

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC DEFENCE AND SECURITY REVIEW

Summary

The 2010 National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review set out a comprehensive and adaptable approach to tackling risks in an uncertain world. The documents included for the first time a National Security Risk Assessment which set out the top tier risks that were seen to face the UK. But the essence of the Strategy was to recognise that the world was uncertain, that we could not foresee all the risks and challenges we would face, and to establish an adaptable approach in order to preserve the UK's security whatever the challenges.

Since 2010, there have been significant shifts in the security environment with developments such as the Arab Spring, Russia's action in Ukraine, the emergence of ISIL, and the spread of the Ebola virus. More positive developments have included progress on nuclear security talks, growing opportunities for international trade and investment, and the successful transitions of Presidential power in Afghanistan and of security responsibility to the Afghan National Security Force, with UK training and mentoring support. Developments over the period reinforce the importance of the adaptable posture adopted in 2010 and the establishment of the National Security Council. While we did not predict all these developments, we have been able to respond to them quickly and effectively, including through the use of our diplomatic network, the expertise of our intelligence and law enforcement agencies, and the use of our military strength. Effective cooperation with friends and allies, in the economic and military spheres, has also been vital.

This Annual Report to Parliament sets out how the Government has sought to meet the challenges of the past year. It also summarises further progress in implementing cross-cutting tasks and priority commitments since the last Annual Report, and wider progress since 2010.

In the past year, the Government has worked to tackle a variety of risks. Hosting the 2014 NATO Summit, we have been at the forefront of delivering commitments to increased defence spending among NATO members, agreeing a rapid reaction force, keeping up pressure on Russia over its intervention in Ukraine, and mobilising international support against ISIL. We are taking measures to support the Ukrainian Government and to reassure regional NATO Allies of our commitment to the alliance.

Further instability and conflict overseas have led to a rise in the level of threat to the UK from international terrorism. We have continued to provide the necessary response powers and capabilities; are working to bring forward new Counter-Terrorism legislation; and are making available an additional £130 million including new funding to enhance our ability to monitor and disrupt self-starting terrorists. We have also introduced to Parliament the new Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill. The Bill contains important new powers to help fill the gaps in our armoury in tackling the increased threat that we face. The provisions in the Bill will strengthen our counter-terrorism powers to prevent travel; stop suspects returning unless they do so on our terms; relocate individuals within the UK to help break their links with extremist networks; and strengthen our border and aviation security.

The UK is also playing a leading role in international efforts to address the Ebola virus threat. We have committed £230 million towards this and successfully led work to scale up to €1 billion the commitment of the EU and its Member States.

Focusing more specifically on challenges within the UK, the Government has continued to make good progress on Defence transformation in force structures, equipment, personnel, bases, efficiency and reform. We have announced this year a £1.1 billion investment programme including £800 million for Intelligence and Surveillance equipment for the Armed Forces. The Successor Deterrent programme is on track to deliver an operational capability from 2028. 2016 will see the delivery of our first production Lightning II test and evaluation aircraft enabling the first front-line squadron to become operational by 2019. The first of three Rivet Joint signals intelligence aircraft was deployed to support operations in Afghanistan this year well ahead of schedule. Along with procurement of 589 multi-role Scout armoured vehicles, nine Voyager aircraft, the A400M Atlas transport aircraft and new Chinook helicopters, these assets will significantly enhance our Armed Forces' capabilities.

A sustained programme is transforming our understanding of cyber threats and our defences against them. The Government has continued to strengthen measures to address serious and organised crime including illegal immigration, achieving significant numbers of disruptions and convictions; to maintain communications data and interception capabilities; and to manage risks posed by returning foreign fighters.

Government has also worked to enhance crisis management capabilities through joint emergency services inter-operability training and the new ResilienceDirect secure web-based information-sharing service; to make contingency plans for risk of disruption to satellite communications; to monitor risks of disruption to oil and gas supplies; and to safeguard Falkland Islanders' rights to self-determination.

The relentless evolution of risks and threats over the past year re-emphasises the need for effective resilience and preparedness if we are collectively to manage the diversity and unpredictability of challenges to national security. But marked progress has been made since 2010 in delivering the adaptable posture, with 94% of all commitments broadly on track or delivered.

Broader experience over the last four years testifies to the continuing value of sustained and properly coordinated efforts across the whole of government and across sectors, nationally and internationally, both to ensure a secure and resilient UK and to shape a stable world. The next National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review will be able to build on this experience.

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Introduction

1. This fourth Annual Report to Parliament on the implementation of the 2010 National Security Strategy and of the Strategic Defence and Security Review is the last in the current Parliament. It outlines achievements to date.
2. Against a backdrop of longer term global security trends, reflecting the many uncertainties faced by the country both at home and overseas, this report summarises risks materialising in the past year and steps taken by the Government to address them. An annex then details progress during the year with the commitments made in 2010, noting some longer term achievements and reflections on the experience. The report also takes account of comments made by the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy on the 2013 Annual Report.
3. The Government has continued to make good progress in implementing the commitments made in 2010. Many have now been delivered. Some have a longer horizon, especially related to the delivery of the Ministry of Defence's Future Force 2020. Effective delivery continues to require a sustained and properly coordinated focus across the whole of Government and across sectors, both nationally and internationally.

The longer term global security context

4. The 2010 National Security Strategy assessed the evolving international context as one of enduring uncertainty, presenting the UK with new and unforeseen threats and opportunities. Developments over the last four years, and their various consequences, have proven that assessment correct.
5. The Arab Spring in the Middle East and North Africa created hope for reform, yet in many places resulted in disappointment and conflict. The NATO-led intervention in Libya halted the Qadhafi regime's atrocities; but hopes for stabilisation have been frustrated by resurgent conflict. The Assad regime's brutal suppression of peaceful protests plunged Syria into bloody civil war in which the regime has used chemical weapons against its own citizens.
6. The regime's brutality created the conditions that have allowed ISIL to flourish. ISIL has seized territory across Syria and Iraq, terrorising innocent populations of all faiths and ethnicities and threatening the region and beyond. The resulting rise in level of terrorist threat to the UK from "Substantial" to "Severe" has placed further pressure on limited resources. Al Qa'ida, affiliated partners and wider terrorists groups continue to target Governments and vulnerable communities, including in Mali, Yemen and Nigeria, and have committed large-scale atrocities in Kenya and Algeria.
7. Renewed conflict between Hamas and Israel in Gaza left thousands dead. North Africa and the Levant remain vulnerable to instability, with severe challenges

remaining in Libya. The continuing conflict in Syria is spreading disorder, notably to Iraq. Russia has challenged the fundamental principles of international order by its illegal annexing of Crimea and direct military subversion in eastern Ukraine. Tensions in the South and East China Seas have grown over the past four years.

