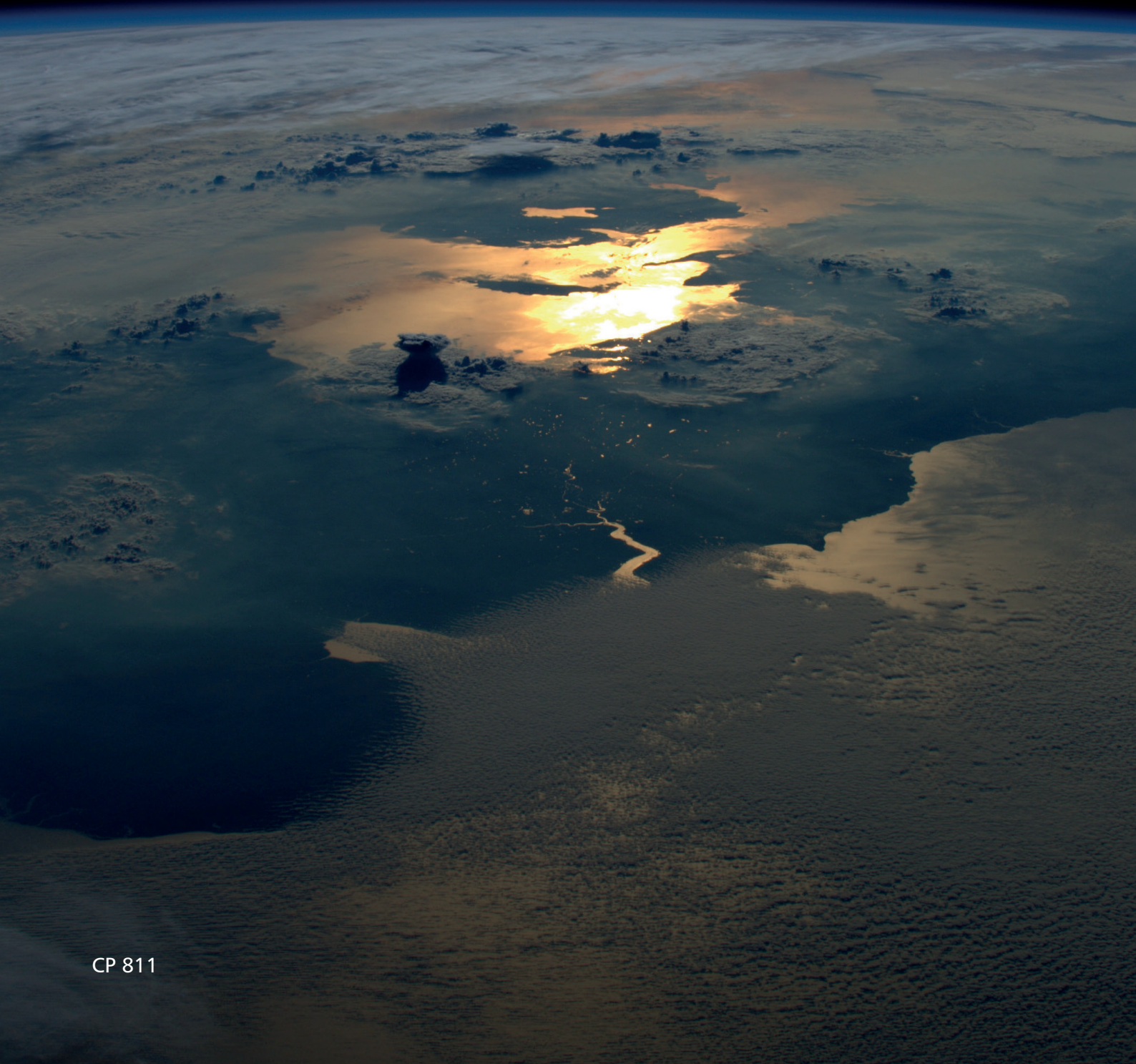




HM Government

Integrated Review Refresh 2023

Responding to a more
contested and volatile world





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Responding to a more
contested and volatile world

Presented to Parliament by the Prime Minister
by Command of His Majesty

March 2023

Cover image: summer sun over the UK
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I. Foreword from the Prime Minister



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The 2021 Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy anticipated some but not all of the global turbulence of the last two years. It recognised that the intensification of competition between states was sowing seeds of instability. It warned of the acute threat posed by Russia; of China's willingness to use all the levers of state power to achieve a dominant role in global affairs; and of the persistent destabilising behaviour of Iran and North Korea.

As a result of this analysis, the 2021 Integrated Review helped instigate record investment in defence and recommended a more active and activist posture for Britain on the world stage. It prioritised collective security in the Euro-Atlantic and emphasised the need to forge stronger bonds in the Indo-Pacific, the Gulf and Africa, as regions of growing importance to UK interests.

This approach has been played out in the UK's leading contribution to the defence of Ukraine – both in terms of the amount of defensive support we have provided and in the leading role we have played in galvanising the international community. When the security of our continent has been threatened, we have been at the forefront of its defence; and we will maintain that commitment for as long as it takes. I am proud that the UK has delivered the ambition we set for the Indo-Pacific tilt: achieving dialogue partner status with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), deepening our bilateral political, economic and security relations across the region, pursuing final phase negotiations on accession to CPTPP, launching British International Investment's Singapore hub, deploying a UK Carrier Strike Group and two offshore patrol vessels to the region, and co-launching the Partners in the Blue Pacific initiative. We have strengthened Atlantic-Pacific links, including through two major defence and security partnerships in the form of AUKUS with the US and Australia and the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP) with Italy and Japan.

But what could not be fully foreseen in 2021 was the pace of the geopolitical change and the extent of its impact on the UK and our people. We learned from COVID-19 just how much impact events that begin overseas can have on our lives and livelihoods at home. Since then, Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, weaponisation of energy and food supplies and irresponsible nuclear rhetoric, combined with China's more aggressive stance in the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait, are threatening to create a world defined by danger, disorder and division – and an international order more favourable to authoritarianism. Long-standing threats from terrorism and serious and organised crime are enduring and evolving, and may find new opportunities in events like the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. Other transnational challenges such as large-scale migration, smuggling of people, narcotics and weapons, and illicit finance have become more acute, with grave human costs and strain on our national resources.

The 2023 refresh therefore builds on the approach set out in the Integrated Review, setting out the next evolutionary step in delivering on its aims, against the backdrop of a more volatile and contested world. Its main conclusion is that unless democracies like our own do more to build our resilience and out-cooperate and out-compete those that are driving

instability, the global security situation will deteriorate further, to the detriment of all states and peoples. As in 2021, it paves the way to greater integration across government in pursuit of the four campaign priorities that will guide our national security strategy in this changing context. And it does so with further investment in our national security.

First, we must shape the global strategic environment, working with like-minded partners around the world and also with those who do not necessarily share our values and our perspective. The security and prosperity of the Euro-Atlantic will remain our core priority, bolstered by a reinvigoration of our European relationships. But that cannot be separated from our wider neighbourhood on the periphery of our continent and a free and open Indo-Pacific. We will deepen relationships, support sustainable development and poverty alleviation, and tackle shared challenges including climate change.

China poses an epoch-defining challenge to the type of international order we want to see, both in terms of security and values – and so our approach must evolve. We will work with our partners to engage with Beijing on issues such as climate change. But where there are attempts by the Chinese Communist Party to coerce or create dependencies, we will work closely with others to push back against them. And we are taking new action to protect ourselves, our democracy and our economy at home.

Second, as threats and volatility increase, we recognise the growing importance of deterrence and defence to keep the British people safe and our alliances strong. Our immediate and most urgent priority is supporting the self-defence and restoration of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. This is not just about our values. We are acting because Ukraine's security is all of our security. Russia's invasion and continuing occupation of Georgia, invasion and occupation of Crimea, threats to the UK homeland and attempts to destroy Ukraine are assaults on European security. That is why we have committed at least £2.3 billion of support for Ukraine as it enters the second year of its war of national self-defence, just as we did in 2022.

This geopolitical moment not only requires us to act now but to plan for the long-term. As a result of the refresh of the Integrated Review, defence will receive £5 billion of additional funding over two years – focusing on the priority areas of nuclear resilience and conventional stockpiles. Building on the record investment announced in 2020, overall UK defence spending is expected to reach 2.2% of GDP this year (2.29% when including our military support to Ukraine). But we will go further still, moving away from the baseline commitment of spending at least 2% of GDP on defence to a new aspiration to reach 2.5%. Taken together, these commitments will maintain our leading position in NATO and continue the modernisation of our armed forces, which will be further strengthened as we learn the lessons from the war in Ukraine. It will also allow us to invest in the next stages of the AUKUS and GCAP programmes. We will also support efforts to renew arms control and counter-proliferation, as it is when tensions are highest that leadership to establish clear routes for de-escalation is most vital.

Third, the stability and resilience of our economy and society is a precondition of our security, so we will address vulnerabilities that have been exposed in the UK and many countries by the events of the last two years. We must preserve the huge benefits that stem from our openness while ensuring that we are protected from the worst effects of global disruption, transnational challenges, or to hostile interference. That means improving our economic, health and energy security, with practical steps such as our energy support packages or using the National Security and Investment Act to prevent high-risk investment

in critical infrastructure and sensitive technologies. A new National Protective Security Authority will engage with businesses and institutions to protect our security and prosperity at home.

Working more closely with others will be vital to these efforts. Over the last year, together with the G7 and other partners, we have developed new economic tools, deploying an unprecedented package of sanctions against Russia. We will take this further with a new initiative to support sanctions enforcement and bolster other tools of economic statecraft, so that we are better prepared for future challenges.

Fourth, we will invest in the UK's unique strengths. Britain is a leading economy, but our strength comes not only through size but specialisation. As the 2021 Integrated Review was clear, science and technology is increasingly vital to our future. We are a top five nation in innovation, artificial intelligence (AI) and cyber, and a major international power in science and technology. We will increase our resilience for the long term by surging investment into these areas. That's why we are committing to spend £20 billion a year by 2024/25 on research and development and why we have reorganised government to enable greater focus and dynamism in an area that is critical for our future prosperity and security.

The most significant lesson of the last two years is not just that the world is a more dangerous place, but that when challenged we are ready and able to respond, working quickly and effectively with our partners. As the global context evolves further, systemic competition continues to intensify and new challenges emerge, we must make sure that this remains the case by taking a lead where we can make the most difference and finding new ways to cooperate with others to maximise our collective impact.

With the UK's unique strengths and deep partnerships, combined with our outstanding armed services, diplomatic network, development expertise, law enforcement and intelligence agencies, we will protect and promote our interests and play an active role in defence of openness, freedom and the rule of law. That's why I am looking to this difficult and dangerous decade with pride in our country and confidence in our values and with this Integrated Review Refresh as our blueprint.

II. Overview

Strong foundations: building on the 2021 Integrated Review

1. The 2021 Integrated Review, *Global Britain in a Competitive Age (IR2021)*, set the UK's overarching national security and international strategy, bringing together defence, security, resilience, diplomacy, development and trade, as well as elements of economic, and science and technology (S&T) policy. It is supported by a series of published sub-strategies, including the 2021 Defence Command Paper, the Defence and Security Industrial Strategy, the National Artificial Intelligence Strategy, the National Cyber Strategy, the National Space Strategy, the Strategy for International Development, the UK Export Strategy, the British Energy Security Strategy, the Net Zero Strategy, the Arctic Policy Framework and the UK Government Resilience Framework.
2. The IR strategic framework established four goals to guide all related government policy to 2025: sustaining strategic advantage through S&T; shaping an open and stable international order in our region and beyond; strengthening collective security and defence; and building resilience at home and overseas. The core emphasis of IR2021 was on integration – bringing together all of the UK's levers, breaking down barriers between domestic and international policy, and strengthening cooperation and burden-sharing with allies and partners to better navigate a more competitive and contested world.
3. IR2021 recommended continuity across many areas of policy, including in the UK's commitment to: multilateralism through the UN and other fora; collective security through NATO; robust measures to protect the British people from terrorist groups and serious and organised crime; and leading action at home and globally on climate change and biodiversity loss. It was clear that the security of the homeland and the Euro-Atlantic area remained the first-order priorities, on which our prosperity and quality of life depended. Overall, however, it concluded that static defence of the status quo was no longer sufficient to promote the UK's interests and protect the British people at a time of rapid geopolitical and technological change and a shifting balance of global power. The IR strategic framework therefore introduced several important shifts in the UK's posture and policy, including:
 - i. Renewed investment to bolster collective defence and security, supported by the biggest sustained uplift in defence spending since the end of the Cold War. Alongside this, it recommended an activist and more targeted foreign policy that recognised the intent of others to shape the international order in ways counter to the UK's interests, both in terms of traditional multilateralism and in areas of growing importance such as cyberspace, the digital domain and emerging technologies. This was therefore supported by a new emphasis on 'regulatory diplomacy' focused on shaping rules, norms and standards.
 - ii. Strengthening the UK's domestic resilience and international partnerships, partly in response to the epoch-defining and systemic challenge posed by China under the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) across almost every aspect of national life and government policy. This included a new focus on tackling state threats to the UK's democracy, economy and society, and protecting our science and technological base.
 - iii. Moving away from a predominantly risk-management approach to national security and engaging proactively in areas of growing importance to both global prosperity and security. IR2021 was unambiguous in its prioritisation of the Euro-Atlantic as the region of primary and overriding importance to UK interests, where the vast bulk

of the UK's defence and security efforts would be focused through NATO. Equally, however, it also stressed the need to engage more in areas of growing geopolitical significance, such as the Indo-Pacific and the Gulf, through sustainable, enduring and long-term commitments and partnerships in which security would be just one dimension.

- iv. Prioritisation of strength in S&T – including as a responsible and democratic cyber power – as a national objective. Specifically, IR2021 stressed the importance of innovation in areas such as AI, quantum computing, engineering biology, nuclear technology, cyber and space, as vital to the future prosperity and quality of life of the British people and as an increasingly important arena of competition between states. IR2021 committed to supporting these priorities in areas of government policy that went beyond traditional national security activity – such as education and skills, investment in research and development (R&D) and the attraction of talent to the UK.
4. The IR's emphasis on integration also enabled clearer prioritisation of finite resources. The decision to increase defence spending in 2020 allowed the UK to maintain our leading role in NATO and the Euro-Atlantic region while modernising our capabilities – with a significant share of the defence budget orientated to R&D. In parallel, the Indo-Pacific tilt was achieved largely through non-military instruments – such as diplomacy, trade, development, technological exchange and engagement with regional organisations – accompanied by a modest initial increase in our regional defence presence. We have also adapted at pace where needed – to release new resources in support of Ukraine (£2.3 billion in defensive support in 2022, and again in 2023), and to seize opportunities through new partnerships such as AUKUS. We created legal migration routes and welcomed thousands of people to this country who are fleeing the war in Ukraine, who are British Nationals Overseas from Hong Kong, or who helped our armed forces in Afghanistan.

What has changed since 2021?

The case for updating the Integrated Review

5. IR2021 identified four trends that would shape the international environment to 2030: shifts in the distribution of global power; inter-state, 'systemic' competition over the nature of the international order; rapid technological change; and worsening transnational challenges. Our assessment is that these remain the trends that will dominate the decade ahead, and to which the UK national security and international policy must respond.
6. The government's decision to publish the IR refresh (IR2023) reflects the pace at which these trends have accelerated over the past two years. In that time, the transition into a multipolar, fragmented and contested world has happened more quickly and definitively than anticipated. We are now in a period of heightened risk and volatility that is likely to last beyond the 2030s. IR2023 updates the UK's priorities and core tasks to reflect the resulting changes in the global context.
7. First, IR2023 responds to Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. Putin's act of aggression has precipitated the largest military conflict, refugee and energy crisis in Europe since the end of the Second World War. It has brought large-scale, high intensity land warfare back to our home region, with implications for the UK and NATO's approach to deterrence and defence. As IR2021 set out, Russia is the most acute threat to the UK's

security. What has changed is that our collective security now is intrinsically linked to the outcome of the conflict in Ukraine. We must also analyse, learn from and adapt to the changing nature of warfare – notably in the land domain.

8. There is a growing prospect that the international security environment will further deteriorate in the coming years, with state threats increasing and diversifying in Europe and beyond. The risk of escalation is greater than at any time in decades, and an increasing number of advanced weapons systems have been developed and are being tested or adopted. The strategic stability mechanisms that helped in the 21st century to mitigate the risks of misunderstanding, miscalculation and unintended escalation have not developed at the pace needed to ensure that competition does not spill over into uncontrolled conflict. Tensions in the Indo-Pacific are increasing and conflict there could have global consequences greater than the conflict in Ukraine. The threat from Iran has increased, as demonstrated by its advancing nuclear programme, regionally-destabilising behaviour and its actions in the UK – including 15 credible threats by the Iranian regime to kill or kidnap British or UK-based individuals since 2022. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea is also seeking to develop its nuclear capabilities while pursuing regionally destabilising activity through missile tests that threaten its neighbours.
9. At the same time, transnational security challenges still pose a considerable risk to the UK, remaining a major focus for the law enforcement and intelligence agencies, and adding to the complexity of the threat picture. Illegal migration is one of the major challenges of our time, and has become particularly acute across Europe. Islamist terrorist groups maintain an aspiration to conduct attacks against the UK and our overseas interests: the threat originating in the Middle East is enduring and groups are expanding in unstable regions including Afghanistan and the Sahel, and so we cannot rule out the possibility of a significant resurgence. At home, the threat from self-radicalised individuals with a variety of ideologies remains high. Meanwhile, organised crime groups are increasing in scale and complexity, taking particular advantage of advances in technology to develop new operating models and hide their identities and activity. Coordination and cooperation between state and non-state actors is likely to continue increasing.
10. Second, IR2023 responds to the intensification of systemic competition, which is now the dominant geopolitical trend and the main driver of the deteriorating security environment. A growing convergence of authoritarian states are challenging the basic conditions for an open, stable and peaceful international order, working together to undermine the international system or remake it in their image. The CCP is increasingly explicit in its aim to shape a China-centric international order more favourable to its authoritarian system, and pursuing this ambition through a wide-ranging strategy – shaping global governance, in ways that undermine individual rights and freedoms, and pursuing coercive practices. China’s deepening partnership with Russia and Russia’s growing cooperation with Iran in the wake of the invasion of Ukraine are two developments of particular concern.
11. A more positive consequence of the acceleration of systemic competition – and an important factor in IR2023 – is renewed purpose and cooperation among the UK’s core network of allies and partners. In 2021, the fall of Kabul led many to question the resolve and ability of the UK and our allies to deal with international challenges. But the strength of our collective response in support of Ukraine has demonstrated that we remain willing and able to act decisively in defence of our security, an open international

order, international law and the fundamental principles of the United Nations (UN) Charter. The bedrock of our security, NATO, has increased in political importance and in overall military strength. The enduring strength of the European family of nations, and of the UK's ties within it, has been reaffirmed. The European Political Community (EPC) is a notable and welcome new forum for continent-wide cooperation. Equally, the US's deep and abiding commitment to European security has been proved once again. The depth of the UK's relationship with the US – from intelligence to military and diplomatic coordination – remains an absolutely essential pillar of our security. It has been further strengthened through our response to the war in Ukraine and other measures such as the New Atlantic Charter. In turn, we understand that allies of the US need to step up our collective contribution to burden-sharing both in the Euro-Atlantic and across geopolitical hotspots including the Gulf and Indo-Pacific, as the UK is doing through IR2023.

