. Certainly, if you're talking about policing you have to have a way of representing the police force in Scotland even though that's under Scottish Government responsibility.

**Peter Ricketts:** I think you're right Malcolm, I don't think there is a vehicle for doing that. There's no precedent for doing that. I just wanted to broaden it out beyond the issue of bringing Scottish voices into the debate to the question of bringing voices outside Government into the national security and defence debate. Beatrice I think you're right, I think the UK national security community remains a pretty closed one and there was a lot of talk at the outset of this Integrated Review process of wide consultation, of bringing in other voices and so on. I think the team did try. I think what it amounted to mostly was an invitation to send in papers, send in papers from King's [College], send in thinking from RUSI, all of which was welcome but there wasn't, I think, much flow back in the other direction. You're right, in the US it's a much more open system because of the revolving door. In France when I was ambassador there in 2013, I sat on a commission, a national security commission, which was very heavily involved in writing the French white paper of 2013 on defence and security and that involved academics, it involved some commentators, it involved me as a Brit and a German ambassador, and it was it was very consultative. We don't have the same thing here.

But even more generally than that I'm sure that we ought to be having a wider debate in the community about the sorts of decisions that are implicit if not actually evident in this Integrated Review. It's very striking how little debate there is about the nuclear issue as you say, even though this is a major increase in the nuclear warheads that the UK will hold. There is very little debate publicly about the defence choices. Do we want an army that is optimised for going and helping local forces far away from home or fighting a potential First World War in Europe? Those are quite big questions but they're not really debated and so I would like to see this Integrated Review as the start of a much wider national dialogue at all sorts of levels including in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland but also in England and bringing in younger people critically, because the younger generation are those who are going to have to live with the decisions that are taken, you know, over the next few years as this integrated review works through into Government policy.

**Andrew Corbett:** I think there are, kind of, I'm not quite sure of the term - possibly third estate or something - activities going on. I mean RUSI runs PONY, the project on nuclear issues for young scholars to get involved in nuclear deterrence issues so there are some things that are going on but there certainly doesn't appear to be anything governmental. I was struck by - that came out wrongly - George Robertson was very proud of the degree of consultation that went on for the 1998 SDR and they had regional roundtables all across the country and he was absolutely sure that he got very valuable feedback from that. But perhaps playing devil's advocate a little bit but why should Scotland have a say in UK defence policy and not, say, Cornwall or Yorkshire and I think this indicates perhaps something that's not quite healthy with the parliamentary system. There is a block of Scottish MPs who seem to be speaking with pretty much one voice on defence issues and certainly on the nuclear issue and yet their influence within Parliament and therefore their influence on the UK's defence policy is negligible because the parliamentary system is such that if you're not in government your vote is - it's not meaningless, clearly, it's not meaningless - but it can be outvoted by it by a large government bloc. So, I think there is, and ought to be, a regional voice for each of the regions within the parliamentary setup but perhaps the parliamentary setup isn't quite as effective as we would like it to be.

**Des McNulty:** Beatrice?

**Beatrice Heuser:** I have one question for Lord Ricketts with his past experience of introducing this list of risks and evaluating how important they are. I'm very, very fascinated by that and this is a real academic methodological question if you like because it's the question is 'how do you evaluate the likelihood or unlikelihood of that and to what extent can you rely on that?' I seem to remember a story from the 1990s in which I believe the Foreign Office's planning staff dismissed any planning around the risk for a Yugoslav breakup as something that was going to be unlikely and, if it happened at all, it might not be likely but if it happened at all, would be so much less important than if, say, the Soviet Union / Russia, collapsed and broke up in civil war. And therefore little planning was done for it and little was done to cover this eventuality which then came to preoccupy us for the entire 1990s. Isn't this idea of a list of risks and their evaluation fairly dangerous as well?

**Peter Ricketts:** I disagree because I think strategy is about choosing you can't do everything especially if you're a middle-sized power and you have to set some priorities. Equally it's a mug's game to try to predict events. Events will always come up that you don't expect. After the 2010 review, of course, 2011, we found ourselves fighting an air war in Libya which we wouldn't have predicted then. You know in 2015 we wouldn't have predicted we'd have a global pandemic although we certainly had flagged it up as a risk. So, to answer the question how we did it? I mean there is a national risk register that I think is 80 or 90 different risks of all kinds that everyone can imagine, and we sat down with that in 2010 and we went through risk by risk on a matrix of likelihood and impact. And, of course, those are you know, to some extent, subjective judgments but we tried to measure both the likelihood of something happening and the impact if it did. It was those that were both relatively likely and high impact that came out in the top four risks that we listed and then we had other tiers going further down.

In some ways it's the process of thinking like that that is the most useful because Ministers in my experience don't tend to think in terms of risks. They live their entire life, everything is a risk, they might wake up one morning and find that you know some awful scandal had blown up or you know there'd been a reshuffle and they'd lost their seat whatever. They tend to live in the moment and having to think about risks and do some sort of rough ranking, so nuclear war with the Soviet Union with Russia we put down in the second or third category not the top category because the likelihood was actually quite low given the mitigations in place. Whereas the risk of a cyber-attack, the risk of natural hazards like pandemics, the risk of a terrorist attack, or an international military operation, those four seem to us to be generically likely even if we couldn't predict individual elements or how event would happen. So, I would say some degree of prioritising and choosing which are going to be your topmost objectives is important in the Strategy and I do regret that it's missing in this latest Integrated Review.

**Des McNulty:** We're drawing towards the end of our time. We've had a fantastic discussion of a wide range of issues here. I'd particularly like to thank our three panellists Peter Ricketts, Andy Corbett and Malcolm Chalmers for contributing their wisdom and expertise and Beatrice Heuser for her involvement in setting this up and then dealing with the questions. Can close the meeting, in a sense, by thanking the audience. We've had a very good attendance and the vast majority of people have stayed with us right the way through which is always the test of a successful event. I wish you all well for the rest of the day. Thank you.

**ENDS**