8. The progress of nuclear talks with Iran since 2013, including a further extension to the Geneva agreement until summer 2015, has provided some hope for a resolution to this long-running challenge, with potential benefits for the security of the whole region. African countries cooperating under the auspices of the African Union have made substantial progress in stabilising Somalia, with help from western partners; and the UK has worked actively with Allies and Partners over the past four years to respond to the challenges and contribute to international peace and security.
9. Following a slower than expected recovery after the global financial crisis, the world economy is now expected to see more differentiation in growth both within and across advanced and emerging economies. The UK has the fastest growing major advanced economy in the world. The United States and Canada also appear to be strengthening; but the euro area remains weak and at risk of a more sustained slowdown. Emerging markets are also expected to slow down and diverge in performance. Some (mainly in Asia) are expected to see continued strong growth; while others including Brazil, Russia, Turkey and South Africa, are expected to slow down due to both cyclical and structural factors. In addition, geopolitical tensions appear to have increased compared to a year ago, including persistent security issues in Syria/Iraq and Ukraine.
10. The Ebola outbreak in West Africa demonstrates the global risk posed by highly contagious diseases – both directly, in terms of public health, and indirectly, in terms of their wider social and economic impacts. As of 8th December, the Ebola virus had claimed the lives of 6,387 people in West Africa and this figure is expected to continue to rise over the coming weeks. International spread on a significant scale would have even more devastating consequences.

Materialising risks and responses in the past year

11. The National Security Strategy classified major risks into three tiers. Recognising their diversity and mutability, it aimed to prevent and mitigate them using all the instruments of the adaptable posture detailed in the Strategic Defence and Security Review. This section summarises risks materialising over the past year and how the Government has acted to tackle them. Resilience in the face of materialising risks, their successful mitigation and their prevention together testify to the continuing value of a risk-based approach to national security.

Tier one

- **International terrorism affecting the UK or its interests, including a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear attack by terrorists; and / or a significant increase in the levels of terrorism relating to Northern Ireland.**
12. In August 2014, the threat to the UK from international terrorism was raised from “Substantial” to “Severe”, meaning an attack is highly likely and could occur without warning. This increase in threat level is related to developments in Syria and Iraq, where terrorist groups are planning attacks against the West. Some of these are likely to involve foreign fighters who have travelled from the UK and Europe. We continue to provide the police and security and intelligence agencies with the powers and capabilities they need to respond to the changing threat, including measures to address the current threat emanating from Syria and Iraq. In cooperation with close allies and partners, we are playing an active role in the international coalition against ISIL, including through the UN and by the action of our Armed Forces in support of Iraqi Security Forces fighting ISIL on the ground (see also paragraphs 127-139).
13. The threat from Northern Ireland-Related Terrorism remains at “Severe” in Northern Ireland and “Moderate” in Great Britain’. As a direct result of efforts by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and MI5, there have been major disruptions, arrests and convictions as well as seizures of arms and Improvised Explosive Device components, both north and south of the border, which have impeded violent dissident republican activity. Northern Ireland continues, however, to face a serious terrorist threat from groups possessing both lethal intent and capability. As an illustration of the threat, examination of a property near the border in October led to the discovery of half a ton of fertilizer, six pipe bombs, a suspected firearm and 100 rounds of ammunition.
- **Hostile attacks upon UK cyber space by other states and large scale cyber-crime.**
14. Sophisticated and targeted cyber attacks continue to cost the UK economy several billion pounds per year and pose a significant national security threat. In response, a sustained National Cyber Security Programme, now in its fourth year of implementation, is transforming our understanding of the cyber threat and improving the UK’s cyber defences in parallel with greater investment from the private sector. Across government, initiatives are in place to build up the UK’s sovereign capability to detect and defeat high-end threats, and support law enforcement in fighting cyber-crime. There are also measures to boost business and public awareness of the issue, so that firms and individuals are doing what they can to protect themselves; increase the supply of skilled professionals needed to improve UK cyber defences across public and private sectors; and work with international partners to build capacity, bear down on havens for cyber-crime such as the “dark web”, and establish norms of behaviour in cyber space. The Government reports annually to Parliament on progress in delivering its Cyber Security Strategy: the latest report was published on 11th December.

- **A major accident or natural hazard which requires a national response, such as severe coastal flooding affecting three or more regions of the UK, or an influenza pandemic.**

Human health

15. The Ebola outbreak has drawn upon many of the same requirements and capabilities that would be needed in response to an influenza pandemic, particularly the need for the international effort to be concerted and coordinated. The UK has been playing a prominent role on the international stage and is leading the international effort in Sierra Leone. This has focused on greatly enhancing Ebola treatment centre capacity in-country, supporting burial teams and controlling transmission within communities through quick isolation of suspected cases. The Government has also been prominent in developing the prospects from an eventual Ebola vaccine, as well as taking measures to protect the population of the UK. The scale of the overall task is immense.
16. The Government's response is being delivered through several government departments, with overall coordination provided by the Cabinet Office; and leadership of the response in Sierra Leone by DFID. In the UK we have robust measures in place, including screening, and we have tested our emergency response. Arrangements are also in place to coordinate those aspects of the UK response which are devolved. UK diplomacy, including our Posts overseas, has taken a lead in mobilising the international response to Ebola, galvanising international support both for the UK's response in Sierra Leone and for the wider regional response. Specialist knowledge and experience within Government, the military and from across the UK emergency response community are playing a key role in the region and in managing the complex programme within Government. As part of the UK's response, DFID has established a "Beyond Ebola" team in Sierra Leone which is looking at the implications of the crisis for the UK's existing development programmes. The team is identifying opportunities for strengthening long-term impact, for instance on health systems, food security and job creation. Lessons from responding more quickly to a crisis of this scale and complexity will need to be identified to inform preparedness for health emergencies here and abroad.
17. Domestically, the risk to the public remains low. However, the Chief Medical Officer for England has estimated that a handful of Ebola cases are likely to reach the UK over the next three months. There are robust systems in the UK for managing infectious diseases when they arise, supported by a wide range of experts. Responsibility for health matters is devolved to the Scottish and Welsh Governments and the Northern Ireland Executive. All four nations including England have plans in place to identify and promptly treat patients; and there are robust prevention measures to contain infection, including specialist units if needed. Furthermore, all four are closely coordinating their preparations to respond to an incident to ensure that arrangements across the UK are coherent. In England, the response measures were tested in a major exercise conducted on 11th October 2014. The exercise demonstrated that the system and associated plans for managing the disease were robust, well-developed and well-tested. The arrangements are being tested in the devolved administrations.

18. The Government continues to support the cross-government pandemic influenza programme, and closely monitors influenza and other infectious diseases across the globe including Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Corona Virus (MERS-CoV). Influenza pandemic risk is a central component in the UK's national exercise programme, enabling lessons to help shape the policies needed to develop an effective response so that preparedness can be accurately gauged.