12. The growing coalescence amongst our like-minded allies and partners is also translating into a new network of 'Atlantic-Pacific' partnerships, based on a shared view that the prosperity and security of the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific are inextricably linked. This is seen in the growing importance of the G7, closer cooperation of countries such as Australia, the Republic of Korea and India with G7 countries, and the commitment of many Indo-Pacific countries to supporting Ukraine's self-defence. It is also seen in the investment of the UK in deeper defensive ties and new frameworks such as AUKUS and GCAP with Italy and Japan. These enable the UK and its partners to develop capabilities that not only reinforce NATO but help allies in the Indo-Pacific bolster their own security. S&T, trade and economic connectivity are also vital to these Atlantic-Pacific ties, which will continue growing in importance over the rest of the decade. In this context, the well-established Five Eyes grouping will continue to play a critical role, both in its core mission of intelligence sharing, and in the broader defence and security cooperation it now supports.
13. Importantly, however, systemic competition is developing into a highly complex phenomenon that we must navigate with an understanding that not everyone's values or interests consistently align with our own. Today's international system cannot simply be reduced to 'democracy versus autocracy', or divided into binary, Cold War-style blocs. As IR2021 identified, an expanding group of 'middle-ground powers' are of growing importance to UK interests as well as global affairs more generally, and do not want to be drawn into zero-sum competition any more than the UK does. We will need to work with these countries to protect our shared higher interest in an open and stable international order, accepting that we may not share all of the same values and national interests.
14. Third, IR2023 responds to the way systemic competition is playing out across overlapping 'strategic arenas', in which there is constant and dynamic competition above and below the threshold of armed conflict – over the military, economic and political balance of power, rules and norms, and institutional architectures. In particular since IR2021:
 - In some areas – such as AI – technology has advanced and become more widely available. As well as driving societal and economic change, these advances are leading to an increased ability to threaten, harm and damage countries, societies and individuals remotely and in some cases anonymously. The use of commercial spyware, ransomware and offensive cyber capabilities by state and non-state actors has proliferated, highlighting the importance of engaging with technology

companies and shaping responsible norms of behaviour with respect to cyberspace and new and emerging technology areas.

- At the same time, technological competition has accelerated. More actors are pursuing technological advantage or autonomy through multi-year, multi-billion pound investments in their domestic sectors - such as the US CHIPS and Science Act and the European Chips Act, greater use of export controls, and trends towards data localisation. In the context of Ukraine, technology, digital and information warfare have helped to hold back a larger aggressor by providing an asymmetric advantage.
 - The global economic and trade order is also changing and showing signs of fragmenting. More countries are tending towards protectionism through 'onshoring' and 'friendshoring', the primacy of the Bretton Woods institutions is being eroded, and the use of economic coercion is growing. In the decades ahead, we can expect further pressures as the net zero transition drives a major restructuring of the global economy with a massive redeployment of capital, presenting both opportunities and challenges for open, innovating and trading economies such as the UK.
 - There has been a sharp increase in geopolitical tensions over sources of energy, following the severe disruption to global energy markets and conflict in Ukraine. This may be compounded by the transition to clean energy: the need for assured access to key technologies, raw materials and critical minerals will create new challenges that we must start to address now, including through effective global governance that can support an equitable transition for all countries. IR2021 identified the transition to clean energy and net zero as a core element of global action on climate change; IR2023 also recognises that this is a geostrategic issue.
15. Fourth, IR2023 responds to the multiplying effects of overlapping transnational challenges, which are compounding wider global instability. Of the challenges identified in IR2021, climate change and biodiversity loss are important multipliers of other global threats, and are guaranteed to continue to worsen over the next decade: six of the top ten risks for the decade ahead identified by the World Economic Forum relate to climate, the environment and nature. The consequences are both acute and chronic, resulting in a sharp increase in global migration and the number of people in need of immediate humanitarian assistance, as well as significant set-backs to progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At home, these transnational challenges test the UK's own resilience, as well as driving new or evolving security challenges, as seen in the numbers of people seeking to cross the Channel in small boats.
16. Finally, IR2023 responds to the growing impact of global volatility on the daily lives of the British people. As in many other countries, the consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine for the British people have been far-reaching. It has contributed to a huge rise in energy prices and serious burdens on families, leading to unprecedented government intervention through the Energy Price Guarantee and other support schemes. More widely, geopolitical instability is manifesting itself in: the greater volume and variety of attacks by both state actors and organised crime groups on UK institutions, organisations and people; the growing issue of illegal migration via small boats; interrupted supply chains and rising prices for basic goods; and the proliferation of disinformation and cyber scams. Consequently, the UK's ability to shape the global environment – and to identify, address and confront threats – is of growing importance to domestic policy, and to our national wellbeing.

Integrated Review 2023: headline conclusions

17. To produce this IR Refresh, the government has drawn on:

- A range of assessment and horizon-scanning products, including Joint Intelligence Committee assessments, the National Security Risk Assessment, Defence Intelligence, Government Office for Science (GO-Science) and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) analyses of future trends. We have also consulted external experts.
- Lessons from policy and strategy over two decades of UK engagement in Afghanistan, from the Manchester Arena Inquiry, and from cross-government work on wider geopolitical implications of the conflict in Ukraine. We continue to draw lessons on an ongoing basis, including from Ukraine, and this will be essential to future plans for the armed forces, particularly in the land domain.
- Red-teaming and other challenge activity, in line with the Chilcot principles.
- The recommendations of Parliamentary reports, including those produced by the Foreign Affairs Committee, Defence Committee, Intelligence and Security Committee, and the Lords International Relations and Defence Committee.
- Consultations with allies and partners undergoing a similar process of reappraisal, including: Five Eyes partners; nations of NATO and the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF); other key European partners including France, Germany, Poland and Italy; and partners across the Gulf, Indo-Pacific and Africa. In particular, IR2023 is closely aligned with the new NATO Strategic Concept and places high importance on the future role of the JEF and the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF) with France.

18. The government's overarching assessment is that the broad direction set by IR2021 was right, but that further investment and a greater proportion of national resource will be needed in defence and national security – now and in the future – to deliver its objectives. IR2023 therefore maintains significant continuity across most policy, such as the high priority given to S&T and cyber, homeland security, and tackling the climate and nature crises. However, in other areas the UK's policy has evolved since IR2021, or needs to be updated to respond to the changes in the context set out above.

19. The headline strategic conclusions (and associated commitments) of IR2023 are that:

- i. The most pressing national security and foreign policy priority in the short-to-medium term is to address the threat posed by Russia to European security. A vital part of this is supporting Ukraine to reassert its sovereignty and denying Russia any strategic benefit from its invasion. As we update our Russia strategy, the UK's objective will be to contain and challenge Russia's ability and intent to disrupt the security of the UK, the Euro-Atlantic and the wider international order. We have already weakened the Russian war machine with hundreds of targeted sanctions, coordinated with our allies, and set in motion international justice for Moscow's egregious war crimes. In 2022/23, we provided £2.3 billion in military and humanitarian aid to Ukraine and we will maintain at least the same level of support in 2023/24. We will also work with partners to ensure Ukraine has the support it needs in the future as it looks towards reconstruction.

- ii. Although IR2023 stands outside a spending review, there are urgent and immediate pressures brought about by the deteriorating security situation. Defence will receive £5 billion of additional funding over the next two years, further to the £560 million of new investment made in autumn 2022. This will be prioritised towards: replenishing and increasing our stockpiles and investing in the resilience of the UK's munitions infrastructure; and the continued modernisation of the nuclear enterprise, including investment in infrastructure, skills, and support to in-service submarines. This means that UK spending on defence is expected to reach 2.2% of GDP this year (2.29% including support to Ukraine), having increased in cash terms every year since the record settlement provided at Spending Review 2020.
- iii. The UK will maintain our leading position in NATO in the decade ahead, in reflection of its growing importance. We will lead a new conversation in NATO on burden-sharing and future defence spending commitments beginning at the 2023 NATO Leaders Summit in Vilnius – just as we did after the Newport NATO Summit in 2014. In recognition of a more contested and insecure world, we will move away from the baseline commitment to spend 2% of GDP on defence as a floor. Instead, IR2023 states for the first time that it is the UK's aspiration to invest 2.5% of GDP on defence over time, as fiscal and economic circumstances allow.
- iv. We will further strengthen the UK's ability to tackle state and non-state threats below the threshold for armed conflict. This means improving UK resilience in key areas, including through our Defending Democracy Taskforce and enhanced cyber security measures. The National Security Bill will create a more challenging operating environment for states and other actors who seek to undermine UK interests, and we will make use of the full range of powers available to us – including considering proscription – to tackle the threats we face from organisations such as Wagner. We will also continue to develop our broader deterrence and defence toolkit, including information operations and offensive cyber tools, and make greater use of open source information alongside our intelligence capabilities.
- v. We will develop more robust measures to bolster the UK's economic security. We will step up work to protect the capabilities, supply chains and technologies of strategic importance to the UK and our allies and partners, with the new National Protective Security Authority providing a source of expertise and interface between government and UK businesses. We will publish a new strategy on supply chains and imports and refresh our approach to delivering the Critical Minerals Strategy. A new Semiconductor Strategy will set out plans to grow the UK semiconductors sector and improve resilience of semiconductor supply chains at home and overseas.
- vi. We will launch a new Economic Deterrence Initiative to strengthen our diplomatic and economic tools to respond and deter to hostile acts by current and future aggressors. With up to £50 million of funding over two years, the initiative will improve our sanctions implementation and enforcement. This will maximise the impact of our trade, transport and financial sanctions, including by cracking down on sanctions evasion. It will also be used to prepare HMG for future scenarios where the UK may need to deter or respond to hostile acts and bolster the type of work we have done with the G7 in response to the invasion of Ukraine.
- vii. We will update the UK's approach to China to keep pace with the evolving and epoch-defining challenge it poses to the international order. First, we will increase our national security protections in those areas where Chinese Communist Party

actions pose a threat to our people, prosperity and security. Second, we will deepen our cooperation and increase alignment with both our core allies and a wider group of partners. Third, we will engage directly with China bilaterally and in international fora so that we leave room for open, constructive and predictable relations: diplomacy is a normal part of state-to-state business, and supports the national interest. We will double funding to build China capabilities across government to better understand China and allow us to engage confidently where it is in our interests to do so.

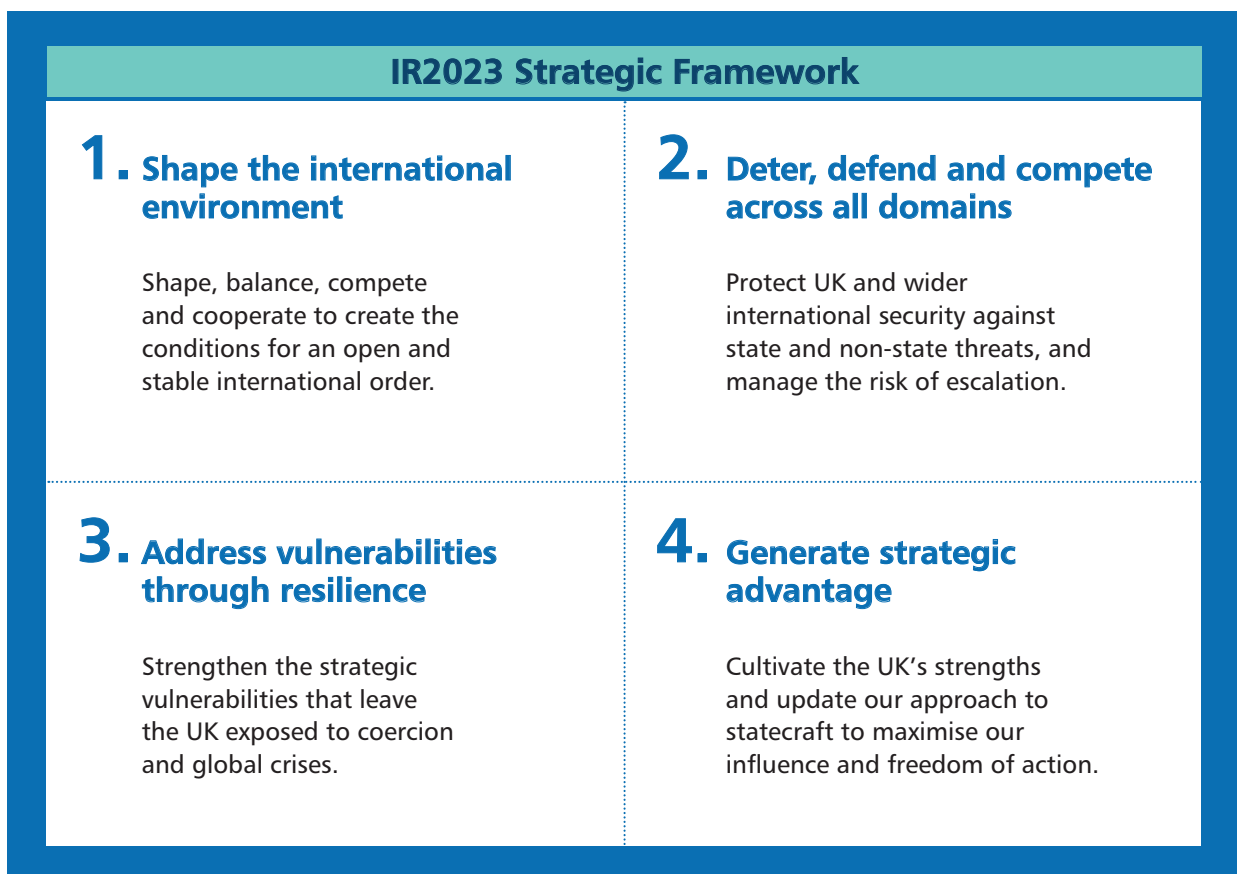
- viii. While the UK will be prepared to address contestation and confrontation in the international environment, our goal is to see better cooperation and well-managed competition. As part of IR2023 we will introduce a new long-term goal to manage the risks of miscalculation and escalation between major powers, upholding strategic stability through strategic-level dialogue and an updated approach to arms control and counter-proliferation. We will also foster a strategic affairs specialism to build the expertise needed to navigate the changing international environment.
- ix. We will build on the Trade and Cooperation Agreement and the Windsor Framework to enter a new phase in our post-Brexit relationships in Europe. The UK is committed to playing a leading role in upholding the stability, security and prosperity of our continent and the Euro-Atlantic as a whole. We will address the full range of challenges facing the region, providing leadership where we are best placed to do so. Related to this, our ambition is to build even stronger relationships with our European allies and partners based on values, reciprocity and cooperation across our shared interests. This includes the EU, with which we seek to work closely in areas of mutual benefit, as we have done in response to Ukraine. The UK will host the next meeting of the European Political Community (EPC) in 2024.
- x. We will continue to enhance our relationships in the Indo-Pacific, as a theatre of growing geopolitical and economic importance, pursuing the final stages of CPTPP accession as a priority. The UK has delivered on the IR2021 ambition for a tilt; the target we now have is to make this increased engagement stronger and enduring, and a permanent pillar of the UK's international policy. We will put our approach to the region on a long-term strategic footing, working with others and ensuring that we are respectful to and guided by regional perspectives. We will do this through a combination of bilateral, multilateral and institutional relationships across the region and our support for the concept of a free and open Indo-Pacific. Through the March 2023 UK-France Summit we have strengthened our cooperation with France in the Indo-Pacific, including by establishing the basis of a permanent European maritime presence in the region through coordinated carrier deployments.
- xi. Beyond our traditional allies and partners, the UK will continue to deepen relationships with a wide range of influential actors across the Indo-Pacific, Gulf, Africa, and beyond. We seek to build long-term ties across our shared interests, looking for new opportunities to collaborate across a broader range of issues, and without forcing zero-sum choices or encouraging bipolarity in the international system. We recognise that the multilateral system needs to change to accommodate new realities, and the UK will support reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to welcome additional permanent members. We will host the next UK-African Investment Summit in April 2024.

- xii. The Government will seek to maximise UK soft power, including by working with the British Council and BBC World Service. In a world in which disinformation is proliferating, we have established a new directorate in the FCDO to build our capability to assess and respond to the hostile manipulation of information. We will also work to provide trusted sources of news. As an outcome of IR2023, we will provide £20 million of additional funding to the BBC World Service over the next two years to protect all 42 World Service language services it provides, support English language broadcasting and counter disinformation.
 - xiii. The UK will work to reinvigorate its position as a global leader on international development, pursuing patient, long-term partnerships tailored to the needs of the countries we work with, going beyond our Official Development Assistance (ODA) offer to draw on the full range of UK strengths and expertise. In 2023, we will pursue seven priority campaigns under the International Development Strategy, and ensure FCDO's structures can effectively deliver on those priorities. We will take forward work to maximise the benefits of the merger of diplomacy and development in one department. The Minister for International Development will have a permanent place on the National Security Council, a new second Permanent Secretary in the FCDO will oversee our development priorities, and a new FCDO-HM Treasury governance structure will improve oversight of all aid spending.
 - xiv. We will build on IR2021's prioritisation of strategic advantage in science and technology as a core national priority. The new Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) will take responsibility for coordinating work to achieve a durable competitive edge in S&T. Under the new S&T Framework, the Government will create the right ecosystem for S&T to flourish in the UK and keep pace with strategic competitors, including in five priority areas of technology: AI, semiconductors, quantum technologies, future telecommunications and engineering biology. We will establish a new government-industry taskforce to build the UK's capability in foundation models – a rapidly-advancing type of AI that will have far-reaching implications for the UK's security and prosperity.
 - xv. The Government will establish a new UK Integrated Security Fund (UKISF) by combining the existing Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) and a range of smaller government funds to support delivery of IR objectives, raising overall funding to £1 billion. We will also commit £4 million over the next two years to embed the College for National Security – which was launched through IR2021 – in our national security architecture.
20. These conclusions and commitments are reflected in the 2023 IR strategic framework which expands on – and in some of the areas set out above supersedes – the goals set out in the IR2021 strategic framework.