Animal Health

19. In November, a case of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (H5N8) was discovered on a farm in East Yorkshire. This is a notifiable disease primarily due to the economic impact resulting from a high mortality rate among affected birds and restrictions on trade. It is also zoonotic and could, in rare cases, be transmissible to humans – particularly those in very close contact with infected live poultry. However, the risk to public health in the UK, either by transmission or through the food chain, is judged to be very low. The Government swiftly activated its comprehensive plans for responding to this outbreak. At the time of writing, the outbreak has been brought under control and no new cases have been identified. It is likely, however, that the outbreak originated in migrating wild birds so a further outbreak is possible.

20. Variants of the avian influenza virus continue to be recorded in other areas of the world, including highly pathogenic H7N9 in China. The virus is not currently transmissible among mammals. A virus which is both highly transmissible and potentially fatal to humans remains possible.

Severe winter weather

21. From late 2013 and through the winter in early 2014, the UK was affected by an exceptional run of winter storms, which carried with them large amounts of rain and led to very serious flooding across southern England. With catchments in most areas saturated by mid-December, the full range of flood manifestations – tidal, surface, river and ground water – were felt over the ensuing seven to eight weeks, with substantial effects on individuals, businesses and infrastructure.

22. No single storm was exceptional but storm continuity and persistence were unusual. England and Wales saw one of the most sustained periods of winter rainfall in at least 248 years. In December and January, total rainfall exceeded 370 mm for the south-east and central southern England region - the wettest such period since 1910. The Thames, recorded some of the highest flow rates ever measured and remained exceptionally high for longer than in any previous flood episode since 1883. In January 2014, the Thames Barrier was raised on 13 consecutive occasions to protect people and property as high fluvial flows and high spring tides coincided. Rainfall well above average continued throughout January, giving little respite for areas already affected by flooding especially in southern England and notably in the Thames Valley and Somerset.

23. Government's response was robust. In total 40 ministerial COBR meetings were held during January and February to coordinate the national response to flooding

of over 8,300 homes and over 4,300 businesses. The Armed Forces supported the UK civil authorities in providing flood relief across the country. Existing flood defences helped to protect more than an estimated 1.3 million properties. To date, the Government has committed more than £565 million in flood recovery support funding through schemes to support needs ranging from repair of coastal defence assets to support for local authorities, businesses and individuals. Ministers were heavily involved: 11 ministerial flood representatives supported the Government's flood response and recovery efforts in different areas of the UK. By the end of August, over 90% of flood and coastal erosion risk management projects had been completed, with others planned or under way.

- **An international military crisis between states, drawing in the UK, and its allies as well as other states and non-state actors.**

24. The risk posed to the UK's interests by an international military crisis remains. Although not a state, the activities of ISIL in Iraq and Syria threaten both regional and international security. Working closely with international partners, the Government is pursuing a long-term comprehensive strategy to degrade ISIL and counter its poisonous ideology, in order to minimise the threat to UK security and UK interests in the region.

25. In addition to providing UK humanitarian aid to alleviate the suffering of those displaced by ISIL's violence, the Government is working to: disrupt attack-planning against the UK and our interests; counter ISIL's propaganda; isolate ISIL by supporting inclusive political governance that can reach out to all communities in Iraq and Syria; strengthen those moderate forces fighting ISIL on the ground; cut off ISIL's access to funds and fighters; help strengthen the resilience of neighbouring countries; and bring the widest possible coalition of countries together to degrade ISIL through diplomatic engagement. Following the debate in Parliament on 26th September, the UK's response extended to include UK air strikes in Iraq to support local security forces fighting ISIL on the ground; and in October, the Defence Secretary confirmed that UK aircraft would also begin surveillance missions over Syria to gather intelligence. A sustained effort across all these elements will be needed in order to defeat ISIL and its violent ideology. Government's response to Iraq, Syria and ISIL is addressed in more detail in paragraphs 127-139.

26. Russia's illegal activities in Ukraine are addressed in paragraphs 40-41 and 115-120.

Tier two

- **An attack on the UK or its Overseas Territories by another state or proxy using chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) weapons.**

27. There has been no attack on the UK or its Overseas Territories by another state or proxy using CBRN weapons. Over the past year, the Government has worked hard in international fora and with our allies and partners to tackle the risks of CBRN proliferation, as paragraphs 91-93 of this report describe.

- **Risk of major instability, insurgency or civil war overseas which creates an environment that terrorists can exploit to threaten the UK.**

28. Rising instability and conflict in the Syria and Iraq region have directly affected UK national security, and prompted the increase to the UK threat level from international terrorism from “Substantial” to “Severe” (see also paragraph 12). Such ungoverned spaces, often as a consequence of conflict, directly benefit terrorist groups, allowing for the free movement of weapons and people, and safe locations in which to plan and train for further attacks, potentially against the UK itself. Instability in other areas of the Middle East, North Africa, the Sahel and South Asia necessarily increases the threat to UK interests.

- **A significant increase in the level of organised crime affecting the UK.**

29. The level of serious and organised crime affecting the UK and its interests remains high. The National Crime Agency’s (NCA) first National Strategic Assessment, published in May 2014, paints the most complete picture yet of this threat and highlights areas of particular concern: on-line sexual exploitation of children, including the live-streaming of abuse; the growing volume of cyber-crime and the targeted compromise by criminals of UK networked systems; money-laundering; fraud against the public sector; organised illegal immigration; and new sources and routes for illegal drugs. The National Strategic Assessment estimates that over 5,300 active organised crime groups, comprising more than 36,600 individuals, are operating against the UK.

30. HMG has continued to strengthen the response to these and other threats, following October 2013’s launch of both the NCA and a new cross-government Serious and Organised Crime Strategy. We are delivering a wide range of reforms, improving law enforcement capabilities and fostering closer local partnerships. These steps are having real impact. The last 12 months have seen numerous successful operations to disrupt and prosecute serious and organised criminals, encompassing effective action to tackle: modern slavery and human trafficking; drug trafficking and distribution; economic crime; under Operation NOTARISE, the arrest of more than 660 people suspected of sharing child sexual abuse imagery over the internet; and the disruption of computer malware responsible for global losses of hundreds of millions of pounds. In its first year, the NCA led and coordinated activity resulting in over 920 disruptions against serious and organised criminals, the arrests of 2,048 people in the UK and 1,181 overseas, and 415 convictions.

- **Severe disruption to information received, transmitted or collected by satellites, possibly as the result of a deliberate attack by another state.**

31. Disruption to information received, transmitted or collected by satellites can result from natural events, specifically severe space weather. This has been relatively quiet during 2014, with no significant Earth-directed events and no known impacts on satellite communications systems; but these events clearly can and do occur: a solar storm emitted from the far-side of the Sun on 1st September affected a science-mission satellite.

32. The Government continues to put in place contingency plans both locally and nationally: raising awareness of this risk amongst local responders; encouraging them to consider appropriate response measures in situations where satellite communications or Global Navigation Satellite System applications are lost; and establishing a cross-government working group dedicated to understanding space weather and its impacts so as to ensure better preparedness for response.
33. Further, monitoring and responding to the persistent eruption at Bardarbunga volcano in Iceland has helped to validate many of the new communications channels introduced since the aviation industry was disrupted by the 2010 Iceland eruption. This has resulted in detection of low levels of volcanic gases in Northern Ireland and Scotland. Met Office-led modelling of potential dispersal of gas and particulates has helped to improve assessment of potential effects of a severe, gas-rich volcanic eruption on the UK. Additional capabilities have also been delivered, with an improved framework for flying in areas of predicted volcanic ash; a specialist aircraft for sampling ash; and government funding to improve the network used for monitoring volcanic ash.