III. IR2023: Updated Strategic Framework

1. At home and abroad, the government's first duty is to promote and protect the United Kingdom's core national interests: the sovereignty, security and prosperity of the British people, ensuring that our borders are secure and that the UK and its Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies are free from coercion, protected from harm, and able to maximise our economic and social wellbeing.
2. The UK also has a higher interest in an open and stable international order of enhanced cooperation and well-managed competition based on respect for the UN Charter and international law. An open and stable international order recognises the legitimate self interest and aspirations of all countries. It creates the optimum conditions in which the UK can secure its interests, and in which we and others can prosper. It is the foundation for meaningful cooperation on global challenges, not least the existential threats posed by climate change and biodiversity loss. And it helps us deal with challenges like migration that affect us at home. Working towards the higher goal of an open and stable international order is therefore an 'end' of UK strategy, alongside our core national interests.
3. The four pillars of this updated IR strategic framework set the 'ways' through which the UK will pursue these 'ends'. The framework will guide all relevant areas of national security, international and domestic policy and resource decisions until the next general election. Given the interconnected nature of the challenges we face and the breadth of the policy agenda sitting under the IR, the pillars do not cover policy in exhaustive detail. However, each pillar highlights the particularly important areas of policy that will be essential to delivering the overall intent, and indicates prioritisation where this is possible. They are designed to support a sustained, campaigning approach that keeps pace with the changing international environment, with the emphasis on 'think long-term; act now'.
 - i. **Shape the international environment.** This pillar commits the UK to shaping, balancing, competing and cooperating across the main arenas of systemic competition, working with all who support an open and stable international order and the protection of global public goods.
 - ii. **Deter, defend and compete across all domains.** This pillar reinforces the ongoing shift to an integrated approach to deterrence and defence, to counter both state threats and transnational security challenges. It reaffirms that NATO is at the core of this effort, but is clear that – given the changing threat picture – effective deterrence will mean working through other groupings and beyond the Euro-Atlantic theatre. It also introduces a renewed emphasis on the concept of strategic stability – establishing new frameworks and building a new international security architecture to manage systemic competition and escalation in a multipolar environment.
 - iii. **Address vulnerabilities through resilience.** This pillar develops the UK's approach to resilience, shifting to a long-term campaign to address the vulnerabilities that leave the UK exposed to crises and hostile actors. This will strengthen the UK's deterrence by denial, and ensure that operational activity under pillar two can be focused where it has the greatest impact.
 - iv. **Generate strategic advantage.** This pillar reinforces and extends IR2021's focus on strategic advantage – the UK's relative ability to achieve our objectives compared to our competitors. In a more contested environment, this is indispensable to maintaining the UK's freedom of action, freedom from coercion and our ability to cooperate with others, and is the underpinning for the other pillars of the strategic framework.

4. To deliver this campaigning approach, the National Security Council (NSC) will oversee a 'strategic cycle' that drives delivery of the IR2023 strategic framework. This will emphasise: greater integration of IR2023 into the Government Planning and Performance Framework (GPPF) through departmental Outcome Delivery Plans and cross-cutting Priority Outcomes; regular horizon-scanning underpinned by products including the NSRA; ongoing monitoring and evaluation of delivery progress; more frequent opportunities to consider cross-cutting issues such as strategic advantage in the round; and greater agility in responding to the intent and actions of our competitors. As set out in IR2021, this requires long-term cultural change so the Government is able to navigate a much more challenging operating environment. The IR strategic cycle will therefore require ongoing commitment from senior leaders across the national security community to strengthening culture, diversity and inclusion.
5. The Government will also align the IR2023 with the resources and levers it needs to succeed. One component will be a new UK Integrated Security Fund (UKISF) to support the implementation of key IR objectives, in the UK and overseas, formed by combining the existing Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) and a range of smaller government funds to integrate cross-government effort and ensure that resources are prioritised in line with IR2023 as effectively as possible.





UK-aid funded project run by the charity Hello World, creating community-led solar-powered internet hubs in rural Nepal. The hubs support connectivity, education, training and employment, bridging the digital divide. Credit: Johnny Fenn and Hello World

Pillar 1: Shape the international environment

1. In order to pursue our core national interests, and in support of broader international goals, the UK must be able to shape the environment in which it operates. As a permanent member of the Security Council of the United Nations (UN), member of the G7, one of the biggest defence and development spenders, and one of the largest economies in the world, the UK will always retain a global perspective – and this is becoming more, not less, important in a more contested and multipolar world.
2. The UK will work to shape an open and stable international order of well-managed cooperation and competition between sovereign states on the basis of reciprocity, norms of responsible behaviour and respect for the fundamental principles of the UN Charter and international law. We will act with consistency and predictability in line with these principles, while actively balancing against and contesting efforts to undermine them through force or other coercive means.
3. IR2021 set out an approach to shaping the international order organised around open societies and economies. A determination to preserve that openness as a collective good remains the thread running through the UK's action, in particular in our commitment to protecting global public goods. But we will sharpen the UK's posture, shaping, balancing, cooperating and competing wherever we are active internationally to create the conditions, structures and incentives necessary for an open and stable international order.
4. The UK's long-standing commitment to multilateralism remains the foundation of this approach. The creation of the UN was a historic shared achievement that continues to provide huge global benefits, and the UK will support the Secretary General in his call for reinvigorated multilateralism. In particular, we recognise that the multilateral system needs to change to accommodate new realities. Moving beyond IR2021, the UK will support reform of the UN Security Council (UNSC) – and would welcome Brazil, India, Japan and Germany as permanent members. We will also support permanent African representation in the UNSC, as well as further representation in other multilateral institutions including the G20.
5. However, as IR2021 emphasised, traditional multilateral approaches and defending the post-Cold War 'rules-based international system' are no longer sufficient on their own. The UK will prioritise shaping activity across the strategic arenas where developments will be most consequential for our core national interests and international order: geographically, the Euro-Atlantic, the Indo-Pacific, and our wider neighbourhood; thematically, energy, climate and nature, sustainable development, the global economic order, the emerging digital and tech order, and the cyberspace, space and maritime domains. In each, we will calibrate our action based on an appreciation of geography, the allocation of resources, regional and international architectures, rules and norms, and the relative balance of economic, military, diplomatic and cultural power.
6. Across this agenda, the UK will partner with all who are willing to work with us on the basis of respect, reciprocity, the UN Charter and international law. This commitment extends to our systemic competitors, as there can be no stable international order without dialogue. The UK therefore particularly values the role of the G20, as a critical forum in which the major geopolitical players are represented.

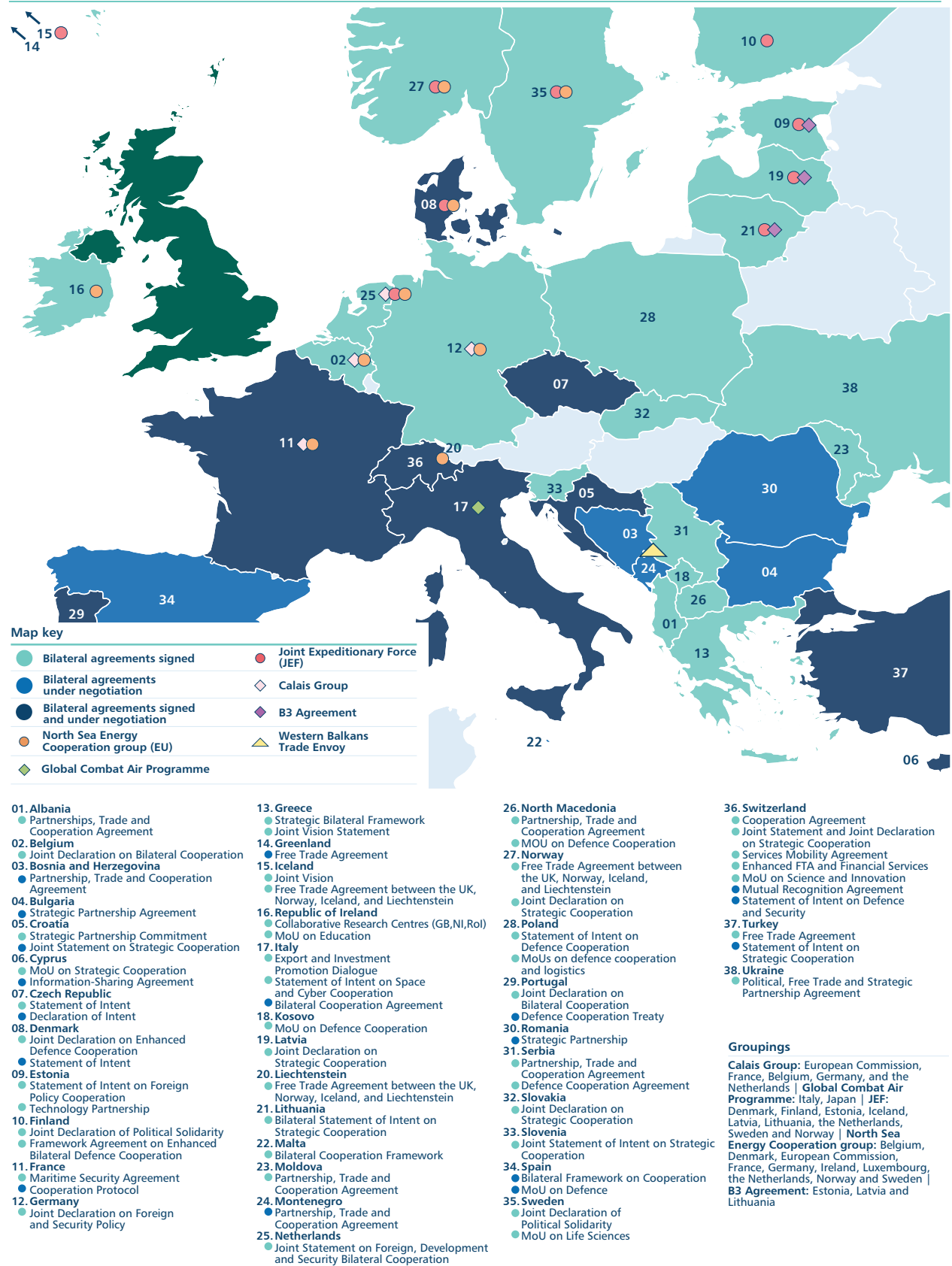
7. The UK's closest collaboration will nevertheless always be with our core network of democratic allies and partners, with whom our interests and values are most consistently aligned. The US in particular remains the UK's most important ally and partner, and our revitalised Atlantic Charter reflects the breadth and depth of our shared global vision. As another substantive step beyond IR2021, the UK will make it a priority to build closer alignment of purpose and action among our most like-minded partners in the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific, recognising the high degree of shared interests that transcend regional concerns. We have a natural foundation for this in groupings such as the Five Eyes and the G7.
8. Beyond this core, we also recognise the importance of deeper, enduring partnerships with the other influential actors that will shape the geopolitical environment in the years ahead. The UK places significant value on all of these partnerships – whether they are in our areas of geographical priority or in wider regions where we have strong ties, such as Latin America – and will seek to build long-term ties across our shared interests. We recognise that these partners may share different views on major international issues and we seek neither to force them into zero-sum choices nor to encourage bipolarity in the international system.
9. The UK will also seek to strengthen the Commonwealth, as an organisation that accounts for over a quarter of the membership of the UN and a champion of values at the heart of an open international order. We will deepen cooperation with Commonwealth partners and institutions to enhance the benefits of membership for all 2.5 billion Commonwealth citizens, further strengthen intra-Commonwealth trade, support members facing challenges in attracting inward investment, and strengthen the resilience of the most vulnerable members to climate change, nature loss and environmental degradation.

Geographic priorities

10. The UK's overriding priority remains the **Euro-Atlantic**, which is essential to the defence of our homeland and to our prosperity as a nation. Although we have left the European Union, the UK retains a significant role and stake in the future of our home region – as a G7 economy, permanent (P5) member of the UNSC, founding member of NATO, and framework nation for the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF).
11. The UK will work to ensure that Europe, and the broader Euro-Atlantic, is stable, secure and able to prosper politically and economically in the years ahead. We will play a role across the full range of challenges facing the region – from Russian aggression and the systemic challenge posed by China, to energy security, migration and revitalising economic growth. As a regional actor, we will seek to lead and galvanise where we have most value to add, giving particular priority – as set out in pillar two – to the contribution we can make in northern Europe as a security actor. We have also appointed our first envoy to the Western Balkans, in recognition of its vital importance to regional stability.
12. The UK welcomes the positive evolution of our post-Brexit relationships with the EU and our European partners. Our bilateral ties with some European nations – such as Ukraine, Poland and the Baltic states – are now closer than they have been at any point for decades, and we have valued close cooperation with the EU, France, Germany and Italy in the G7 on sanctions, reconstruction and diplomatic support for Ukraine. We will sustain this positive trajectory, building strong relationships with our European allies and partners based on values, reciprocity and cooperation across our shared interests.

Revitalising the UK's ties in Europe since Brexit

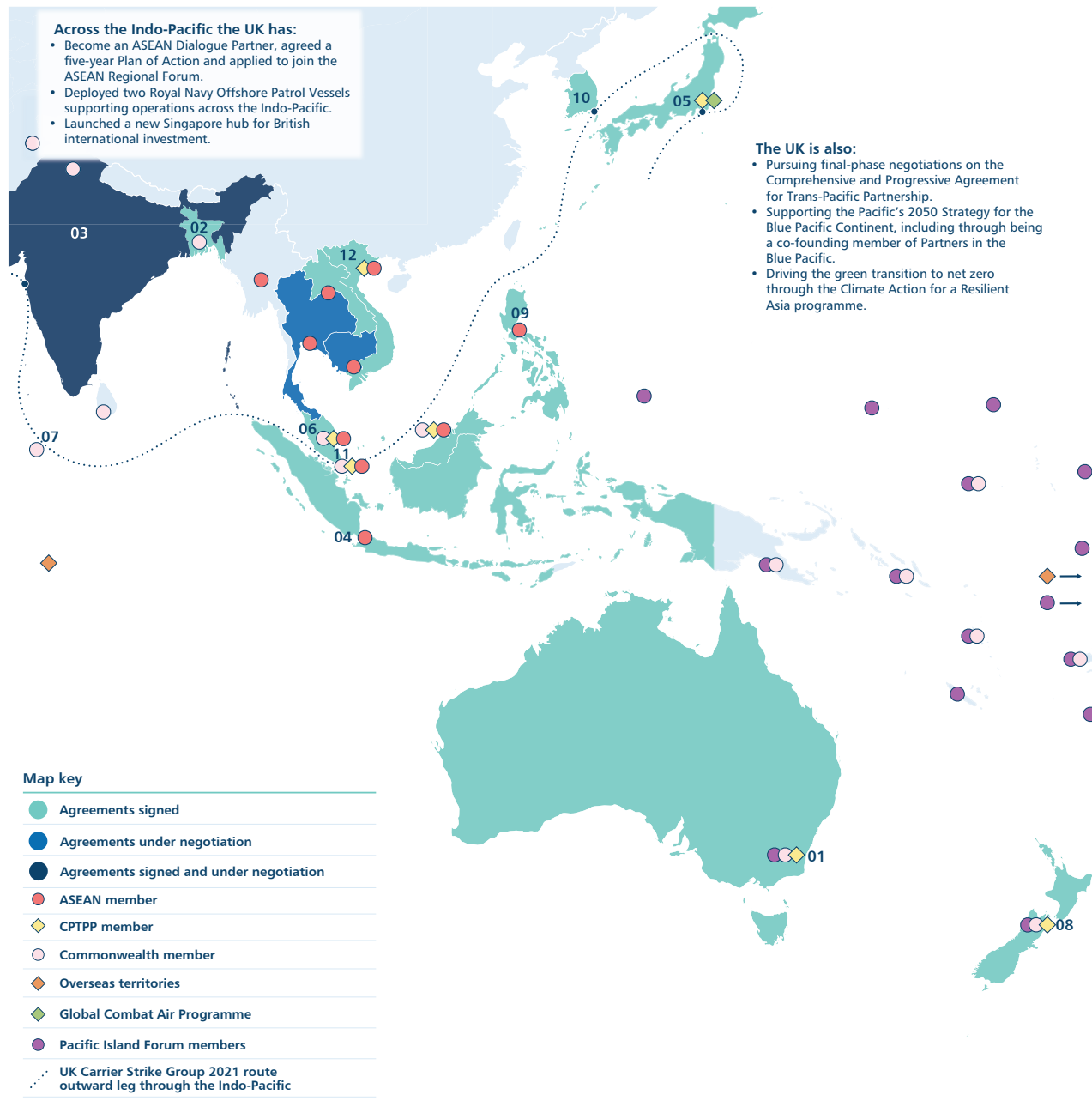
Non-exhaustive list. Entries correct as of 1 March 2023



13. This will include reinvigorating the UK's most important historical bilateral ties across Europe, building on the March 2023 UK-France summit with a range of further Prime Ministerial and ministerial engagement. Within this, our relationship with Ireland is particularly important, as a co-guarantor of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement and due to the Common Travel Area and other shared interests. We will also seek to extend practical cooperation through bilateral and minilateral formats – for example, working through the Transatlantic Quad and Quint (the UK, US, France, Germany, joined in the latter grouping by Italy) on foreign policy issues, through the Calais Group on migration, and with Benelux, France, Germany, Ireland and the Nordic countries through the North Seas Energy Cooperation group.
14. Through the UK-France Summit we have fortified the structures of our alliance with France and reaffirmed our long-standing friendship. We have: committed to a new partnership on energy security; agreed to cooperate on the shared issue of illegal migration; affirmed our commitment to European security, including through the training of Ukrainian marines and the supply of ammunitions; agreed to further enhance military interoperability, including by scoping the co-development of next generation deep precision strike weaponry; and strengthened our cooperation in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific; including through a new strategic dialogue and by establishing the basis of a permanent European maritime presence in the Indo-Pacific through coordinated carrier deployments.
15. The UK's relationship with the EU, governed by the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), provides the right balance between access to our biggest market and autonomy to set rules in our best interest. The new Windsor Framework strengthens Northern Ireland's place in the Union, first and foremost, as well as creating a foundation for stronger UK-EU relations. The UK will seek to use the new momentum in the relationship to maximise the potential of the TCA, including furthering engagement through the Partnership Council, Committees and other collaborations. We will also develop new forms of cooperation on issues of shared interest – through direct cooperation (including on defence through PESCO) and in the G7 and other fora.
16. The UK will also continue to invest in the regional institutions and organisations of which it is a member, including NATO (the highest priority), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Council of Europe. This includes supporting the development of new initiatives such as the European Political Community (EPC), which brings together the whole European continent. The UK will host the fourth EPC summit in 2024.
17. The UK will also prioritise the **Indo-Pacific**, a region critical to the UK's economy, security and our interest in an open and stable international order. Developments there will have disproportionate influence on the global economy, supply chains, strategic stability and norms of state behaviour. Having delivered the original IR ambition for a 'tilt', we will put our approach to the Indo-Pacific on a long-term strategic footing, making the region a permanent pillar of the UK's international policy.
18. A core tenet of the UK's approach in the Indo-Pacific will be to support the vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific shared by many regional partners. The UK believes that a free and open Indo-Pacific is one where a regional balance of power ensures no single power dominates, and where a rich tapestry of institutions and partnerships shape a stable but adaptable regional order in which: states can make choices free from coercion, disinformation and interference; territorial integrity is respected and disputes resolved

Delivering the Indo-Pacific tilt since IR2021

Non-exhaustive list. Entries correct as of 1 March 2023



- 01. Australia**
 - AUKUS partnership
 - Agreed FTA
- 02. Bangladesh**
 - Climate Accord signed
- 03. India**
 - UK-India Roadmap to 2030 agreed
 - Comprehensive Strategic Partnership agreed
 - FTA negotiations
 - Pillar lead on Indian-led Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative
- 04. Indonesia**
 - Just Energy Transition Partnership
 - UK Indonesia Roadmap agreed
 - MoU on cooperation on forestry and other land use

- 05. Japan**
 - Reciprocal Access Agreement
 - Digital partnership agreement
 - Agreed FTA
- 06. Malaysia**
 - MoU on cooperation on climate action
- 07. Maldives**
 - MoU on Ocean Country Partnership Programme
- 08. New Zealand**
 - Agreed FTA
- 09. Philippines**
 - MoU signed on healthcare cooperation

- 10. Republic of Korea**
 - UK-ROK Bilateral Framework
 - Agreed FTA and upgraded FTA under negotiation
 - Agreement to strengthen supply chain resilience
 - Terms of reference for space cooperation signed
 - MoU on clean energy signed
- 11. Singapore**
 - Digital economy agreement
 - Agreed FTA
 - Agreed Green Economy Framework
- 12. Vietnam**
 - Just Energy Transition Partnership
 - Agreed FTA
 - MoU on maritime cooperation

in line with international law; international rules and norms govern the sea, land and air as well as international trade; shipping lanes remain secure and open; action is taken against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; and countries are resilient against the full range of threats and risks, whether from climate change, natural disasters or cyberspace.

19. The UK's role in the region will be stable, enduring and guided by respect for regional perspectives, supporting ASEAN centrality and the Pacific Way. As the UK has less overall resource and geographic presence than in the Euro-Atlantic, we will prioritise working through partners and institutions, and building deep relationships anchored in decades-long economic, technological and security ties. We will also more closely align our efforts with partners pursuing Indo-Pacific strategies, including the ASEAN, Canada, the EU, France, Germany, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the US.
20. We will continue to strengthen our bilateral and institutional relationships across the region. This will encompass a wide range of activity, including but not limited to:
 - With Australia, further deepening one of the UK's closest partnerships, including through implementation of our bilateral free trade agreement (FTA). In particular, we will move the AUKUS partnership to the implementation phase, equipping Australia with conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability, and progressing cooperation on advanced military capabilities. As Five Eyes partners, the UK will always work closely with both Australia and New Zealand across our breadth of our shared agendas.
 - With India, building on our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, implementing the UK-India 2030 Roadmap, supporting India's G20 presidency, advancing negotiations on a FTA, strengthening our defence and security partnership, progressing collaboration on technology and leading the maritime security pillar of India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative.
 - With Japan, deepening defence cooperation through our Reciprocal Access Agreement and GCAP with Italy, supporting Japan's G7 presidency, and implementing our FTA and digital partnership.
 - With the Republic of Korea, delivering the landmark UK-ROK Bilateral Framework and upgrading our existing FTA.
 - With Singapore, delivering on our FTA, Digital Economy Agreement and Green Economy Framework, and working towards a bilateral strategic partnership.
 - With Indonesia, delivering the UK-Indonesia Roadmap 2022-24.
 - With Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, strengthening our partnerships across shared priorities in trade and investment, climate change, maritime security and wider security relationships.
 - Pursuing final-phase negotiations to accede to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), which accounts for 13% of global GDP.
 - Across the region, delivering development investment through British International Investment's new regional hub in Singapore, bolstering S&T cooperation, and supporting regional resilience.

- Driving the green transition to net zero, delivering the Just Energy Transition Partnerships with Indonesia and Vietnam, and supporting climate adaptation in particular through the Climate Action for a Resilient Asia programme.
 - Deepening our engagement with Pacific Island countries and regional resilience in the Pacific, supporting the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and as a founding member of the Partners in the Blue Pacific initiative.
 - Delivering the UK-ASEAN Plan of Action and applying to join the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus and ASEAN Regional Forum.
21. The UK's third geographic priority will be **our wider neighbourhood**: the regions on the periphery of the Euro-Atlantic where developments have direct consequences for our home region, from migratory flows to transnational security threats. This incorporates our long-standing focus on the Middle East and Africa, where there is significant competition for influence in the context of the wider geopolitical shifts. It also extends to the Arctic – where competition is growing as the retreating ice opens up new shipping routes and access to natural resources, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine has disrupted regional cooperation through the Arctic Council.
 22. IR2021 was clear that the UK did not foresee in the short-to-medium term large-scale interventions in the Middle East on the scale of those brought to an end in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, it emphasised our willingness to make deep and abiding contributions to regional security through diplomacy and security cooperation, as well as cooperation across S&T, climate adaptation and other shared interests. It highlighted in particular the importance of the UK's partnerships with the Gulf states and Israel, as key regional and broader geopolitical actors. The period since 2021 has seen a rapid increase in the depth and quality of these partnerships, and we look forward to further deepening and strengthening them in the years ahead.
 23. Similarly, the UK's approach in Africa will continue to be defined by a greater appreciation of the needs and perspectives of key partners across the continent, focusing on mutually beneficial development, security and defence partnerships, and support for clean infrastructure and climate adaptation. The UK will host the next UK-African Investment Summit in April 2024, bringing countries together to strengthen our economic and trade links. Through Room to Run, we have made a new UK guarantee to the African Development Bank that is expected to unlock up to \$2 billion of new financing for climate adaptation projects. We will continue to invest in long-term relationships across the continent, including with South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria and Egypt.
 24. The UK's long-term goal is for the Arctic to return to being a region of high cooperation and low tension. The UK's 2023 Arctic Policy Framework, *Looking North: the UK and the Arctic*, sets out how the UK will pursue our Arctic interests, including taking action to limit further damage from climate change and to adapt to increasing systemic competition in the region. We will work with the Norwegian chairmanship of the Arctic Council from May 2023, and strengthen our dialogues with Arctic allies and groupings, including through the JEF and NATO. Although further afield, Antarctica is also part of the UK's extended neighbourhood through our Overseas Territories in the South Atlantic and Southern Ocean and, like the Arctic, is subject to increasing systemic competition. The UK will continue to strengthen the Antarctic Treaty system, upholding the rights of all Parties and protecting the continent for science and peaceful cooperation.

Thematic priorities

25. The UK's first thematic priority remains tackling **climate change, environmental damage and biodiversity loss**, given the urgency of making progress before 2030. We will maintain the high ambition set by IR2021, COP26 and the Glasgow Climate Pact, leading and galvanising a collective global effort to keep the 1.5-degree target alive, supporting the most vulnerable to adapt and build resilience to the effects of climate change, and protecting biodiversity as agreed through the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
26. At home, our focus will remain on delivering the UK's 2030 nationally determined contribution (NDC), environmental, and net zero 2050 commitments. The upcoming 2030 Strategic Framework for International Climate and Nature Action will detail the UK's international priorities. These will include: delivering the remainder of the UK's £11.6 billion International Climate Finance commitment for the period 2021/22 to 2025/26, including £3 billion on nature (with £1.5 billion on forests) and tripling of our funding on adaptation to reach £1.5 billion in 2025; accelerating decarbonisation of economies and systems by securing higher ambition from major emitters; delivering Just Energy Transition Partnerships and driving progress through the UN, G7 and G20; building resilience to climate impacts by seeking to agree a framework for the Global Goal on Adaptation in 2023; facilitating progress on Loss and Damage financing; and driving implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework. The UK will also work with the Overseas Territories – which are home to 94% of the UK's biodiversity – to protect and re-establish critical biodiversity, respond to disasters, and support long-term zero-carbon economic and social development.
27. Interlinked with this work, the UK's second priority is **sustainable development**, seeking to reinvigorate progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to alleviate poverty and to address some of the root causes of geopolitical instability. The 2022 International Development Strategy (IDS) set out a new approach to development, anchored in patient, long-term partnerships tailored to the needs of the countries we work with, built on mutual accountability and transparency, and focused on the quality of the UK's offer, not just the quantum.
28. The IDS established four overarching priorities for the UK's contribution to sustainable development: delivering honest and reliable investment; providing women and girls with the freedom they need to succeed; providing life-saving, principled humanitarian assistance and championing International Humanitarian Law; and supporting progress on climate change, nature and global health. In 2023, the UK will champion seven specific initiatives to deliver the IDS, contribute to delivery of the SDGs, address key issues that matter to our partners and support the wider objectives under this pillar:
 - i. Reforming and greening the global financial system to ensure the International Financial Institutions – in particular the multilateral development banks and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – and capital markets are better equipped to meet the needs of developing countries in dealing with the economic, debt, climate and nature crises.
 - ii. Championing global efforts to make global tax systems fairer and ensure that revenues and assets lost to illicit finance are identified and recovered, so that low- and middle-income countries can self-finance their own development.

- iii. Delivering clean, green infrastructure and investment, through British Investment Partnerships, UK contributions to the \$600 billion G7 Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment, and by leveraging the support of capital markets and the private sector.
 - iv. Leading a campaign to improve global food security and nutrition, including by increasing the availability, affordability and quality of malnutrition treatment and prevention products, driving the shift to sustainable agriculture, and making greater use of science and R&D, alongside anticipatory action on famine risk and resilience building.
 - v. Leading a global campaign on 'open science for global resilience', making the case for a secure, collaborative approach to science that ensures low- and middle-income countries have access to knowledge and resources that can support improved resilience.
 - vi. Catalysing international work to prevent the next global health crisis, building on the achievements of our G7 Presidency to broker more ambitious international agreements on pandemic preparedness and response, strengthen health systems, drive more equitable access to affordable vaccines, drugs and diagnostics, and tackle antimicrobial resistance. Our refreshed Global Health Framework will set out more detail on the UK's continued commitment to global health efforts.
 - vii. Coalescing a collective response to the accelerating, well-financed and organised attacks on the rights of women and girls, including online. As set out in the recently published International Women and Girls Strategy, we will work to improve education, health and rights, support empowerment, reduce gender-based violence, and amplify the role of women's rights organisations.
29. In delivering our international development offer, we will go beyond ODA to use all of our levers in support of development outcomes. This includes working through international institutions, sharing our expertise – including through new UK Centres of Expertise in technology, illicit finance, and green cities and infrastructure – and leveraging London's position as a leading financial centre, such as through British Investment Partnerships' initiatives to mobilise £8 billion financing per year by 2025.
30. The merger of diplomacy and development in the FCDO has strengthened both our development offer and our foreign policy. This has been evidenced by: our humanitarian response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine; our work to support a ceasefire to be reached in Ethiopia to enable humanitarian access, where we brought together our diplomatic lobbying and development programming; and our work to encourage the Government of Yemen to implement economic reforms to reduce the price of food imports and improve food security. We will now further strengthen development leadership within government. The Minister for International Development will maintain a seat at Cabinet and will join the National Security Council, a second Permanent Secretary at FCDO will oversee our development priorities, and a new FCDO-HM Treasury governance structure will improve oversight of all aid spending. Our work on international development will also be brought together under a brand that reflects the breadth of the UK's leadership and our partnership approach, to help ensure that the value of our international development is understood at home and internationally.

31. Alongside development-focused reform of the international financial system, the UK's third priority is to shape the changing **global economic order** more broadly. We will maintain IR2021's firm commitment to shaping an open global economy, ensuring a free trading system under which all countries are treated fairly, and standing up to economic coercion. We will use our own economic statecraft to pursue this agenda, using our trade policy and diplomacy to update the institutional economic, financial and trade architecture and rulebooks to better manage systemic competition and to prepare for the structural challenges that will accompany the energy transition, the digital economy and wider technological disruption. We will work with similarly-positioned economies – such as Japan, Canada, the Republic of Korea and Australia – to develop and promote approaches that strengthen rather than undermine our collective economic resilience.
32. Building on IR2021's commitment to extending the international order into future frontiers, we will further strengthen the UK's efforts to shape the **emerging digital and technology order**. Authoritarian states are attempting to reshape the rules of the road, not only by providing digital infrastructure and services, but also by promoting a state-led approach in multilateral bodies. The UK will seek to shape open, democratic norms, rules and standards and effective accountability and oversight, while opposing the overreach of state control. We will continue to press for all stakeholder groups to have a seat at the table in discussions on the future of our digital world.
33. A systems approach is of particular importance in this arena, and we will work with industry and international partners to balance and shape across issues including AI, digital standards, and internet and data governance – building on the work we have done since IR2021 through the G7, the UK-hosted Future Tech Forum, UK AI Standards Hub, and in partnership with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) through the Global Forum on Technology and the Global Partnership for AI. We will engage creatively where there are gaps in the current multilateral and multi-stakeholder architecture, and will build both global multi-stakeholder coalitions and like-minded groupings beyond our traditional partners – including working with 'digital deciders' on critical technology and data use, development and policy making. This is underpinned by the work to deliver S&T advantage in pillar four.
34. The UK will also seek to shape rules and norms of behaviour in **cyberspace**. In keeping with IR2021, we remain committed to acting as a responsible and democratic cyber power, including in the use of our offensive cyber capabilities. In line with this, we will keep advancing the progressive and proactive approach of the 2022 National Cyber Strategy, seeking to unblock the international debate on the application of rules, norms and principles in cyberspace and move it towards a consensus on effective constraints on destructive and destabilising activity by state and non-state actors. We will also continue to develop the tools to deter, defend and compete in cyberspace, addressing both our domestic cyber vulnerabilities and supporting partners to build their own capabilities.
35. The importance of shaping and balancing activity in **space** has also become clearer since IR2021, not least in light of Russia's direct ascent anti-satellite (ASAT) missile test in November 2021 and the critical role that space capabilities have played in Ukraine's defence. IR2021 – and the subsequent National Space Strategy and Defence Space Strategy – committed to making the UK a meaningful actor in space, strengthening our civil and military capabilities, supporting the growth of a sovereign UK space industry,

developing new governance for sustainable management of commercial activity in the space environment and advancing norms of responsible state behaviour. The UK has committed not to conduct ASAT missile testing, and we will continue to play a leading role in supporting the UN open-ended working group on reducing space threats. We will also intensify work to develop active debris removal and in-orbit servicing, manufacturing and assembly capabilities, and to develop international standards on new governance frameworks for commercial activity, including with the European Space Agency.

36. Alongside space and cyberspace, the UK will continue to balance and shape in the **maritime domain** – which is essential to global connectivity and prosperity, and to a healthy planet, but remains under increasing pressure from systemic competition and environmental degradation. We will maintain our integrated approach to maritime security, environment and trade – building on our long history as a maritime power. In doing so, the UK will maintain an active role in upholding freedom of navigation and reinforcing the centrality of the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea, including by: continuing to make the Royal Navy available to NATO; deepening naval partnerships with JEF nations; deploying more of our naval assets across the world to protect shipping lanes and strategic chokepoints, such as the Strait of Hormuz, supported by the Joint Maritime Security Centre; and working through the Five Power Defence Arrangements in the Indo-Pacific.

The UK's policy towards China

China under the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) poses an epoch-defining and systemic challenge with implications for almost every area of government policy and the everyday lives of British people. In responding to this challenge, the UK will strengthen our national security protections, align and cooperate with our partners, and engage where it is consistent with our interests.

Since IR2021, the Government has acted consistently and robustly to protect the UK's interests and values in relation to China. We have increased cooperation with our partners through the G7 and NATO, continued to raise our grave concerns about human rights violations in Xinjiang at the UN and other fora, and imposed asset freezes and travel bans on those involved under the UK Global Human Rights sanctions regime. We have created and used new powers under the National Security and Investment Act, passed the Telecommunications (Security) Act 2021 to bolster the security of our 5G network, and expanded export controls on goods and technology for military use. We have reduced Chinese involvement in the civil nuclear sector and taken measures to remove surveillance technology from the government estate that could result in sensitive data being accessed by the Chinese state. As of December 2022, we have approved 153,708 applications from British National (Overseas) status holders to live in the UK, reflecting our historic commitment to those people of Hong Kong who chose to retain their ties to the UK.

The UK's China policy is being updated to respond to two overarching factors that have continued to evolve since IR2021:

- i. First, China's size and significance on almost every global issue, which will continue to increase in the years ahead in ways that will be felt in the UK and around the world. China is a long-standing permanent member of the UN Security Council. It now accounts for nearly a fifth of the world economy and is a major investor in the developing world. It is highly advanced in several industrial, scientific and technological fields, and plays a vital role in many global supply chains of importance to the UK. As the world's largest investor in sustainable energy and the largest emitter of carbon, the choices that China makes are critical to our collective ability to tackle climate change. In other areas such as global health and pandemic preparedness, decisions taken by China have the potential to have profound impact on our lives at home.
- ii. Second, the UK's growing concerns about the actions and stated intent of the CCP. Since IR2021, it has chosen to strengthen its partnership with Russia just as Russia pursued its invasion of Ukraine, and continued to disregard universal human rights and its international commitments, from Tibet and Xinjiang to Hong Kong. Its 'new multilateralism' is challenging the centrality of human rights and freedoms in the UN system. It has pursued rapid and opaque military modernisation with huge new investments, militarised disputed islands in the South China Sea, and refused to renounce the use of force to achieve its objectives with regard to Taiwan. It has used economic power to coerce countries with which it disagrees, such as Lithuania. The CCP has sanctioned British parliamentarians and acted in other ways to undermine free speech. And as the Director General of MI5 identified publicly last year, it has engaged in both espionage and interference in the UK.

The UK does not accept that China's relationship with the UK or its impact on the international system are set on a predetermined course. Our preference is for better cooperation and understanding, and predictability and stability for global public good. But we believe that this will depend on the choices China makes, and will be made harder if trends towards greater authoritarianism and assertiveness overseas continue.

The UK's policy towards China will therefore be anchored in our core national interests and our higher interest in an open and stable international order, based on the UN Charter and international law. Where it is consistent with these interests, we will engage constructively with the Chinese government, business and people and cooperate on shared priorities. But wherever the CCP's actions and stated intent threaten the UK's interests, we will take swift and robust action to protect them. This is the template for mature diplomacy between two P5 nations and is aligned with the approaches adopted by our closest allies and partners, including those in Europe, the US, Australia, Canada and Japan.