Tier three

- **A large scale conventional military attack on the UK by another state (not involving the use of CBRN weapons) resulting in fatalities and damage to infrastructure within the UK.**
34. There has been no large scale conventional attack on the UK by another state. As later sections of this report describe (see paragraphs 169-184), the Government has worked closely with Allies and partners to sustain the international cooperation and alliances and institutions, such as NATO, which underpin our national security.
- **A significant increase in the level of terrorists, organised criminals, illegal immigrants and illicit goods trying to cross the UK border to enter the UK.**
35. Immigration crime still poses a significant threat to the UK. As the NCA's 2014 National Strategic Assessment suggests, organised criminals continue to facilitate illegal immigration into the UK by air, land and sea. Cross-border human trafficking persists as a threat for the UK. Organised criminals smuggle varied illicit commodities across UK borders using fast parcel delivery, air freight, container traffic and roll-on/roll-off ferry services. Opiates from Afghanistan and Pakistan, cocaine from South America, and new psychoactive substances from the Far East are of particular concern. Firearms, parts and ammunition can be obtained via the internet and imported into the UK from the United States, China and various European countries using parcel delivery services. Other illegal commodities, including endangered species, are frequently seized at the border (e.g. rhino horn, elephant ivory, reptiles and birds of prey). On foreign fighters, see paragraphs 12 and 96-97. The Government has been working to ensure that the powers and capabilities needed to tackle these varied threats are available to the law enforcement, security and intelligence agencies (see paragraphs 85-90 and 101-104).

- **Disruption to oil or gas supplies to the UK, or price instability, as a result of war, accident, major political upheaval or deliberate manipulation of supply by producers.**

36. Over the last year, oil prices (Brent) peaked at \$115 per barrel in June and fell to a low of \$66 per barrel in December 2014 – the lowest in several years. No event has led to physical disruption at a scale requiring coordinated international stock release.

37. The Government is monitoring risk of disruption to gas supplies from Russia through Ukraine into the EU. The UK receives less than 1% of its gas from Russia. On the 7th July, the EU Commission asked EU Member States to complete a Stress Test Report analysing the impact on their country of scenarios with gas supplies disrupted by rising tensions between Russia and Ukraine. The Government has published the UK Stress Test summary findings in the Autumn Statutory Security of Supply Report (see http://ec.europa.eu/energy/stress_tests_en.htm). The Commission has produced an EU-wide report, findings of which were presented to the EU Council in October.

- **A major release of radioactive material from a civil nuclear site within the UK which affects one or more regions.**

38. There has been no major release of radioactive material.

- **A conventional attack by a state on another NATO or EU member to which the UK would have to respond.**

39. The threat of conventional attack on a NATO or EU Member stands, but remains unlikely. The risk is greater that the UK could be asked to respond conventionally to an unconventional attack or an attack made by a non-state actor.

40. The development of the crisis in Ukraine over the last nine months, through the illegal annexation of Crimea and aggressive cross-border Russian activity in the east of the country, represents a significant challenge to European security (see also paragraphs 115-120). Several EU and NATO Members (especially those with significant Russian-speaking populations, or Russian, Ukrainian or Black Sea borders) remain concerned about conventional Russian interventions, ambiguous attacks or border destabilisation either on their own territory or flowing over from Ukraine. Additionally, the UK has experienced a significant increase in incursions into its airspace by Russian aircraft in the past year.

41. EU and NATO Members continue to exert pressure on Russia to de-escalate the situation in Ukraine principally through sanctions, and to provide reassurance to Allies and advisory support to Ukraine. Four Trust Funds for Ukraine were launched at the recent Wales NATO Summit. Decisions at the Summit, including the creation of a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force, reaffirm NATO's strong commitment to collective defence and provide the assurances sought by concerned Allies.

42. ISIL has seized control of territory across Syria and Iraq. Its declared ambition to create a “caliphate” has already led to attacks in Lebanon and right up to the Turkish border. ISIL poses a significant terrorist threat bordering a NATO member. A substantial attack on the territory of a NATO Ally could lead NATO Allies to invoke the collective defence clause (Article 5) of the North Atlantic Treaty.

- **An attack on a UK overseas territory as the result of a sovereignty dispute or a wider regional conflict.**

43. Argentina continues to challenge UK sovereignty of the Falkland Islands through bilateral and multilateral diplomatic activity and by enforcing practical measures designed to isolate the Islands in the Latin American region and to cause economic damage. Government continues to safeguard the Islanders’ rights to self-determination and freedom to develop a strong economy. There has been no military escalation, nor any substantial change to the UK’s defensive posture on the Falklands since the conflict in 1982.

- **Short to medium term disruption to international supplies of resources (e.g. food, minerals) essential to the UK.**

44. There were no short-to-medium term disruptions to international supplies affecting the UK.

Snowden

45. As the Heads of the Agencies made clear at their public evidence session in front of the Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC) in November 2013, the unauthorised disclosure of intelligence material by Edward Snowden and the wide coverage of this issue in the media have caused real damage to UK national security interests. Sir John Sawers said: “the leaks from Snowden have been very damaging. They have put our operations at risk”; and Sir Iain Lobban remarked: “The cumulative effect of the media coverage, the global media coverage, will make the job that we have far, far harder for years to come”.

46. This coverage raised questions about the lawfulness of agencies’ activities, subsequently addressed by independent bodies including the ISC and the Interception of Communications Commissioner. The Interception Commissioner’s 2013 Report made clear that UK Agencies operate entirely properly within the current framework, and also that the law – including the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 Part 1 Chapter 1 – is technology neutral and remains fit for purpose. Nevertheless, the Government remains committed to ensuring that law enforcement and intelligence agencies have the powers they need to investigate crime in cyber space, protect the public and ensure national security. The Government has made clear that these issues should be addressed in the next Parliament, taking account of current reviews including the ISC’s Privacy and Security Inquiry, the Royal United Services Institute’s review of data gathering by the agencies, and David Anderson QC’s Investigatory Powers Review.

Overall implementation of SDSR commitments

47. As Figure 1 below illustrates, delivery of the majority of Strategic Defence and Security Review commitments remains strong with 94% broadly on track: 37% have been completed (28% one year ago); 30% are fully on track (versus 33%); and 27% satisfactory (versus 33%). As in 2013, however, about 6% remain problematic. Significant progress has therefore been made; but challenges remain for reasons including technical, resource, legislative, and wider international relations issues.