The Government will pursue this policy through three interrelated strands, which run throughout the IR2023 strategic framework:

- **Protect.** The UK will further strengthen our national security protections in those areas where the actions of the CCP pose a threat to our people, prosperity and security. This means protecting ourselves at home, particularly our economy, democratic freedoms, critical national infrastructure, supply chains and our ability to generate strategic advantage through science and technology. We will continue to invest in areas like cyber security, and in the defensive capabilities that will allow us to keep ourselves safe in the long-term and respond to future contingencies. We will increase protections for academic freedom and university research. Where tensions arise with other objectives, we will always put national security first.
- **Align.** The UK will deepen our cooperation and increase alignment with our core allies and a broader group of partners. This recognises that we have limited agency to influence the CCP's actions on our own and so must instead shape the broader strategic environment. We will work with others to encourage China to make contributions to financial stability and economic development that are transparent and commensurate with its weight and responsibilities. And we will work to strengthen collective security, balance and compete where necessary, and push back against behaviours that undermine international law, violate human rights, or seek to coerce or create dependencies. The UK's long-standing position remains that the Taiwan issue should be settled peacefully by people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait through dialogue, and not through any unilateral attempts to change the status quo.
- **Engage.** The UK will engage directly with China, bilaterally and in international fora to preserve and create space for open, constructive, predictable and stable relations that reflect China's importance in world affairs. In doing so we will always respect the diversity and complexity of the Chinese people and their views, including in large diaspora communities in the UK and throughout the world. We will strengthen diplomatic contact and people-to-people relationships, and where possible cooperate on global challenges including climate and global health. While avoiding dependencies in our critical supply chains and protecting our national security, we believe that a positive trade and investment relationship can benefit both the UK and China, and the Government will work with industry to ensure trading and investment is safe, reciprocal and mutually beneficial.

This approach will be supported by other immediate actions set out in the IR2023 strategic framework including creation of the National Protective Security Agency, other new measures on economic security and the review of how we can protect our higher education sector. As part of IR2023, the Government will also increase investment in the capabilities that help us to understand and adapt to China – doubling funding to develop China capabilities across government.

British soldiers in the UK-led NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup in Estonia. © Crown copyright 2023



Pillar 2: Deter, defend and compete across all domains

1. To protect the British people, the UK homeland, the Crown Dependencies, and our Overseas Territories we must be able to deter and defend against threats to our security, to roll them back where necessary, and to adapt to those threats as they change over time. This is the core business of the UK's armed forces and security services, and it is an essential part of achieving strategic stability.
2. IR2021 recognised that the deteriorating security environment and growth in hybrid threats required a more robust and integrated approach to deterrence and defence. It maintained the traditional basis of deterrence: balanced and credible nuclear, conventional, cyber and space forces, and a clearly communicated willingness to use them in the place and at a time of our choosing. In addition, it introduced greater emphasis on the role of the wider levers of state power, to enable the UK to counter threats above and below the threshold of armed conflict. IR2021 also restated the central importance of alliances and partnerships to an integrated approach to deterrence and defence, starting with NATO as the bedrock of Euro-Atlantic security, but also working more flexibly through bilateral and minilateral formats.
3. Given that the security environment has rapidly grown more contested, the UK will now further strengthen our integrated approach to deterrence and defence, reflecting the real-world evolution of our posture since 2021 and in full alignment with the 2022 NATO Strategic Concept. Systemic competition between states now represents the most immediate and substantial threat to UK interests, and will require an increasing proportion of national security resources. This will be achieved by an immediate increase in defence spending in critical areas and by a new aspiration to invest 2.5% of GDP on defence, cementing the UK's leading position in NATO. However, transnational security challenges will continue to evolve – as will the interplay between state and non-state actors – and we must also adapt how we deter and defend against them.
4. In addition to reinforcing UK's ability to deter and defend, we must also address the risk that misunderstanding and miscalculation could lead to large-scale military conflict between major powers, which has grown substantially in the past decade. This means working more effectively with others – including those who may threaten our interests and security – to build stability, transparency and better mutual understanding, so that we have clear routes for de-escalation when required. It also means a refreshed approach to arms control and counter-proliferation that reflects the prevailing security environment, and complements our deterrence and defence posture.

An integrated approach to deterrence and defence

5. The foundational component of an integrated approach to deterrence and defence remains a minimum credible, independent UK **nuclear deterrent**, assigned to the defence of NATO. It ensures that potential adversaries can never use their capabilities to threaten the UK or our NATO allies or to deter us from taking the action required to maintain regional and global security and stability. We would consider using our nuclear weapons only in extreme circumstances of self-defence, including the defence of our NATO allies. Only the Prime Minister can authorise their use. The UK's negative security assurance remains unchanged.

6. As IR2021 set out, the UK is committed to a one-in-two-generations modernisation of our nuclear forces. IR2023 reinforces this with further investment. As part of the Government's broader ambition on the nuclear enterprise (see textbox), we will publish a Defence Nuclear Strategy to set out how we will deliver the recapitalisation programmes necessary to strengthen and build resilience in UK capabilities, including an updated approach to people and specialist skills.
7. In addition to our nuclear deterrent, the UK's **conventional, cyber and space forces** must be sufficiently capable, resilient, deployable and adaptive to deter potential adversaries from engaging in conflict, and to win a conflict if deterrence fails. The UK's forces already have cutting-edge technologies and capabilities across all five domains of land, sea, air, space and cyberspace. Combined with our ability to train and operate with others in an integrated way, this enables the UK to deliver disproportionate effect relative to our size. But as others modernise their own armed forces, we must work to maintain our edge.
8. The Government will continue the programme of modernisation that was initiated following the 2020 Spending Round, which provided UK defence with the biggest sustained budget increase since the end of the Cold War. As set out in the 2021 Defence Command Paper (DCP21), MOD is investing in armed forces that are networked and digitally-enabled, more lethal, and more capable in the newer domains of space and cyber. Investment in R&D and sixth-generation capability programmes will ensure the UK has battle-winning platforms, weapons systems and technologies into the next decade.
9. However, DCP21 predated the announcement of the AUKUS and GCAP partnerships, which require further investment in the years ahead. It also predated the war in Ukraine, which has increased the urgency of modernising our land forces, ensuring combat readiness, and strengthening the stockpiles, readiness and resilience underpinning them – with a focus on how best we can bring value to NATO.
10. In taking the decision to invest in all five domains there are necessarily trade-offs in terms of priorities and force structure. A pragmatic balance has to be struck between different types of investment in the different parts of the armed forces. In line with IR2021's commitment to keep both the quantum and the relative balance of investment under review, the Government has decided to provide defence with £5 billion of additional funding over the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25, in addition to the £560 million war stocks replenishment in autumn 2022.
11. Of this new money, £3 billion will be invested across the defence nuclear enterprise, supporting areas such as the construction of industrial infrastructure at Barrow, Derby and at the Atomic Weapons Establishment, allowing us to continue to grow our graduate and apprentice nuclear skills programmes, and enhancing support to in-service submarines. This investment will help to modernise our manufacturing and maintenance capacity so that we can improve submarine availability and increase resilience, as well as supporting the delivery of AUKUS. The remaining £2 billion will allow us to replenish our stockpiles and to increase them in line with a reassessment of appropriate levels – building on the £560 million announced for this purpose at the Autumn Statement 2022 – and to invest in the resilience of the UK's munitions infrastructure.

12. Over the longer-term, our aspiration is to invest 2.5% of GDP on defence, as the fiscal and economic circumstances allow. This uplift will support ongoing modernisation of our armed forces. As we develop and deliver these plans we will respond to the lessons from Ukraine, focusing on those force elements most likely to make the decisive difference in future conflicts. This will be particularly pertinent in the land domain as we implement and build on the Army's Future Soldier programme.

The nuclear enterprise

In the changing strategic context, the UK's defence and civil nuclear sectors are of increasing importance for our security, our energy needs and our prosperity. They make a substantial contribution to the UK's economic growth and technological edge, supporting a highly-skilled workforce and investment across the whole of the UK.

The defence nuclear enterprise is collectively responsible for the development, build, maintenance and – through the Royal Navy – delivery of our Continuous at Sea Deterrent. The success of the defence nuclear enterprise remains a critical national endeavour, requiring significant and sustained investment and support from government.

The delivery of the four new Dreadnought Class submarines, the first of which will enter service in the early 2030s, is an illustration of our investment; as is the programme to replace the UK's sovereign nuclear warhead, which has now entered its concept phase. We are also investing in personnel, infrastructure, and capabilities at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) that are essential to deliver the UK Replacement Warhead programme and sustain the current in-service warhead until it is withdrawn from service.

In 2022, the Government announced a £2 billion investment in the UK's submarine delivery across Barrow-in-Furness and Derby, as part of the current phase of Dreadnought. We will continue to build on that investment, providing thousands of British jobs across the enterprise and supply chain. This will support the delivery of a new, world class fleet of nuclear-powered attack submarines for the Royal Navy.

This programme will underpin the delivery of AUKUS, working with the US to deliver the optimum pathway to provide Australia with conventionally armed nuclear-powered submarines. The AUKUS programme will be an important part of the nuclear enterprise, providing an unrivalled opportunity to share innovation and build resilience with the US and Australia. It will improve the continued delivery of non-nuclear advanced capabilities across all three countries and enhance how we share information with each other. It will also deliver on our commitment to setting the highest nuclear non-proliferation standards.

We will proactively look for opportunities to align delivery of the civil and defence nuclear enterprises, seeking synergies where appropriate to ensure a coherent demand signal to our industry and academic partners. The Defence Nuclear Strategy, which will be published later this year, will signal government's future ambitions for the defence nuclear enterprise, setting our plans for skills and make clear the vitally important role that our industry partners play in supporting both the civil and defence nuclear sectors.

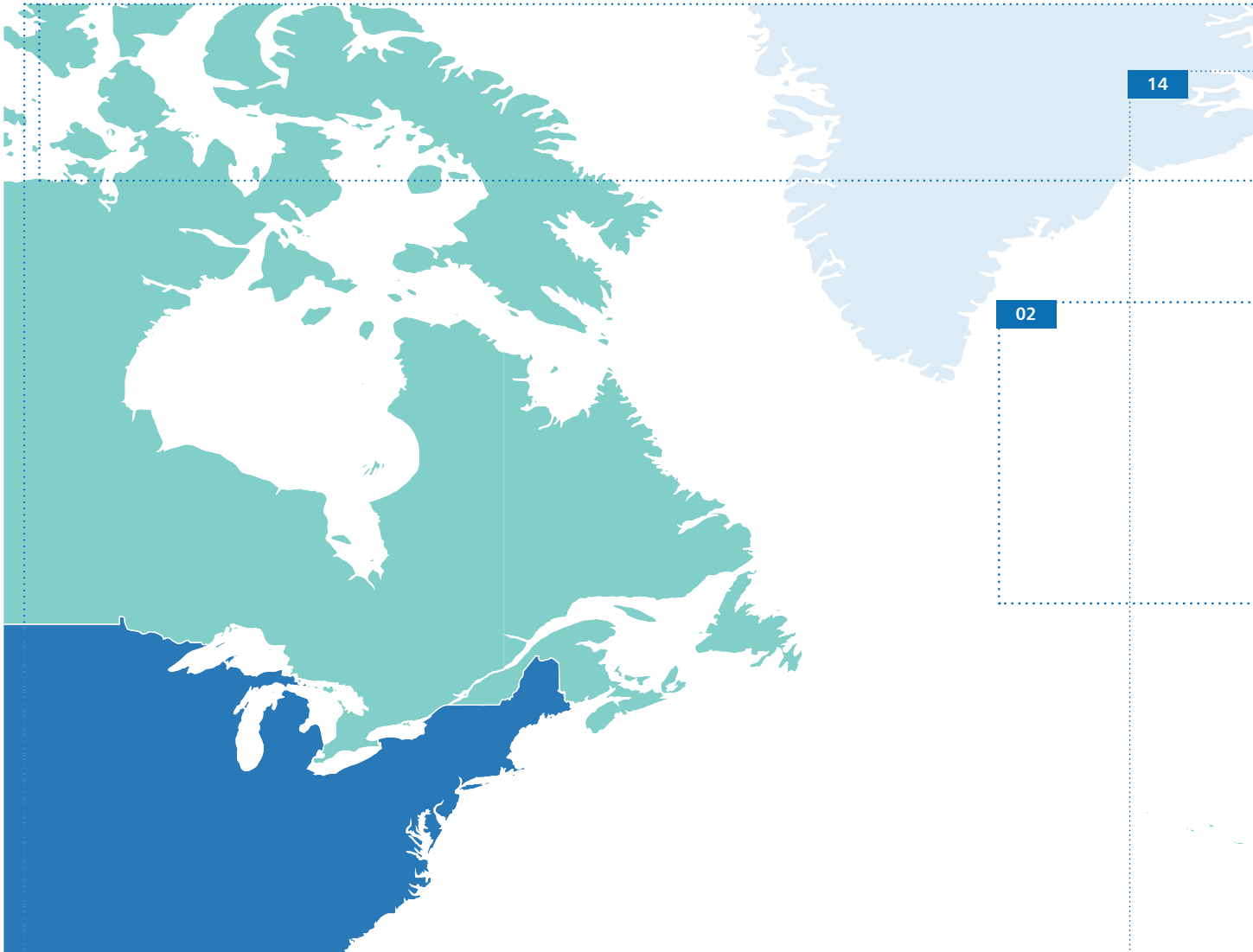
The civil nuclear sector will also deliver the critical baseload of the future energy system – supporting the UK's energy security and delivery of our net zero commitments. In the British Energy Security Strategy, the Government announced our ambition for civil nuclear to provide up to 24GW of the UK's power generation capacity by 2050. To achieve this, we are progressing the construction of Hinkley Point C, and driving forward Sizewell C, a sister project in which the Government has invested approximately £700 million to become a co-shareholder. Sizewell C has the potential to provide reliable, low-carbon power for the equivalent of six million homes over 50 years and is expected to support around 10,000 jobs at peak construction. We have also: announced our intention to establish Great British Nuclear, to progress a resilient pipeline of new nuclear projects; committed £210 million, matched by private investment, to develop small modular reactors in the UK through Rolls Royce SMR; announced the £120 million Future Nuclear Enabling Fund; and launched the Nuclear Fuel Fund to provide up to £75 million in grants to help preserve the UK front-end nuclear fuel cycle capability.

13. The increasing proliferation of diverse threats originating from both state and non-state actors has vindicated the UK's substantial investment in the National Cyber Force (NCF) since 2020. As set out in IR2021, the NCF deploys its capabilities in a responsible, ethical manner, in accordance with domestic and international law, to disrupt terrorist networks, counter sanctions evasion, support and protect military operations, and remove online child sexual exploitation and abuse material. We are now publishing in more detail how the NCF conducts its operations, to support our commitment to further transparency about our capabilities and provide clarity on how the UK acts as a responsible and democratic cyber power.
14. Beyond our military instruments, an integrated approach to deterrence and defence requires us to **bring together the wider levers of state power** to increase the costs of aggression by hostile actors above and below the threshold of armed conflict. The UK will continue to develop new levers to adapt to the changing threat environment, and better integrate existing levers for strategic effect.

15. In particular, the UK will strengthen our economic capabilities, and information statecraft, building on the success of these tools in constraining Russia's room for manoeuvre in Ukraine. We will build expertise across government to design, implement and enforce sanctions for maximum impact, develop our autonomous sanctions regimes, and deepen international coordination to assess, prepare for, deter and respond rapidly to future economic threats. We have established a new directorate in the FCDO – incorporating the Government Information Cell – as part of a drive to increase our capability to assess and respond to the hostile manipulation of information by actors including Russia, China and Iran where they affect UK interests abroad. Building on lessons learned from the war in Ukraine, we will raise national security communications capabilities through a new curriculum delivered by the College for National Security.
16. We will also adopt a new approach to countering state threats below the threshold of armed conflict, organising cross-government activity into four lines of effort: protecting ourselves, our allies and partners from the impact of this activity; engaging domestically and internationally to raise awareness of it and to deepen cooperation on countering it; building a deeper understanding of states' activity and how to respond effectively; and competing directly with these states in creative and assertive ways, when appropriate. This aligns with NATO's approach to state threats, and provides a framework for responding to emerging threats (such as high altitude surveillance balloons, which we will not tolerate in our airspace) as well as traditional ones. As part of this new approach, we will use the full range of powers available to us – including considering our robust counter-terrorism powers, such as proscription – to tackle the threats we face from organisations such as the Wagner Group.
17. An integrated approach to deterrence and defence must also be applied to evolving transnational challenges. To date, the UK has primarily organised our resources around separate responses to individual transnational challenges, such as terrorism or serious and organised crime (SOC). However, the lines between these challenges – and state threats – are increasingly blurred, and the capabilities and activities we use to respond to and disrupt them are increasingly overlapping. We will make more effective use of our resources by continuing to break down the silos across the homeland security community to build more threat-agnostic capabilities and approaches.
18. In 2023, the updated SOC Strategy and Counter-Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) will be informed by this imperative. Both will respond to common trends, including the use by threat actors of new technologies to facilitate covert communications and financial transactions, the role of the online space in enabling them to operate within and across borders, and the growing interaction with state threats. The SOC Strategy in particular will put an increased emphasis on upstream efforts with international partners to disrupt and dismantle the business models of the highest harm criminal networks. As well as responding to the diversification of terrorist groups overseas, CONTEST will address the shift in threat towards self-initiated terrorists, drawing lessons from beyond law enforcement on how best to mitigate and manage this risk. Both strategies will highlight the importance of parallel action to build greater resilience across a range of domestic vulnerabilities, as set out in pillar three below.