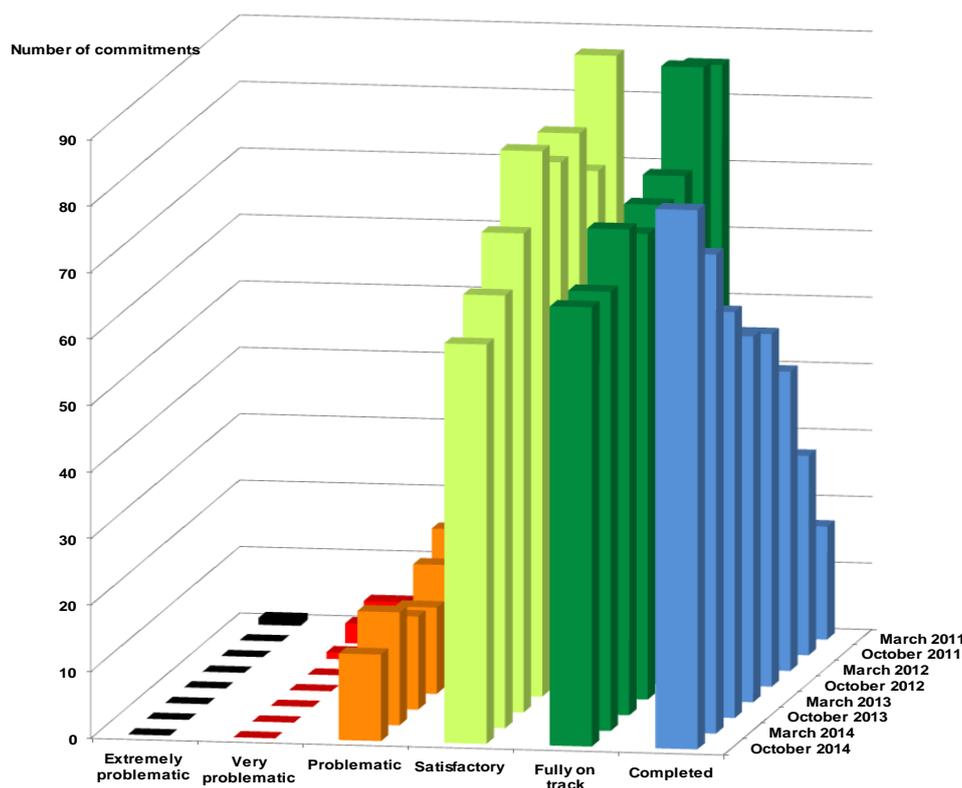


Figure 1. Overall implementation of commitments since October 2010.

48. Annex A to this Report details progress over the past year with the eight cross-cutting National Security Tasks and Defence Transformation, focusing on the central priorities

Conclusion

49. Over the past year, all four Tier 1 risks of the National Security Risk Assessment, and several Tier 2 and Tier 3 risks, have materialised to varying degrees, emphasising the importance of the adaptable posture to which we committed in the Strategic Defence and Security Review. Some risks are inter-connected. This overview illustrates the relentless evolution of risks and threats, and the continuing need for resilience and readiness in the face of such varied and unpredictable national security challenges.

50. As documented in the Annex to this Report, broader experience over the past year, and since 2010, testifies to the continuing value of sustained and properly coordinated efforts nationally and internationally in pursuit of the Government's major strategic objectives overseen by regular meetings of the National Security Council. These objectives have been to ensure a secure and resilient UK and to shape a stable world, using all available knowledge and instruments of power. Our experience since 2010 will inform preparatory work towards the next National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review.

ANNEX A

National Security Strategy core objectives: To ensure a secure and resilient UK by protecting our people, economy, infrastructure, territory and way of life from all major risks that can affect us directly; and to shape a stable world by acting to reduce the likelihood of risks affecting the UK or British interests overseas, and applying our instruments of power and influence to shape the global environment.							
	Extremely problematic	Very problematic	Problematic	Satisfactory	Fully on track	Completed	
Task 1: To identify and monitor national security risks and opportunities.			1	5	2	4	12
1a. A coordinated approach to early warning and horizon scanning				1		1	2
1b. Strategic intelligence on potential threats to national security and opportunities for the UK to act						1	1
1c. Coordinated analysis and assessment of the highest priorities				1	2	1	4
1d. Investment in technologies to support the gathering of communications data vital for national security and law enforcement			1				1
1e. Intelligence assets to support the core military, diplomatic and domestic security and resilience requirements set out below, and our economic prosperity				3	0	1	4
Task 2: Tackle at root the causes of instability.			0	0	2	7	9
2a. An effective international development programme making the optimal contribution to national security within its overall objective of poverty reduction, with the Department for International Development focusing significantly more effort on priority national security and fragile states					1		1
2b. Civilian and military stabilisation capabilities that can be deployed early together to help countries avoid crisis or deal with conflict					1	4	5
2c. Targeted programmes in the UK, and in countries posing the greatest threat to the UK, to stop people becoming terrorists						3	3
Task 3: Exert influence to exploit opportunities and manage risks.			0	8	6	4	18
3a. A Diplomatic Service that supports our key multilateral and bilateral relationships and the obligations that come from our status as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and a leading member of NATO, the EU and other international organisations				4	1		5
3b. A Foreign and Commonwealth Office-led global overseas network that focuses on safeguarding the UK's national security, building its prosperity, and supporting UK nationals around the world				2	1	1	4
3c. Coordinated cross-government effort overseas to build the capacity of priority national security and fragile states to take increasing responsibility for their own stability						1	1
3d. Strategic military power projection to enhance security, deter or contain potential threats, and support diplomacy				2	4	2	8
Task 4: Enforce domestic law and strengthen international norms to help tackle those who threaten the UK and our interests, including maintenance of underpinning technical expertise in key areas.			1	7	1	10	19
4a. Law enforcement capability to investigate and where possible bring to justice terrorists and the most seriously harmful organised criminal groups impacting on the UK			1	3		8	12
4b. Continuous development of the rules-based international system				2		1	3
4c. Stronger multilateral approaches for countering proliferation and securing fissile material and expertise from malicious use				1	1	1	3
4d. Retention of our chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear science and technology capabilities that contribute to counter-proliferation and our response to the potential use of such materials by terrorist or state actors				1			1
Task 5: Protect the UK and our interests at home, at our border and internationally, to address physical and electronic threats from state and non-state actors.			2	11	6	15	34
5a. A minimum effective nuclear deterrent				1	2	1	4
5b. Secure borders			2	3	1	3	9
5c. Security and intelligence services and police counter-terrorism capability to disrupt life-threatening terrorist threats to the UK						2	2
5d. Military capabilities to help protect the UK from major terrorist attack				2		1	3
5e. An independent ability to defend the Overseas Territories militarily						1	1
5f. Investment in new and flexible capabilities such as cyber to meet emerging risks and threats				5	3	7	15
Task 6: Help resolve conflicts and contribute to stability. Where necessary, intervene overseas, including the legal use of coercive force in support of the UK's vital interests, and to protect our overseas territories and people.			0	4	5	6	15
6a. An integrated approach to building stability overseas, bringing together better diplomatic, development, military and other national security tools				1	2	1	4
6b. Armed forces capable of both stabilisation and intervention operations				3	3	4	10
6c. A civilian response scaled to support concurrency and scale of military operations						1	1
6d. The military ability to help evacuate UK citizens from crises overseas							0
Task 7: Provide resilience for the UK by being prepared for all kinds of emergencies, able to recover from shocks and to maintain essential services.			2	4	8	6	20
7a. Security and resilience of the infrastructure most critical to keeping the country running (including nuclear facilities) against attack, damage or destruction						1	1
7b. Crisis management capabilities able to anticipate and respond to a variety of major domestic emergencies and maintain the business of government				2	1		3
7c. Resilient supply and distribution systems for essential services			2	2	3	4	11
7d. Effective, well organised local response to emergencies in the UK, building on the capabilities of local responders, businesses and communities					3	1	4
7e. Enhanced central government and Armed Forces planning, coordination and capabilities to help deal with the most serious emergencies					1		1
Task 8: Work in alliances and partnerships wherever possible to generate stronger responses.			6	10	9	3	28
8a. Collective security through NATO as the basis for territorial defence of the UK, and stability of our European neighbourhood, as well as an outward-facing EU that promotes security and prosperity.			5	1	4	1	11
8b. Our contribution to international military coalitions to focus on areas of comparative national advantage valued by key allies, especially the United States, such as our intelligence capabilities and highly capable elite forces				4	3	1	8
8c. Greater sharing of military capabilities, technologies and programmes, and potentially more specialisation, working with key allies, including France, and based on appropriate formal guarantees where necessary			1	5	2		8
8d. A Defence Industrial and Technology policy that seeks to secure the independence of action we need for our Armed Forces, while allowing for increased numbers of off-the-shelf purchases and greater promotion of defence exports						1	1
Defence transformation			1	9	19	16	45
SDSR implementation oversight, reporting and revision				2	8	10	20
Overall Red/Amber/Green progress status figures	0	0	13	60	66	81	220

Table 1. Progress with National Security Tasks and related planning guidelines, defence transformation, and Strategic Defence and Security Review implementation oversight in 2014.

Progress in implementing the National Security Tasks since November 2013

51. The National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review established eight cross-cutting National Security Tasks underpinned by planning guidelines defining ways to achieve its objectives. Each Task brings together a varied set of commitments. The Strategy made clear that achieving the Tasks would require close cross-government coordination and strong National Security Council (NSC) leadership.
52. The NSC was an innovation of this Government. It has proved a real success. It meets regularly, bringing together the relevant departments and agencies, and ensures that national security issues are seen in the round, from the perspectives of both foreign policy and domestic policy. Departments work together rather than separately across the breadth of national security issues, fostering genuine debate to discuss and challenge real policy options. Above all, the NSC has improved the Government's analysis of both threats and opportunities, and therefore its decision-making on critical challenges facing the country.
53. The NSC has discussed a mix of foreign and domestic security issues throughout the year, from foreign policy issues such as Syria and Ukraine to domestic issues like Northern Ireland-related terrorism and foreign national offenders. But the NSC looks at all national security issues in the round and takes the domestic aspects of foreign policy discussions very seriously. For example, the Prime Minister looks to MI5 or a Metropolitan Police representative for contributions on the counter-terrorism aspect of international discussions, or to the NCA in respect of serious and organised crime. Bringing in external experts where necessary, the NSC takes a considered approach to its discussions, driving strategy forward through genuine policy and operational decisions.
54. Overall progress is summarised in Table 1 for October 2014. As in previous reports, subsequent sections describe progress as:
- “on track” where the sum of commitments rated “fully on track” and “completed” exceeds the sum of those “problematic” and “satisfactory”;
 - “balanced” where ratings are distributed equally between these two categories; and
 - “mixed” where the sum of commitments rated “problematic” and “satisfactory” exceeds the sum of those rated “fully on track” and “completed”.

Task 1: To identify and monitor national security risks and opportunities.

55. The **National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA)**, which is reviewed every two years, identifies, assesses and prioritises all major disruptive risks which seriously threaten UK national security interests and are of a scale or impact sufficient to require action from the Government. Work on the next NSRA has begun, and will inform priorities for the 2015 National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review. Building on lessons learnt from the 2010 and 2012 iterations, the next NSRA will consider a broad range of risks (including both hazards and threats, at home and overseas) and their domestic and international impact if materialising in the next five years. It will also assess how long-term risk drivers, such as climate change and demography, may change the risk picture over the next 20 years drawing on work from the Horizon Scanning Programme and Global Strategic Trends amongst other sources. In addition to the National Security Risk Assessment, the Government continues to assess risks against both a five year (through the National Risk Assessment) and a six month time horizon.
56. The Government has continued to implement the 2013 [findings of the Day Review](#), resulting in a new **Horizon Scanning Programme** across Government intended to:
- ensure that implications for policy are highlighted at the right levels;
 - establish a common baseline of understanding across Government departments and organisations;
 - minimise duplication; and
 - share best practice.
57. The Cabinet Secretary leads the horizon scanning programme through a group of Permanent Secretaries: the Cabinet Secretary's Advisory Group. The Minister for Government Policy provides Ministerial oversight. Its main aim in the first year was to address Day Review findings, and break down the "siloed" nature of strategic horizon scanning in Departments. The Programme has been making good progress. Specific highlights include:
- forming an Emerging Technologies Community of Interest with representatives from 29 Government organisations and external experts such as the Royal Society, Arup, BP, and the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts: this has brought together a wide-ranging group of experts internally and externally to help Government to assess the future implications of technologies for individual Departments;
 - identifying Big Data as a specific area for further analysis: a new subset of work will analyse the common understanding of Data Science across Government and the long-term implications for Departments, helping the Government to understand its potential policy-making role;
 - strengthening the Government's approach to resource scarcity and security by using horizon scanning to identify policy implications of resource nationalism; and
 - working to establish a baseline understanding across Government of demographic data, related assumptions and policy implications.