The UK's contribution to NATO

Non-exhaustive list. Entries correct as of 1 March 2023

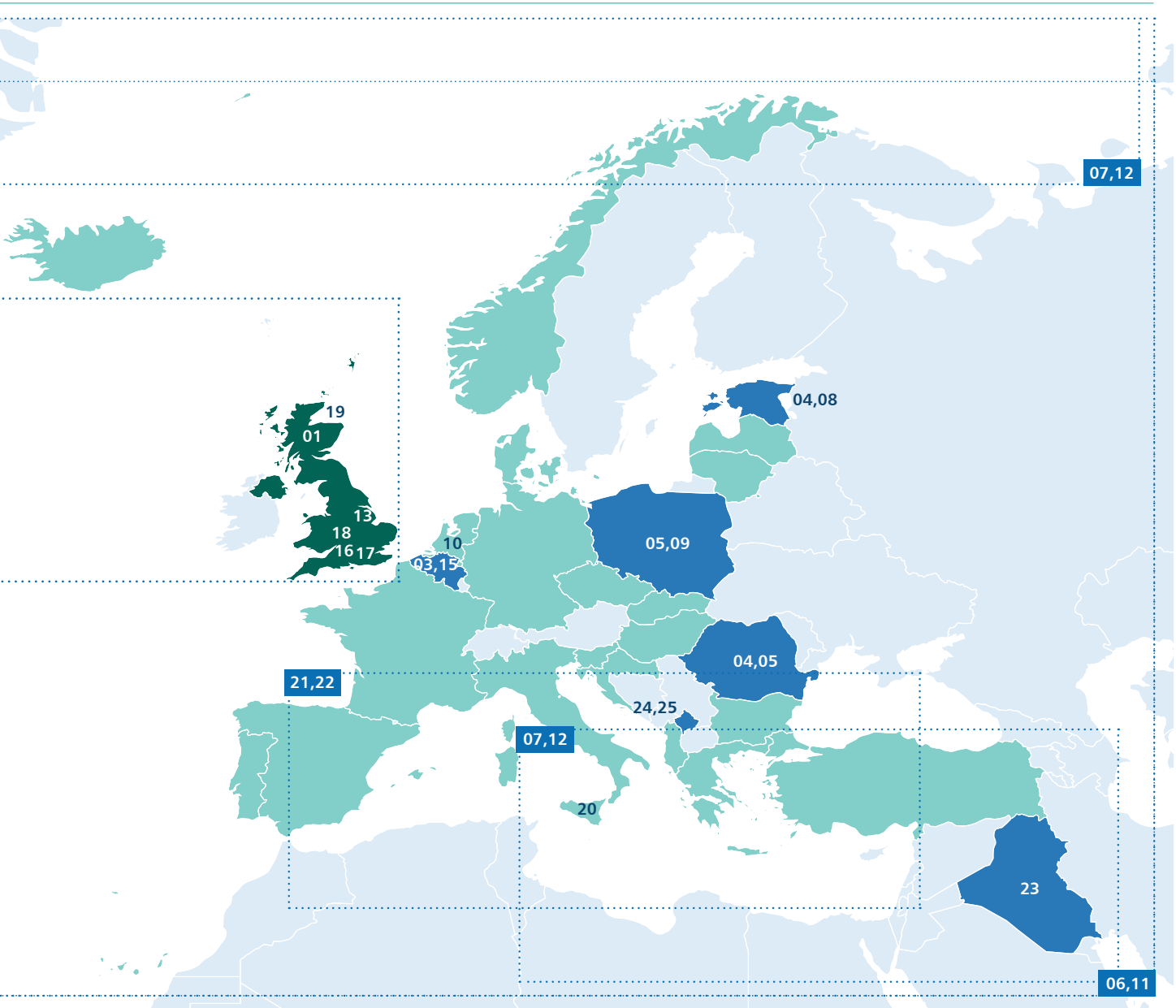


Map key

- UK-led or supported operations
- NATO members

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01. Continuous At Sea Deterrent (CASD) Scotland 02. UK air policing and space warning North Atlantic, North Sea and UK 03. Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (DSACEUR) Mons, Belgium 04. NATO enhanced Air Policing (eAP) Romania / Estonia
4-month annual commitment to either eAP North in Estonia or South in Romania. 05. NATO enhanced Vigilance Activity (Air) (eVA(Air)) Poland / Romania
Typhoons, F-35 and Voyager to support combat air patrols over countries to the west and south-west of (but not in) Ukraine. 06. Very high readiness Joint Task Force (Air) (VJTF(A)) Across the UK's AoR*
Voyager AAR support to the Alliance. 07. Very high readiness Joint Task Force (Maritime) (VJTF(M)) High North and Eastern Mediterranean
Naval assets to bolster the Standing NATO Maritime Groups for fixed durations in both the High North and Eastern Mediterranean. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 08. NATO enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) Estonia
Leading NATO's forward presence battlegroup in Estonia alongside Danish and French forces. 09. NATO enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) Poland
Providing a Light Cavalry Squadron specialising in reconnaissance to the US-led eFP battlegroup. 10. NATO Response Force Netherlands
Providing a leading contribution to NATO's Response Force, a multinational force made up of land, air, maritime and Special Operations Forces. 11. Maritime High Readiness Force Aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales
Served as NATO's command ship when the Royal Navy led the Alliance's Maritime High Readiness Force. 12. NATO Readiness Initiative (NRI) High North and Eastern Mediterranean
Leading contributors to the NATO Readiness Initiative over land, sea and air. 13. Ballistic missile early warning system RAF Fylingdales
Detection and warning of ballistic missile threats across Europe. |
|---|---|

*The UK's area of responsibility is a NATO-agreed area assigned to the UK in which to plan and conduct operations.



- 14. **NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control | (AEW&C)**
The acquisition and operation of NATO's AEW&C Force.
- 15. **NATO's Command and Force structures | Across NATO including ACT (Norfolk, US), SHAPE (Mons) and NATO HQ (Brussels)**
Providing 1,028 personnel to NATO's Command and Force structures under peacetime establishments and supporting NATO training and exercises across all domains.
- 16. **Allied Maritime Command | Northwood**
Under the command of a 3-Star (Vice Admiral).
- 17. **European HQ of NATO's DIANA programme | London**
A platform for allies to accelerate, test, evaluate and validate new technologies that address critical defence challenges and contribute to Alliance deterrence.
- 18. **HQ Allied Rapid Reaction Corps | Gloucester**
Headquarters Allied Rapid Reaction Corps provides NATO with a rapidly deployable, flexible HQ that can act as a Joint, Land or Corps HQ for operations and crisis response.
- 19. **Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) support to NATO activity | RAF Lossiemouth**
Participating in multilateral anti-submarine warfare, in addition to its surveillance and search and rescue roles.
- 20. **Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) | Sicily**
UK personnel and capability support.
- 21. **Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Maritime Group 1 | Northern Europe**
Two minehunters were part of the task group in the Mediterranean.
- 22. **Op SEA GUARDIAN | Mediterranean**
Sea forces routinely allocated to the Mediterranean.
- 23. **NATO Mission Iraq (NMI) | Iraq**
Contributing almost 10% of NATO's mission in Iraq.
- 24. **NATO mission in Kosovo (KFOR) | Kosovo**
Surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities and a Battalion held at readiness in the UK as the pan-Balkans strategic reserve.
- 25. **Op SANDROCK | Kosovo**
Strategic deployment of elements of KFOR reserve force.

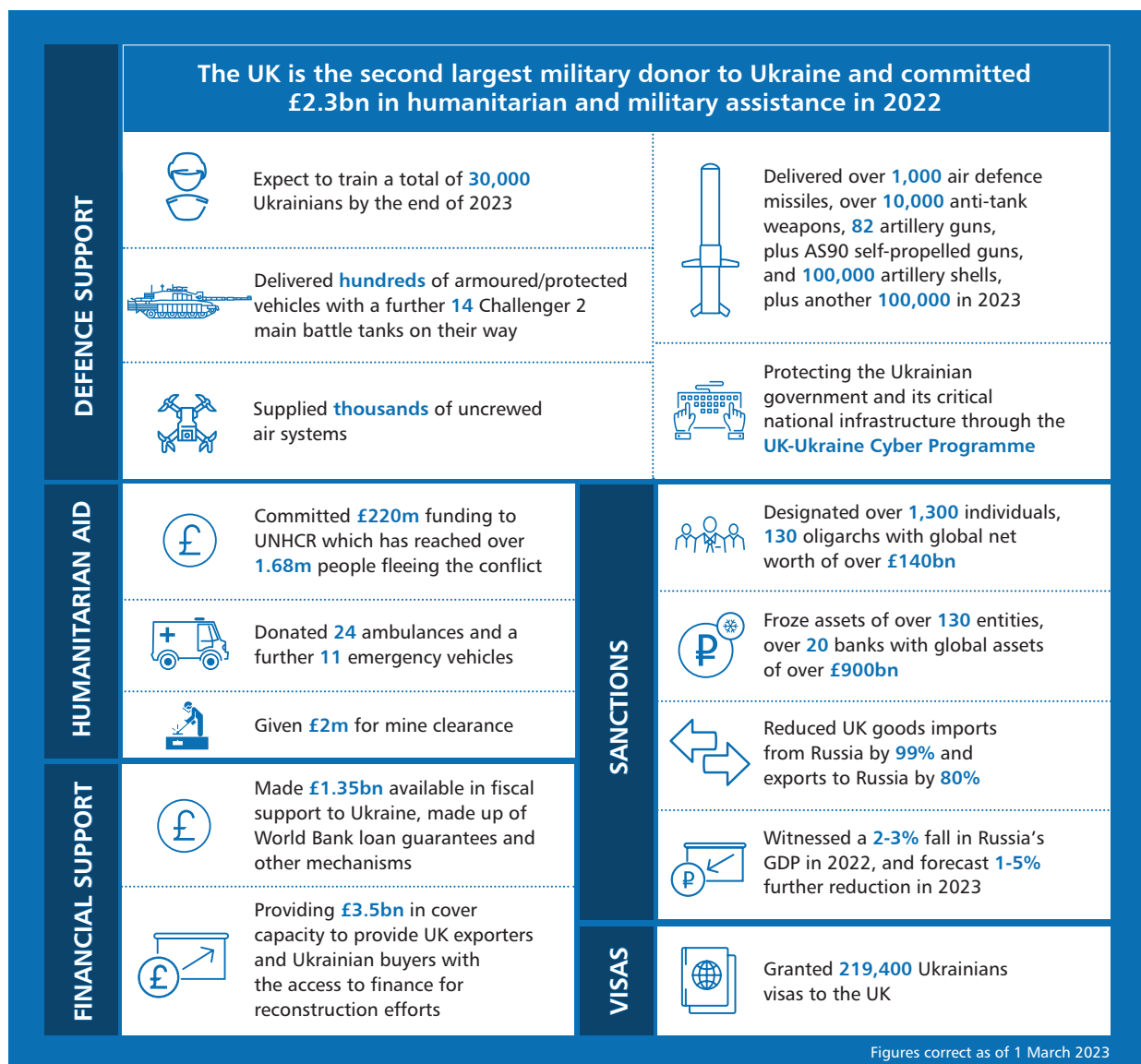
19. Across the full range of state and non-state threats, **burden-sharing with our allies and partners** is a vital element of an integrated approach to deterrence and defence. The UK enjoys deep bilateral defence and security ties with many nations around the world. Of these, the depth and quality of the relationship with the US is unmatched – no two major militaries in the world are more interoperable and complementary. The defence relationship with France is also particularly strong. The Lancaster House Agreement of 2010 not only established the UK-France Combined Joint Expeditionary Force but provides an enduring foundation by which to strengthen that relationship further, committing both parties to work together to ‘address strategic challenges, promote international peace and security, ensure collective security, deter and dissuade against potential aggressors and counter threats, including terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and cyber-attacks’.
20. In the years ahead, the UK will continue to put particular emphasis on developing high-end defence-industrial partnerships that are at the cutting edge of technology, as seen in AUKUS and GCAP. These multi-decade endeavours with partners who share our assessment of the international environment allow us collectively to balance against coercive behaviours and to preserve an open and stable international order.

Applying an integrated approach to deterrence and defence

21. The **Euro-Atlantic** remains the primary theatre to which the UK will commit the majority of its defence capabilities in support of collective deterrence and defence. As the NATO Strategic Concept makes clear, Russia has violated the norms and principles that contributed to a stable and predictable European security order, and we cannot discount the possibility of an attack against Allies’ sovereignty and territorial integrity.
22. NATO is the foundation of collective security in the Euro-Atlantic, and our commitment to Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty is our most powerful deterrent. Under the 2022 Strategic Concept and the Concept for Deterrence and Defence of the Euro-Atlantic Area, NATO is undergoing its most significant transformation in decades. The Alliance will soon have more pre-positioned equipment and forward-deployed capabilities, a new Response Force backed by a greater number of high-readiness forces, upgraded defence plans, and a command and force structure that will allow it to prepare for conflict.
23. The UK will remain a leading contributor to NATO, offering the Alliance the full spectrum of defence capabilities. We have consistently exceeded NATO’s Defence Investment Pledge to spend 2% of GDP on defence, and we will now set a new aspiration to reach 2.5%. We declare our Continuous at Sea Nuclear Deterrent to the Alliance, as well as our offensive cyber capabilities through the National Cyber Force. The Royal Air Force is conducting air patrols over Poland, Romania and Estonia, and our Royal Navy Strike Force in HMS Prince of Wales provided NATO’s flagship in 2022. Our armed forces provide over 1,000 personnel to NATO’s Command and Force Structures, including the Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe.
24. As set out in pillar one, the UK will make a particular contribution to northern European security. We are strengthening our NATO battlegroup in Estonia with artillery, air defence and a reinforced command; in 2023, Exercise Spring Storm will show how we could scale up to a brigade if needed in a crisis. We are especially invested in the format provided by the JEF, which since 2022 has had three leader-level meetings and is an increasingly important vehicle for security in the High North, North Atlantic and Baltic

Sea regions. The military, security and political challenges we face across these areas demand active management, across institutional boundaries, and in close cooperation.

25. The UK will continue to lead efforts in NATO to ensure the Alliance retains its technological edge and industrial advantage. NATO has selected London as one of two locations for the European Headquarters of NATO’s Defence Innovation Accelerator of the North Atlantic (DIANA), twinned with a second in Tallinn, Estonia. This will create opportunities for UK companies to partner with innovators across Europe and North America. The UK has also championed investment in NATO’s digital backbone to better enable multi-domain operations, alongside steps to further strengthen the Alliance’s defence industrial base.



26. At present, the most urgent priority in the Euro-Atlantic is to **support Ukraine to reassert its sovereignty and deny Russia any strategic benefit from its invasion**. The UK will continue to play a leading, catalytic role in supporting Ukraine. Building on our existing military, humanitarian and economic support, we will provide further diplomatic and military assistance in 2023 – matching or exceeding the defence support

we provided in 2022 – to support Ukraine to defend itself, restore its territorial integrity and secure a lasting peace. As part of this, we have committed to providing modern main battle tanks, and will train a further 20,000 Ukrainian soldiers in the UK with support from nine partner nations. In addition, we will: accelerate our efforts to manage escalation risks and prepare for peace, while seeking to hold Russia accountable for war crimes; maintain support to important UN humanitarian initiatives such as the Black Sea Grain Initiative; and host the Ukraine Recovery Conference in June 2023.

27. More broadly, the UK will seek to **contain and challenge Russia’s ability and intent to disrupt UK, Euro-Atlantic and wider international security**. In doing so, we will; maintain our long-standing respect for Russia’s rich history and its people; recognise that many Russians do not support President Putin’s actions; and continue to support the human rights of the Russian people, including freedom of speech and assembly and their access to free and independent sources of information.
28. The UK’s updated Russia strategy focuses on:
 - Increasing the cost and denying the benefit to Russia of disrupting UK and Euro-Atlantic stability, security and prosperity. This will include further strengthening NATO, as set out above, and denying Russia opportunities to exploit the UK’s vulnerabilities. The latter, with respect to Russia, will require a particular focus on energy, democratic institutions, electoral institutions, disinformation, and UK financial systems.
 - Contesting malign Russian influence on the world stage. This will include exposing Russian disinformation, working with partners across the world to reduce dependencies on Russia, and diminishing its coercive ability and its scope to weaponise goods such as energy and food. We will also step up engagement with Moldova, the South Caucasus, the Western Balkans, Central Asia and Mongolia to boost their prosperity, security and resilience to Russian interference.
 - Degrading the capabilities with which Russia threatens the UK. This will include key Russian capabilities above and below the threshold for armed conflict that threaten the UK and our interests, denying its defence sector access to critical technology and materials, and reducing Russia’s ability to pursue malign intelligence activity.
29. The UK will also reinforce and extend its contribution to deterrence and defence beyond the Euro-Atlantic area and the acute threat from Russia. NATO has an important role to play in this wider deterrence picture: the UK welcomes the agreement by NATO Allies at the Madrid Summit in 2022 that some of China’s stated ambitions and policies pose a challenge to Euro-Atlantic security and an open and stable international order more broadly, as well the Alliance’s new emphasis on national and collective resilience. At the same time, the UK will need to work beyond NATO through new and existing minilateral formats, and through DCP21’s commitment to persistent engagement: more proactive, forward-deployed forces better able to understand and shape the global landscape to the UK’s advantage, competing with and campaigning against adversaries below the threshold of armed conflict where necessary.
30. In particular, the UK will contribute to:
 - Countering the threat from Iran to regional and international security. With the US, E3 (France, Germany, Italy) and regional partners, we will continue to work to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon and to deter its destabilising behaviour, including threats against the UK and UK-based individuals.

- Supporting stability in the Taiwan Strait, where we oppose any unilateral change in the status quo, and in the East and South China Seas. We will support all parties to work together to ensure that heightened tensions do not lead to escalation.
- Supporting peace on the Korean peninsula, noting the growing concerns of our regional partners about the risks to regional and international security. The UK urges the DPRK to show restraint and work towards peace, and we are clear that its nuclear and weapons programmes must be dismantled.

Establishing frameworks to manage systemic competition

31. Alongside reinforced deterrence and defence, managing systemic competition is essential to upholding strategic stability. A clear understanding of others' strategic calculus – and an ability to explain our own – is critical in order to avoid miscalculation. The UK's aim is to establish regular strategic-level dialogues to build confidence and transparency around security ambitions, vital interests and military doctrines. During the Cold War, such mechanisms gave all parties a higher level of confidence that we would not miscalculate our way into nuclear exchange. The UK will seek to maintain and establish reliable lines of political and military communication, so that in moments of heightened tension we have quick and effective means by which to de-escalate, or to manage escalation. This will be a long-term endeavour.
32. Well-established channels for dialogue and de-escalation with Russia are currently limited and under significant strain, but we remain ready to reinvigorate them when the moment is right. IR2023 also includes a clear articulation of the principles that will underpin the UK's approach to bilateral relations with China, in which the importance of dialogue and diplomacy is emphasised. Ultimately, the UK seeks to re-establish a stable, constructive and frank relationship that can both create better conditions for cooperation and underpin the kind of strategic dialogue required to prevent miscalculation and misunderstanding.
33. More broadly, the UK will support a new agenda for arms control that is multi-domain, multi-capability and draws together a wider set of actors. We will strengthen the elements of the existing architecture that remain vital – such as the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, and the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The NPT has been the cornerstone of nuclear security and civil nuclear prosperity for the last 52 years, and the UK remains committed to its implementation in full.
34. We will seek to build upon the existing architecture – supporting updates to existing agreements, regulating specific capabilities where appropriate – and will look for opportunities to create new agreements where useful and achievable to do so. In doing this we will expand thinking beyond states to industry experts, companies and technologists, all of whom will play a critical role in understanding the risks and opportunities of dual-use and other new technologies, and in setting the standards that govern them.
35. In furthering arms control, we will have a pragmatic focus on establishing and regulating behaviours. The UK has led work in the UN to apply this approach to cyber and to space, and in the context of hybrid- and technology-enabled conflict we will now seek to establish new norms for behaviour in a broader range of areas, as set out in pillar one. This does not rule out the possibility of new formal agreements to regulate capabilities but instead supplements our existing approach.