58. In March 2014, the Cabinet Office's Horizon Scanning Secretariat and the Government Office of Science's Horizon Scanning Centre merged to form the Horizon Scanning Programme Team. This combines both teams' expertise and networks, strengthening the programme and its outputs.
59. The Horizon Scanning Programme Team coordinates strategic horizon scanning work across Departments, drawing on insights from experts inside and outside Government to challenge Whitehall thinking. In Year 2, the Government will further increase engagement with external experts and raise awareness of the Horizon Scanning Programme using varied approaches (such as high-level round-table discussions) as well as a dedicated web presence on www.gov.uk, regular up-dates on the Cabinet Office Analysis and Insight [blog](#), and other engagement tools.
60. The **Strategic Trends Programme** provides a global context for long-term decision-making. The Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre (DCDC) of the Ministry of Defence has built a respected body of work benefiting from continual engagement with contributors from academia, business and across Government both domestically and internationally, including through the Horizon Scanning structures set out above. The peer-reviewed **fifth edition of Global Strategic Trends (GST5)**, published in June, describes a strategic context looking out to 2045. GST5 is accessible from the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/global-strategic-trends-out-to-2045>.
61. A further priority has been to preserve the ability of law enforcement and intelligence agencies to access the **communications data** required to prevent and detect crime, protect the public and ensure national security. The Communications Capabilities Development programme continues to invest in technical capabilities under existing legislation, and training to ensure that law enforcement officers have the requisite skills and knowledge.
62. Parliament passed in July the Data Retention and Investigatory Powers Act to maintain, where possible, current communications data and interception capabilities. In response to April's European Court of Justice judgement, which declared the EU Data Retention Directive invalid, the Act provides a clear basis on which domestic companies can be required to retain certain types of communications data. The Act does not introduce any new powers, rights of access, or obligations on communications service providers. Nor does it resolve the capability gaps which the Government sought to address in the Draft Communications Data Bill. The Prime Minister has made clear the need to return to this issue in the next Parliament. The Act also clarifies the extra-territorial effect of Part 1 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. In September, Sir Nigel Sheinwald was appointed as a Special Envoy to lead discussions with governments, other international partners and communications service providers on ways to improve access to and sharing of law enforcement and intelligence data in different jurisdictions.
63. Overall progress with this Task, taking account of all commitments, is "balanced" as defined in paragraph 54.

Task 2: Tackle at root the causes of instability.

64. Conflict-affected and fragile states can affect the UK's national security through contributing to a rise in transnational conflict, serious and organised crime, refugee flows, and providing the space for terrorists to take hold. This task covers priorities in building stability overseas and in countering terrorism.
65. The **Building Stability Overseas Strategy** (BSOS) set out three priorities for more integrated UK action: early warning; rapid crisis prevention and response; and investing in up-stream conflict prevention.
66. In 2014/15, as part of the UK's rapid response to crisis, the Conflict Pool's Early Action Facility (EAF) of £20 million per annum has supported monitoring missions in Ukraine and activities in Syria, along with improved Early Warning Analysis. Multi-year funding for Conflict Pool programmes continues, supporting a longer-term conflict prevention approach.
67. In addition, as part of the UK's rapid response to crisis, the Government has provided humanitarian assistance in priority countries affected by conflict with the primary objective of saving lives, reducing suffering and restoring basic livelihoods. UK assistance has demonstrated our continued commitment to international humanitarian principles; and it has been targeted by careful needs assessment.
68. Beyond implementing priority commitments on stability overseas, NSC has introduced the **Conflict, Stability and Security Fund** to replace the Conflict Pool in April 2015, and governance reforms allowing the Government for the first time to look systematically at alignment of British resources deployed overseas with the risk of instability. This enables strategic decisions and trade-offs for the most effective use of limited resources; provides a more integrated approach drawing together defence, diplomacy, development assistance, security and intelligence activities; and links NSC strategic decision-making with programmes on the ground. It is supported by a cross-Whitehall Joint Secretariat based in the FCO and staffed by experts from relevant Departments.
69. Together with BSOS, the UK's wider international development programme has supported the Government's stability objectives in priority fragile states. In 2013, the UK became the first G7 country to achieve the target to contribute 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) in Official Development Assistance (ODA). The UK is on track to meet the 2010 commitment to spend 30% of ODA in fragile states by the end of 2014/15.
70. UK development programmes have, as part of an overall focus on poverty reduction, delivered a range of programmes to tackle conflict and build stability up-stream in priority fragile states. These include supporting inclusive political settlements and processes; strengthening the core functions of the state (for example, rule of law, security sector and justice reform, and public administration); and improving the accountability of governments and their ability to respond to public expectations. In addition, investments to boost economic

development and create jobs, and a strengthened focus on improving the lives of women and girls, are contributing to long-term stability and peace.

71. Results delivered through UK development programmes in fragile states that strengthen service delivery and support growth and job creation contribute to delivering a peace dividend and meeting public expectations, which can help mitigate the drivers of conflict. Further details for a wide range of country-level work are provided in reporting against Task 6 (see paragraphs 115-155 below); but examples include:

- Security and justice investments in 14 fragile and conflict-affected countries, providing more than 10 million women with improved access to security and justice services.
- Supporting freer and fairer electoral processes in 11 countries, including Pakistan and Nepal.
- In Afghanistan, UK assistance has created more than 35,000 jobs since 2011, and contributed to the rehabilitation of more than 500 km of rural roads between 2012 and 2013. The number of Afghan ministries who completed pay and grade reforms rose from eight in 2011 to 21 in 2014.
- In Pakistan, 9 million children in primary school, 4 million in secondary school and 3 million primary completers benefited from UK support in 2013–14.
- In Somalia, 16 District Councils developed and costed their own district-level development plans and 7,000 women and girls have received improved access to security and justice with UK support.

72. In June 2014 the Government published its third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. This aims to put women and girls at the centre of all UK efforts to prevent and resolve conflict, to promote peace and stability, and to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls. It focuses specifically on advancing women's and girls' participation, preventing violence against women and girls, providing targeted relief and recovery, and building UK national capacity to deliver all of this. It brings together all of the UK Government's activities in this area including the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative, DFID's Strategic Vision for Girls and Women, including broader work on violence against women and girls, and the Call to Action on protecting women in emergencies. The Government also co-hosted with UNICEF the Girl Summit 2014 to rally a global movement to end Female Genital Mutilation and Child, Early and Forced Marriage for all girls everywhere within a generation. And the then Foreign Secretary, William Hague, and the Special Envoy of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Angelina Jolie, co-hosted the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict.

73. The Stabilisation Unit (SU) uses a uniquely integrated approach between FCO, MOD and DFID to help Government respond to crises and to improve cross-government working, as illustrated in its 2014 publication of the UK Approach to Stabilisation.