Scottish engineering company Orbital Marine Power's 'O2' is the world's most powerful and advanced tidal turbine, and started generating power in Orkney in 2021. It can generate enough electricity to power 2,000 homes for a year. Credit: Orbital Marine Power

Pillar 3: Address vulnerabilities through resilience

1. The UK's openness – to trade and investment and the exchange of people, ideas and culture – is fundamental to our long-term prosperity. Our global interconnectedness is a source of strength and an essential part of our national life. It is also reflected in the commitment to free speech and universal human rights that underpins our democracy.
2. However, both COVID-19 and the invasion of Ukraine have shown – in different ways – the severe disruption that crises originating beyond our borders can have in the UK, affecting the wellbeing and quality of life of our people. As IR2021 set out, the UK must be prepared to deal with global trends and events that will exert shaping forces on our national life, but that we cannot always control or prevent at source. These will range from: well-understood transnational challenges, such as mass migration and climate change; to emergent issues, such as the increasing global trend towards protectionism and the 'on-shoring' of data assets and critical supply chains. As the security environment deteriorates, we must also make it harder for state and non-state actors to target our people, society, economy and institutions.
3. IR2021 introduced a commitment to building resilience at home and overseas, as the counterpart to strengthening security and defence. The importance of this has since been reinforced by the NATO Strategic Concept, which introduced targets to improve collective and national resilience across the Alliance as the critical underpinning for its core tasks, including deterrence and defence.
4. IR2021 and the 2022 UK Government Resilience Framework defined resilience as the UK's ability to anticipate, assess, prevent, mitigate, respond to, and recover from risks – potential events or threats such as natural hazards or deliberate attacks. The Resilience Framework set out the Government's plan to strengthen the underpinning systems and capabilities for resilience, with measures focused on risk assessment, responsibilities and accountability, partnership, communities, investment and skills.
5. We will now build on this framework, expanding the UK's approach to resilience by introducing greater emphasis on addressing strategic vulnerabilities – the underlying economic, societal, technological, environmental and infrastructural factors that leave the UK exposed to crises or attacks. This will complement the action set out in the Resilience Framework. In combination with the approach to deterrence and defence set out under pillar two, this forms a new operating model for national security – with the majority of government effort orientated towards protective and preparatory action ('security through resilience'), so that operational activity can be focused on long-term, system-level interventions, such as disrupting high-harm criminal networks overseas.
6. Just as it took several years to build the counter-terrorism system after 2001, it will take time to develop and establish an effective model for security through resilience. The new NSC sub-committee on resilience will drive this, leading cross-government preparations to prevent, mitigate or absorb risks and shocks, and assessing action required to address the UK's vulnerabilities. As IR2021 highlighted, many aspects of the UK's resilience are intertwined with the resilience of allies and partners. Where possible, the Government will continue to tackle the root causes of risks through upstream action overseas, including supporting others to build their own resilience.

7. In the meantime, a number of the UK's vulnerabilities are already well understood, including some of which have come into sharper focus as a result of the invasion of Ukraine. This pillar sets out action to improve our resilience in five key areas: energy, climate, the environment and health; the economy; our democracy and society; cyber security and resilience; and the UK border.
8. Action under this pillar is mutually reinforcing with work to generate strategic advantage, set out in pillar four. A resilient UK is a precondition for our national strengths to thrive, which in turn provides the means to strengthen resilience further. In particular, a flourishing S&T ecosystem will develop innovative solutions to issues of resilience at home and overseas.

Assessing risks and vulnerabilities

Since the early 2000s, the Government has assessed risks to the UK through the internal National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA). In response to IR2021's direction for a more dynamic and adaptive approach, the NSRA has moved from a static biennial process to an iterative and continuous one, reviewing risks on a rolling basis. A refreshed National Risk Register based on the NSRA will be published in mid-2023, accompanied by communications to support public and industry preparedness.

Following a formal review by the Royal Academy of Engineering and the input of stakeholders across government, industry and academia, the NSRA has adopted a new methodology. This includes longer timescales, assessment of multiple scenarios, and the use of a wider range of relevant data and insight alongside external challenge.

A key methodological change has been to separate acute and chronic risks. The NSRA now focuses on acute risks: generally time-bound, discrete events, such as major flooding. The Government is establishing a new process for identifying and assessing chronic risks, which are enduring challenges that gradually erode elements of our economy, society, way of life and/or national security, such as disinformation.

Having improved the UK's assessment of risks, we will now introduce an accompanying assessment of the UK's vulnerabilities. As a first step, we will run a cross-government exercise to identify and understand the UK's current and future vulnerabilities, with recommendations for action. This will support the NSC and its resilience sub-committee in delivering the approach set out under this pillar, and in deciding the balance of investment across activity to tackle specific risks and activity to reduce underlying vulnerabilities.

Addressing priority areas of vulnerability

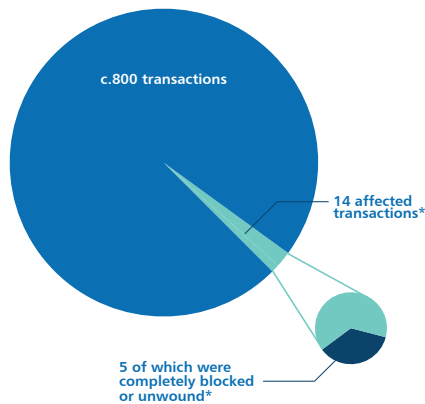
9. The first priority area in addressing the UK's vulnerabilities is **energy security**. We will ensure that the UK's energy supply is less exposed to manipulation by hostile actors and volatility in global markets. This requires a two-pronged approach: maximising sources of supply in the immediate term, while accelerating the transition to clean energy and net zero – the most effective route to both energy security and our climate goals. The 2022 British Energy Security Strategy (BESS) sets out a long-term path to

secure affordable, clean, energy, with increased investment in offshore wind, low-carbon hydrogen, a clear pipeline of new nuclear power projects, and new advanced technologies. The establishment of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero will drive forward this work, and the upcoming Energy Security Plan and Net Zero Growth Plan will provide further detail on the action the UK will take to deliver energy security in line with our commitments to low-cost decarbonisation.

10. In the immediate term, we have already reduced the UK's use of Russian coal, oil and gas. We will continue to diversify our supplies and invest in secure supply chains alongside partners, ensuring that we do not find ourselves with a new set of compromising strategic dependencies as we transition to clean energy. In Europe, we are renewing our participation in the North Seas Energy Cooperation group, and agreeing closer cooperation on nuclear energy and electricity interconnection with France. We are also working through the G7 to reduce global dependence on Russian energy exports and stabilise energy markets, and stepping up collaboration on energy efficiency, nuclear and renewables with the US through our strategic energy dialogue, the UK-US Energy Security and Affordability Partnership. We are also building updated energy partnerships with Gulf states – the UAE, Qatar and Saudi Arabia in particular – to collaborate on renewable energy projects and carbon capture and storage.
11. In parallel we will continue to strengthen the UK's resilience to the range of interlinked risks associated with **climate change and environmental damage**. This is firmly linked to the international agenda on climate change, biodiversity loss and sustainable development outlined in pillar one, as the UK's resilience to these risks requires greater global resilience. In addition, the Government will continue to deliver UK-focused interventions, including through the upcoming Third National Adaptation Programme, which will protect infrastructure, homes and health, the natural environment and businesses from the effects of climate change. The 2022 Food Strategy outlines how the UK will work towards more sustainable food production to address food and water security risks; we will now build on this further, assessing vulnerabilities in our food system and supply chains.
12. The UK's One Health approach recognises the close connection between the health of the environment, people and animals. As part of our work on global health, set out in pillar one, we remain committed to strengthening **health resilience** at home and overseas. The new Centre for Pandemic Preparedness, established in the UK Health Security Agency, is collaborating with US National Center for Epidemic Forecasting and Outbreak Analytics to shape an interconnected global network for evidence and information sharing, so that we are better able to detect and respond to emerging risks and threats. The upcoming Biological Security Strategy will set out a renewed vision to protect the UK and our interests from significant biological risks, no matter how these occur and no matter who or what they affect. It provides the overarching strategic framework for mitigating biological risks – whether arising naturally or through accidental or deliberate release – and sets out our mission to strengthen the UK's resilience, project global leadership, and exploit opportunities for UK-wide prosperity.
13. Our second priority area is strengthening the UK's **economic security**. The UK was the second most attractive destination for inward investment in the world in 2021. We will remain an open and outward-looking economy that welcomes safe foreign investment to drive growth across the UK. But we must also ensure that we strengthen our resilience to hostile action and global shocks. Getting this right is essential: it will help us create a more prosperous economy for future generations.

14. Since IR2021, we have taken robust action to protect the UK's economic security. In 2022, we issued 14 Final Orders under the National Security and Investment Act, blocking, unwinding or setting conditions on acquisitions that posed a risk to national security, and launched the UK's first Critical Minerals Strategy. In addition, we will now:
- Expand the tools we can deploy to tackle threats to global security and prosperity. In particular, we will launch a new Economic Deterrence Initiative (EDI) to boost our diplomatic and economic tools to respond to and deter hostile acts. With up to £50 million of funding over two years, the initiative will improve our sanctions implementation and enforcement. This will maximise the impact of our trade, transport and financial sanctions, including by cracking down on sanctions evasion. It will also prepare the Government for future scenarios where the UK may need to respond to hostile acts. We will increase the number of security cleared analysts available to ensure that future measures are more precise and have greater impact, minimising impacts on the UK economy. We will also consult on updating our export control regime to tackle sensitive emerging technology transfers, and work with international partners to make multilateral controls more effective.
 - Proactively support the capabilities, supply chains and technologies that are of strategic importance to the UK and the wider world. The UK Semiconductor Strategy will set out plans to grow our domestic semiconductors sector by improving infrastructure and skills, focusing on existing strengths including in design, generation of intellectual property and R&D into novel semiconductors. We will also work with international partners to diversify supply and make the global semiconductors market more resilient to shock. We will publish a UK Supply Chains and Import Strategy to support specific government and business action to strengthen our resilience in critical sectors. And we will set up a new Task & Finish Group on Critical Minerals Resilience for UK industry, to investigate vulnerabilities and resilience opportunities across sectors.
 - Provide clarity to business on our approach, to ensure the UK remains a great place to invest. The National Protective Security Authority (NPSA) will replace the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure to provide expert, intelligence-led advice to businesses and institutions in sensitive sectors of the economy, including critical infrastructure, emerging technology and academia. The NPSA will have a target to reach ten times more customers by 2025, by enhancing its digital offer and public campaigns to support businesses and institutions to make informed decisions. We are also establishing an Economic Security Private-Public Sector Forum, so that we can better communicate the UK's economic security policies and develop joint actions and strategies with businesses.
 - Work ever more closely with allies and partners to defend global rules, build resilience and support low- and middle-income countries. This year, we will deliver enhanced cooperation with the G7 on supply chain resilience and global threats, including economic coercion. We will also strengthen our bilateral relationships. We have just launched a new UK-Canada Critical Minerals Supply Chain Dialogue to build secure and integrated critical minerals supply chains.

The National Security and Investment Act came into force in January 2022



*Figures may increase as some transactions subject to 'Call-in' during 2022 are yet to reach a final determination by the Secretary of State

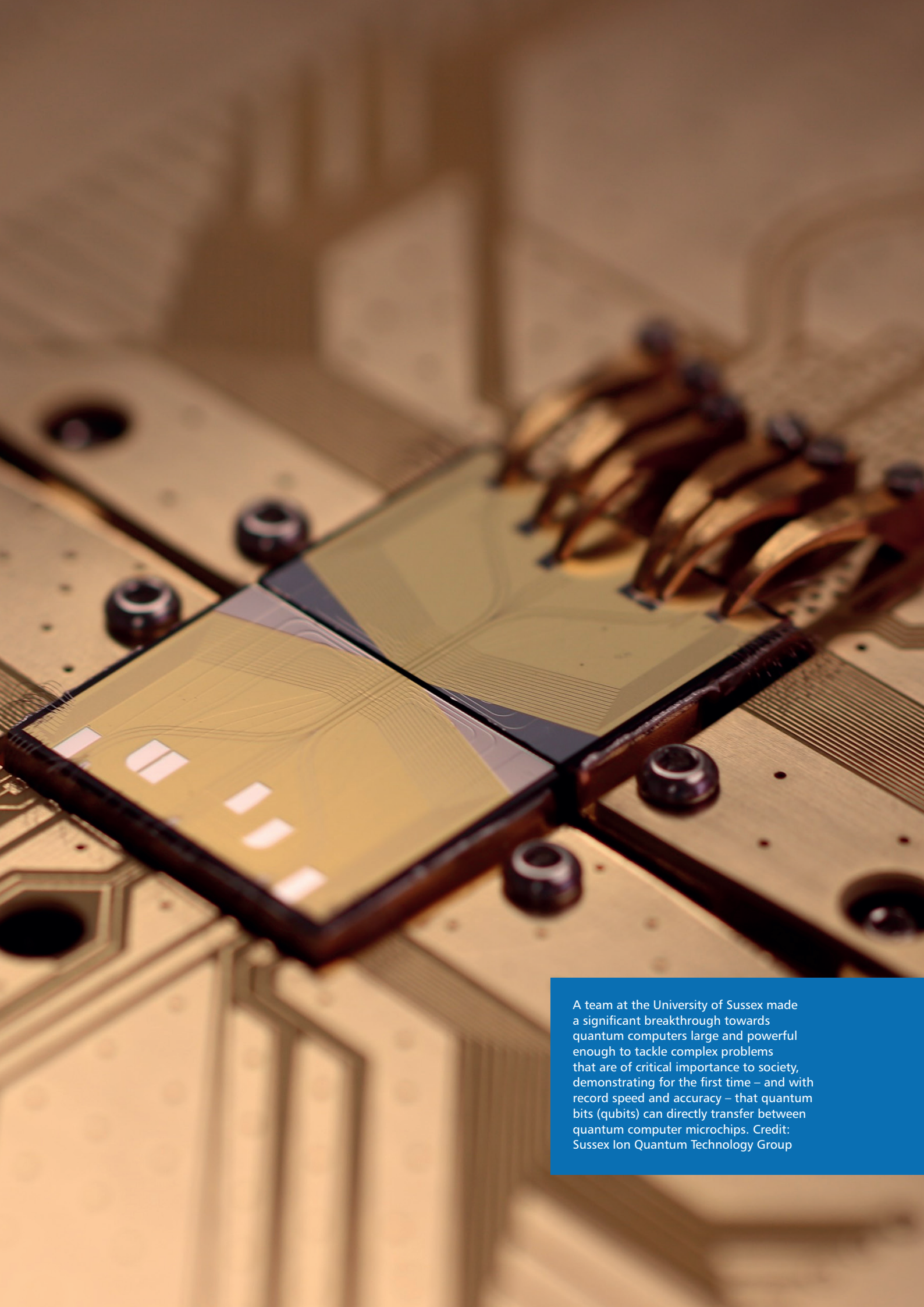
In 2022, using the NSIA powers the Secretary of State:

- Reviewed **c.800** acquisitions, including acquisitions relating to mergers or acquisitions of entities, transfers of intellectual property and purchases of assets;
- 'Called-in' a number of acquisitions to undergo the highest level of due diligence and scrutiny by a wide range of government departments while minimising the burden on businesses; and
- Protected the UK's national security by making **14** Final Orders*, including the complete block or unwinding of **5** acquisitions*. These Final Orders involved acquisitions in areas such as advanced materials, satellite and space technology, communications and energy.

15. In parallel, we will go further in stopping the exploitation of the UK's financial systems and economic openness for domestic and international criminality and corruption. Building on the recently enacted Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act, the upcoming Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill will tackle fraud and money-laundering, and make it harder for organised criminals, kleptocrats and terrorists to use opaque entities to abuse the UK's financial system. We will publish the second Economic Crime Plan (ECP2) in March which will set out our whole-system approach to tackling economic crime, underpinned by significant investment of £400 million from financial year 2022/23 to 2024/25. Under the plan, the upcoming Anti-Corruption Strategy will extend action to close down London as a centre for corrupt elites to launder money and enhance their reputations, as well as scaling up law enforcement capabilities – including the NCA's Combatting Kleptocracy Cell – to detect, investigate and prosecute corruption both domestically and internationally. In addition, the Government is working with law enforcement and industry to take action in line with the upcoming Fraud Strategy to ensure that people and businesses can recognise and avoid fraud, and increase the number of prosecutions.
16. A third area of vulnerability that has come into sharper focus since IR2021 is our **democratic and wider societal resilience**. The Defending Democracy Taskforce is a new, enduring government function with a particular focus on foreign interference. Its purpose is to make electoral processes and infrastructure secure and resilient, ensure elected officials at all levels are protected from physical, cyber and other threats, and counter disinformation efforts aimed at disrupting our national conversation and skewing our democratic processes. As part of this work, it will respond to the need to bridge gaps between the national security establishment and non-traditional partners such as local councils, police forces and global tech companies. In addition, the National Security Bill will create a more challenging operating environment for states who seek to undermine UK interests, our political system and our institutions. The upcoming Anti-Corruption Strategy will detail medium-term efforts to strengthen the UK's institutional integrity, including building the capability of central government to assess the resilience of our democratic institutions to corruption and influence.

17. More broadly, the UK is strengthening our legislative approach to disinformation via the Online Safety Bill, which will ensure that companies subject to safety duties will be required to take action against illegal mis- and disinformation content, including state-sponsored disinformation. The 2021 Online Media Literacy Strategy sets out how the UK will support our people to manage their online lives safely, and the DSIT Counter Disinformation Unit will continue to work with both social media platforms and our allies to improve our understanding of the different techniques used in malicious information operations and our ability to counter them, including through the use of intelligence declassification.
18. We are also committed to protecting our **education sector**. The Higher Education Bill and the National Security Bill both contain provisions to ensure universities have the tools they need to deal with interference and threats to academic freedom. We are taking further action by launching a new and comprehensive review of legislative and other provisions designed to protect our academic sector, to identify what more we could or should be doing.
19. The UK will also strengthen our **protective security**, seeking to address vulnerabilities that expose our people and infrastructure to physical and security risks. In addition to using our existing counter-terrorism and other security capabilities more broadly to disrupt and respond to threats (as set out in pillar two), the new NPSA, set out above, will take on and expand the role currently performed by the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure, which it will replace. In addition, we will publish a draft bill in March 2023 setting out the detail of the new Protect Duty (known as Martyn’s Law) that will make it a legal requirement for owners and operators of public spaces and venues to take measures to keep the public safe from terrorist attacks.
20. As part of the responsible and democratic cyber power agenda, our fourth priority area is **cyber security and resilience** across the UK’s businesses, people, critical national infrastructure and public services. The 2022 National Cyber Strategy anchors this in three strands of effort: understanding the nature of the risk; securing systems to prevent and resist cyber attacks; and minimising the impact of attacks. This is supported by the new National Cyber Advisory Board, which includes leaders from academia, industry and the third sector, and is focused on increasing the national skills base in cyber security, identifying and mitigating cyber vulnerabilities, and protecting digital supply chains. We will also consider new levers to ensure that hostile actors cannot access and exploit bulk data to harm UK interests or secure strategic advantages, balanced against the need for access to data to support our S&T objectives (as set out in pillar four).
21. The ransomware attack against NHS 111 in August 2022 demonstrated the particular urgency of strengthening cyber resilience in the public sector. The 2022 Government Cyber Security Strategy sets out how we will ensure that critical government functions are significantly hardened to cyber attack by 2025, and the wider public sector is resilient to known vulnerabilities and attack methods by 2030. In addition, we will strengthen the Network and Information Systems Regulations 2018, which provide legal measures to boost the cyber security of network and information systems that are critical for the provision of everyday services such as transport, water, energy and health.

22. Given the inherently global nature of the digital world, international partnership is a vital component of cyber resilience. The NCA and the NCSC will continue to work closely with international partners to break the international cybercrime ecosystem, including ransomware efforts. More broadly, by the end of this spending review period we will have committed £100 million of investment since 2021 to building the cyber capacity of countries across the world, including our Ukraine Cyber Programme, which supports the cyber security of the Ukrainian government and its critical national infrastructure.
23. We are undertaking vital efforts to strengthen the **UK border**, to reduce the UK's vulnerability to threats from terrorists, criminals and state actors, prevent illicit goods from reaching the UK, stop illegal migration, and protect the UK's biosecurity. The Government continues to implement the 2025 Border Strategy and the 2022 10-year Drugs Plan; elements of the upcoming Anti-Corruption Strategy and SOC Strategy will also support this effort.
24. The UK border is currently under particular pressure from illegal migration via small boats. In 2022, over 45,000 migrants reached the UK in small boats, primarily from Albania, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Syria; tragically, a number of people who attempted to cross did not reach the UK safely. The Home Secretary has introduced the Illegal Migration Bill to deter attempts to enter the UK by such crossings and ensure those who come to the UK illegally are detained and swiftly removed. We will also disrupt and tackle the criminal gangs and traffickers that prey on human insecurity and compromise the UK border. This will include working upstream:
 - At our external border with France, to increase joint work on border patrol and sharing information, such as expanding the UK-France Joint Intelligence Cell – since its establishment in July 2020, 59 organised criminal groups involved in small boat crossings in France have been dismantled.
 - With partners in Europe to tackle organised criminals through the re-established Calais Group: in 2022, the NCA's joint operational work with Calais Group colleagues resulted in the disruption of an organised crime group supplying around 10% of the small boat market.
 - Through an enhanced partnership with Albania. In December the UK and Albania signed a Joint Communique, including enhanced cooperation on security issues, organised crime and illegal immigration.
25. At home, the 2022 Nationality and Borders Act introduced tougher criminal offences, under which the Crown Prosecution Service has already charged over 50 small boat pilots, with over 35 convictions, since June 2022. The Government has also established a new dedicated Small Boats Command Centre, a single integrated multi-agency structure with 730 additional staff, and doubled funding for the NCA's efforts to tackle the organised criminality behind the use of small boats.



A team at the University of Sussex made a significant breakthrough towards quantum computers large and powerful enough to tackle complex problems that are of critical importance to society, demonstrating for the first time – and with record speed and accuracy – that quantum bits (qubits) can directly transfer between quantum computer microchips. Credit: Sussex Ion Quantum Technology Group

Pillar 4: Generate strategic advantage

1. The UK is a globally-engaged power with a uniquely diverse range of national strengths. We are a G7 economy, the sixth largest in the world by gross domestic product, the seventh largest exporter of goods and services, one of the leading countries for outbound foreign direct investment (FDI) and one of the most attractive for inbound FDI. We are known for our innovation and R&D excellence, and the quality of our universities – 17 of which are in the world’s top 100. We are a permanent member of the UNSC, a founder member of NATO, and a globally engaged defence and security actor currently operating on every continent and in all domains. We are one of the world’s five largest bilateral donors of ODA, valued by partners for our deep expertise. And we have a global cultural reach, through institutions such as the BBC, the British Council and the Premier League, our creative industries, and our extensive people-to-people links.
2. These strengths not only provide the basis of the UK’s prosperity and national wellbeing, but also give us the freedom of action and influence to shape the international environment. As such, they are the foundational building blocks of strategic advantage: the UK’s relative ability to achieve our objectives compared to our competitors.
3. IR2021 considered the concept of advantage in two distinct ways. First, it recognised the centrality of S&T as a source of national power in the decades ahead, and emphasised the need to develop the UK’s competitive edge in S&T, including as a responsible and democratic cyber power. Second, it recognised that allies and partners alike were bringing together a wider range of levers to achieve their objectives, and introduced a new focus on integration at the strategic as well as the operational level in order to respond to this trend and ensure the UK’s future competitiveness.
4. The UK’s understanding of strategic advantage has further evolved in the past two years. For different reasons, both Afghanistan and Ukraine have reinforced the importance of strategic as well as operational integration. Most significantly, the conflict in Ukraine has highlighted the importance of: drawing on multiple areas of competitive edge to compete both asymmetrically and simultaneously across domains; achieving mass in combination with allies and partners; and speed of adaptation and innovation. These factors are likely to be decisive across other arenas as the UK engages in balancing and shaping activity.
5. At the same time, wider developments – China’s significant expansion of military, economic, and technological power, the redistribution of global power away from G7 economies, fragmentation and growing protectionism, and severe pressures on the UK economy – have highlighted that it is becoming both more important and more difficult to maintain the UK’s strengths. S&T is a clear example: despite the progress we have made since IR2021, the UK’s relatively privileged position is under challenge as others also seek to generate advantage. We will need to respond dynamically as the choices made by our competitors shape our own.



The **London Stock Exchange** remains Europe's most active equity market and in 2022 welcomed more international companies than any other major exchange.



The UK is the **seventh largest exporter** of goods and services.



The UK has the world's **fifth largest marine estate** thanks to its Overseas Territories spread across four of the five great oceans in the world.



The British Council operates in over **100 countries**, reaching **650 million** globally in 2021-22.



The UK **ranks fourth** globally in the **Economic Diversification Index**.



The UK **ranked second** behind the USA in terms of estimated **life science inward foreign direct investment (FDI)** capital expenditure in 2021.



The UK has the **second highest GDP** in Europe and **sixth highest** in the world.



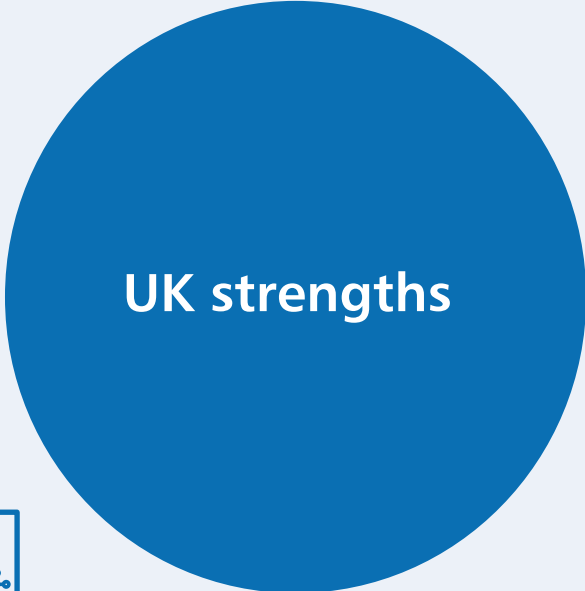
The UK is the **largest exporter** of books in the world.



The **London Metal Exchange** is the **world centre** for the trading of industrial metals. The majority of global non-ferrous metal futures business is transacted on LME platforms.



The **London insurance market** is the **biggest** global commercial and specialty risk market in the world.



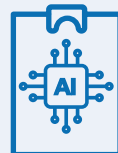
UK strengths



The UK is **ranked fourth** in the global **Cyber Power Index**.



The UK has produced over **120,000 new STEM graduates** in the last five years.



The UK is **ranked third** in the **AI Global Readiness Index**.



The UK is home to **122 tech unicorns**, behind only the US and China for the creation of billion dollar tech companies, and first in Europe.



Ranked as the **joint most attractive** country to young people **in the G20**, in the British Council's 2021 Global Perceptions Survey.



The UK has **four universities in the top 10** and second most of any country in the top 100.



The UK is the **fifth highest** destination for **inbound FDI stocks**.



The UK has increased the number of MOD personnel deployed overseas to **over 4,000**, as part of our **international defence network**.



The UK was **ranked third** globally for **startup funding** in 2022.



The Premier League is broadcast in **188 countries**.



The UK is the **top creator** of **open source software** in Europe (estimated as contributing over £40bn to UK GDP).



The UK has **14 seats** in the governing bodies of **UN specialised agencies** (compared to China's 16, the US's 12, France's 15, and Germany's 13).



The UK is **ranked fourth** in the **Global Innovation Index**.



There are **18,926 UK-based NGOs** spending over **£17bn** improving outcomes around the world.



The UK **ranks third** in the **OECD** for the proportion of **international students** enrolled in tertiary institutions.

Our contribution to global goods



The UK **ranked second** in the G7 and OECD in terms of **defence spending**, having spent **\$68bn** in 2021.



The UK welcomed **152,200 Ukrainian refugees** in 2022 (seventh most in the world).



UK **ranks third** most important country for **investment among global CEOs** in 2023 – one place higher than last year and behind only the US and China.



The UK is **ranked third** in the G7 on **development spending**, as a percentage of GNI in 2021.



The UK has consistently been the **second largest contributor to NATO**, having met NATO's 2% target every year since its introduction in 2006.



The UK has educated a total of **894 students across 70 Defence Strategic Command courses** from **107 countries**, in 2021 and 2022.



The UK is **one of the largest donors** to the World Health Organization, and the largest provider of flexible core voluntary contributions.

6. Building on these lessons, we will now expand and cohere the Government's approach to generating strategic advantage, treating it as a core national mission across all areas of domestic, economic and international policy. This approach has two component parts. First, we will more actively cultivate the UK's foundational strengths, maintaining and extending IR2021's approach to S&T and cyber power. This will require further integration of domestic and international policy, and deepening collaboration with industry, allies and partners. Second, we will update the tools of our statecraft, continuing to evolve and integrate the levers through which the UK translates our strengths into real-world effect. This will require new ways of working and thinking: moving away from binary conceptions of soft and hard power, to networked approaches that are better adapted to the complexity of systemic competition.
7. This effort is mutually reinforcing with the action we will take to address the UK's vulnerabilities under pillar three: advantages deliver the agency we need to strengthen our resilience as a nation; and in turn, a more resilient UK is one in which our core national strengths can thrive.

Cultivating the UK's strengths

8. The UK's overriding priority under this pillar remains **generating strategic advantage through S&T**. We will continue to develop and maintain areas of UK strength. As part of this, we will improve our ability to understand and respond to the intent and capabilities of both allies and adversaries, and to the societal and economic disruption – and new national security risks – resulting from global S&T trends.
9. Since IR2021, the Government has put in place some important structural foundations to support this effort. The new National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) is chaired by the Prime Minister. The UK's new S&T Framework consists of 10 cross-cutting system interventions to create the right ecosystem for S&T to flourish in the UK, which will in turn be a major driver of the UK's future economic growth. This includes measures on skills and talent, investment in R&D, public and private sector financing, regulation and standards, procurement, the communication of clear government priorities, and international collaboration. Delivery of this framework is now underway through an initial raft of projects worth around £500 million in new and existing funding.
10. As part of this work, we have identified five priority technologies crucial for delivering UK objectives, including the cyber power agenda: AI, semiconductors, quantum technologies, future telecommunications and engineering biology. Under the 'own, collaborate, access' model introduced in IR2021, we will ensure the UK has a clear route to assured access for each, a strong voice in influencing their development and use internationally, a managed approach to supply chain risks, and a plan to protect our advantage as we build it. We have already published strategies relating to AI and telecommunications, and will publish strategies for semiconductors and quantum technologies in 2023.
11. In AI in particular, recent developments such as the launch of ChatGPT and the announcement of Google Bard have shown the powerful potential for technologies which are based upon foundation models, including large language models. To ensure the UK is at the forefront of this technology we will establish a new government-industry taskforce to bring together experts and report to the PM and Secretary of State for DSIT. The taskforce will be empowered to advance UK sovereign capability

in foundation models, including large language models, and provide direct advice to ministers. One of the first priorities for the Taskforce will be to apply its deep expertise and understanding of the AI sector, to present a clear mission focused on advancing the UK's AI capability and prioritise options, action and investment designed to benefit our society and economy.

12. Achieving advantage in these areas also requires the UK to secure a leading role in data access and infrastructure, which will be critical to the UK's competitiveness when developing and using digital technologies such as AI, quantum technologies and robotics. The UK will seek to incentivise investment in data-sharing infrastructure, remove barriers to global data access and use, encourage data sets to be made available publicly, and boost individual control of personal data.
13. Equally, where the UK chooses to legislate around new technologies, we will strike the right balance between protecting our people's security and privacy and ensuring that businesses are able to innovate and compete internationally. This approach informs the forthcoming Digital Markets, Competition and Consumer Bill, the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill, and the Online Safety Bill. It also informs our collaboration with allies and partners.
14. Since IR2021, the UK has deepened our S&T partnerships across the globe – with the US, through AUKUS and in the Indo-Pacific more broadly, and through collaboration in international institutions such as the G7, G20, NATO and the International Telecommunication Union. We will continue to make S&T a priority element of our wider bilateral partnerships, in support of shared growth and development and our vision of a future digital and technology order that benefits all. We are also introducing technology envoys and a new Technology Centre of Expertise as part of British Investment Partnerships, which provides access to UK expertise to support sustainable economic growth around the world. The forthcoming International Technology Strategy will provide more detail on our international engagement, including with respect to priority technologies, assuring critical supply chains and shaping global technology standards, regulations and norms.
15. Responsibility for coordinating the next steps on all of these lines of effort will now be assumed by the new Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT), working with the relevant departments and agencies. DSIT's core function will be to position the UK at the forefront of global scientific and technological advancement. It brings together the relevant parts of the former Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the former Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and will incorporate GO-Science and the Office for Science and Technology Strategy. The new Secretary of State will have a permanent seat on the NSC and will deputise for the Prime Minister at NSTC.
16. At the same time, the Government will seek to develop and sustain the wider strengths that allow the UK to compete on the world stage. The UK's ability to forge strong, reciprocal relationships with countries around the world is based on the wide range of areas in which we have identifiable national strengths and a track record of success – in the digital economy, education, legal and financial services, development expertise, the sciences, culture, sport and the arts. All of these areas have the potential to provide us with tools and opportunities that can be leveraged for advantage, and we will take this into account as we make the relevant policy and spending decisions.

17. Above all, the UK's **economic strength** is foundational to our ability to protect and advance our interests at home and overseas. The Government will nurture those key growth sectors in which the UK is competitive and that will contribute to our global influence in the longer-term, including digital technology, life sciences, green industries – such as clean technologies, science, manufacturing and finance – as well as the creative industries and advanced manufacturing. We will facilitate growth in these industries by investing in relevant skills and economic infrastructure, supporting research and innovative firms, and creating the right environment for business investment. The new Department for Business and Trade will bring together the Government's business and trade operations to support investment, unlock exports, and open up new markets for British business.
18. As an important element of this agenda, the Government has committed to making the UK the world's first net zero financial centre – supporting UK financial institutions and listed companies to publish high-quality net zero transition plans. The Rt Hon Chris Skidmore MP's independent net zero review assesses that the British Energy Security Strategy and Net Zero Strategy provide the right pathway and policy framework for welcoming green investment. UK net zero policies are expected to leverage up to £100 billion of private investment and support up to 480,000 British jobs by 2030. The activity they drive will also support our international objectives: our investment partnerships with the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar on renewables and energy R&D, for example, allow us to deepen these relationships while supporting the UK's future energy security.
19. The Government will also continue to protect and promote the soft and cultural power that the UK has internationally. The UK will do more to bring soft power into its broader foreign policy approach, through the Commonwealth and other institutions. The Government will also work with the BBC to support the BBC World Service as a trusted source of news internationally, ensuring an efficient and modern World Service that meets the needs of its audiences and brings value to the licence fee payer and the UK. As an outcome of IR2023, we will provide £20 million of additional funding to the BBC World Service – £10 million in each of the next two financial years, 2023/24 and 2024/25 – protecting all 42 language services overseas.

Updating our statecraft for systemic competition

20. As the international environment evolves, so must the UK's approach to the exercise of statecraft, leveraging our national strengths to protect and advance our interests. The complexity of a highly competitive, multipolar era requires us to use a broader range of tools in pursuit of our aims: updating and adapting our capabilities for the new context, and improving how we apply them in an integrated manner, within government and alongside allies and partners.
21. The action we will take to strengthen and update the UK's defence, national security, development, economic and information capabilities – as set out earlier in the strategic framework – are all important elements of this effort. In addition, we will:
 - Renew and re-skill our core **diplomatic capability**, ensuring it can understand and meet the challenges of an era of systemic competition. The UK's diplomats must pursue British interests in a much higher risk environment than has been the case for several decades, and they need the expertise to match this reality. An updated skills mix across the foreign policy workforce across government should reflect priorities from across the four pillars of this framework, including in due course: a

new strategic affairs specialism; rebalanced geographic specialisms; and an increased focus on nuclear and non-nuclear deterrence, emerging and disruptive technologies, regulatory diplomacy, and resilience and security. As set out above, we will double funding to develop China capabilities across government.

- Continue developing the capabilities and necessary powers of our **intelligence agencies**, to support both covert and overt activity. We will base more staff overseas to enhance our cooperation with partners – not just in the Five Eyes – to understand and respond to the challenges posed by the rapidly changing technological and geopolitical environment. We are also developing our horizon-scanning capabilities and investing in more open partnerships with the technology sector. In expanding our intelligence agencies’ presence in the north-west of England – by 2030 a third of GCHQ staff will be based in the region – we are drawing on an outstanding ecosystem of public, private and academic excellence and making full use of our country’s talents.
- Establish a new **open-source intelligence (OSINT)** hub to upgrade and better integrate the Government’s capability to collect and analyse publicly and commercially available information. We will invest in human and technical capabilities, including AI and data science, to ensure our decision making is driven by the most accurate and wide-ranging data available. In part, it will build on the work of the new National Situation Centre, which has used data analysis and insights from across and beyond government to support the response to events including Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, extreme heat and industrial action. The new Information and Data Exchange (INDEX) digital service will further accelerate data sharing and analysis. We will also harness new partnerships with the private sector, think tanks, and academia, drawing on their skills, expertise and innovation.
- Ensure our national security practitioners more widely are trained in statecraft and other essential skills. Through the **College for National Security (CfNS)** – an IR2021 commitment – we are launching and delivering the first UK National Security Curriculum, which will draw on the expertise of Parliament, business, industry, academia and allies. We will now commit £2 million in each of the next two financial years to embed the CfNS in our national security architecture.



Ukrainian-themed wreath at
10 Downing Street on 24 February
2023, marking one year since
Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
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