74. In December 2013 the Prime Minister's **Extremism Taskforce** recommended a bolder stance against all forms of extremism along with practical measures to strengthen the approach. As part of this, since December 2013, a dedicated police team have taken down more than 46,000 pieces of unlawful content encouraging or glorifying terrorism. A new tool at www.gov.uk enables public reporting of extremist content. The Government has also increased support for Charity Commission work on misappropriation of charitable funds and abuse of charitable status; and a draft Protection of Charities Bill will strengthen Charity Commission powers. The past year has also seen a significant rise in referrals to the Channel programme, which we are making a statutory duty. Channel provides tailored support to people identified as at risk of radicalisation. The Government has worked to dissuade people from travelling to the region of Iraq and Syria and to intervene when they return, and is working to embed *Prevent* more firmly in local structures by making its delivery a legal requirement. Going further, the Government intends shortly to set out a new counter-extremism strategy, led by the Home Office, which will focus on tackling non-violent extremism and the social harms extremism causes. The strategy will aim to build up society to identify, confront and ultimately defeat extremism. It will be rooted in the promotion of core British values like respect, tolerance and the rule of law and will introduce strong new measures to improve our understanding of extremism, galvanise society to challenge it, and ensure a strong State response.
75. Working closely with international partners to mitigate terrorist threats overseas, the Government has continued to focus on building security and justice capacity in countries seeking to contain such threats, including through justice and human rights partnerships where UK interests are most at risk. This is a systematic process of building partners' counter-terrorism capabilities consistently with standards for human rights and the rule of law, and co-ordinated where appropriate with UK development programmes and other international partners. Countering extremism worldwide, including via international fora, will continue to be a priority. Departmental budgets, and programme funds including FCO's £15 million Counter-Terrorism Programme Fund (CTPF) complemented by Conflict Pool-funded activity, are supporting Government's work to counter extremist influences originating overseas. Where appropriate, Government effort is co-ordinated with action through the EU, UN, and Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF). Defence continues to play a pivotal role, principally through capacity-building overseas across a spectrum of military competences. Further work is needed to maximise international efforts to counter extremism, and to ensure that foreign and development policies are accurately understood within the UK.
76. The UK tabled UN Security Council Resolution 2170 in August 2014, and co-sponsored UNSCR 2178 in September, to address threats from ISIL, the Al-Nusra Front (ANF), and other terrorists in Syria and Iraq (see also paragraph 132). These Resolutions included UN sanctions listings of individuals and groups assessed to support ISIL and the ANF. Further, the CTPF is supporting priority projects with Syria's neighbours, including Iraq, to build their capacity to confront the growing terrorist threat from within Syria and Iraq.

77. The Government has also worked with partners to tackle the terrorist threat from Yemen, to prepare for draw-down of international troops in a combat role from Afghanistan at the end of 2014, and to co-ordinate efforts to resolve terrorist kidnaps of British nationals including work to raise awareness of areas where risk of kidnap is high. In January 2014, the UN Security Council adopted its first stand-alone resolution, SCR 2133, tabled by the UK and calling on all Member States to prevent terrorists from benefiting directly or indirectly from ransom payments. Government is now working to turn this agreement into reality.
78. Overall progress with this Task, taking account of all commitments, is “on track” as defined in paragraph 54.

Task 3: Exert influence to exploit opportunities and manage risks.

79. Our **Diplomatic Service** has continued to invest in and exploit the networks of relationships, bilateral and multilateral, governmental, and non-governmental, that are central to the success of foreign policy today, and which underpin many of the actions described throughout this report to safeguard and advance UK national security. Working through these relationships, the UK has played a leading role in achieving the removal of Syria’s declared chemical weapons stockpile, the imminent entry into force in December 2014 of the Arms Trade Treaty, widespread support for an international protocol to End Sexual Violence as a weapon in conflict, and a reduction in instances of piracy off Somalia. Events in Ukraine show the importance of long-term investments not just in the UN, the Commonwealth, the EU and NATO – the bedrock of our international security – but also in bodies such as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (see also paragraphs 169-184). As host of this year’s NATO Summit we played a central role in delivering commitments to increase defence spending amongst NATO members, to mobilise international support against ISIL, to agree a mandate for a rapid reaction force and to maintain pressure on Russia to cease its intervention in Ukraine. We have pressed on with our commitment to grow our relationships with the Emerging Powers, which increasingly underpin our prosperity as well as security objectives.
80. Our global **diplomatic network** is the essential infrastructure of Britain’s influence in the world. It delivers the insight and contacts which open doors for British businesses and promotes the UK as an attractive home for investment. The FCO’s network shift has delivered a flexible response to changing global priorities, enabling significant new contributions to UK security and prosperity at a time of reducing resources. We have opened or strengthened our Posts in those countries of greatest strategic importance to the UK, including opening an additional Consulate General in Wuhan, and creating 250 new UK-based and locally engaged front-line positions in Turkey, India, China, Africa, the Americas and East Asia since 2011. Work continues towards opening a new Deputy High Commission in Chandigarh in India. This exercise is cost-neutral in balancing expansion with reduction of resources elsewhere. This network shift should ensure that Britain’s influence in the world is expanding rather than shrinking, that we are connected to the fastest-growing parts of the globe, and that we retain a global leadership role. Our overseas network and London-based resources have

continued to provide support to British nationals in distress around the world, both in individual cases and in crises, such as Typhoon Haiyan or the Ebola outbreak.

81. **Prosperity** work remains an important strand in Government's drive to support the UK economy. A refreshed strategy aims to build four conditions for growth: openness, sustainability, reputation and opportunity. A focus is to support the Prime Minister's and Chancellor's ambition to double exports to £1 trillion and increase the UK's stock of Foreign Direct Investment to £1.5 trillion by 2020. In particular, this involves helping British companies to identify opportunities and win business in key markets; promoting transparency and tackling corruption, a rules-based international economic system and open markets; countering risks to economic stability including threats to growth from energy and resource insecurity; and promoting the UK as a creative, innovative and trustworthy partner and a world-class destination for business, tourism and study. In response to recent National Audit Office and Public Affairs Committee recommendations¹, we have strengthened FCO–UKTI joint working, introducing joint business planning and use of joint economic analysis of geographic markets, opportunities and barriers to export, and working more strategically to deliver large-scale commercial opportunities.
82. Progress in co-ordination of cross-government efforts to implement priority commitments on stability overseas is covered in paragraphs 64 to 78.
83. The **International Defence Engagement Strategy (IDES)**, launched in February 2013, has led to the development of regional and country strategies with cross-governmentally agreed objectives, allowing coherent use of resources to build capacity and stability of priority states. Examples include new defence sections in Libya, Somalia, Burma, Vietnam, Thailand, Ireland and Mexico. Other developments include Proof of Concept of the Army's strategy to align brigades to regions, providing further resources to deliver defence engagement. Interim findings suggest encouraging progress and benefits; and full roll-out is planned over the next year.
84. Overall progress with this Task, taking account of all commitments, is "on track" as defined in paragraph 54.

Task 4: Enforce domestic law and strengthen international norms to help tackle those who threaten the UK and our interests, including maintenance of underpinning technical expertise in key areas.

85. Publication on 7th October 2013 of a new Strategy to tackle **serious and organised crime** coincided with establishment of the National Crime Agency (NCA), marking the biggest change in approach for a decade. The agency leads the national response to cutting serious and organised crime, increasing the UK's capability in areas which previously had a fragmented response - such as the border, cyber and economic crime - and those where more impact is required -

¹National Audit Office report: "Supporting UK Exporters Overseas" – Session 2013-14 (HC732), published November 2013; Public Affairs Committee report: "Supporting UK Exporters Overseas – Session 2013-14 (HC709), published January 2014.

such as child protection and modern slavery. Domestically it has powers to direct a chief officer of a police force in England and Wales and the British Transport Police (BTP) to undertake a specific operational task, if required in critical situations. Its international liaison network extends its reach to over 100 countries.

86. The NCA has led work to identify High Priority and Priority Organised Crime Groups; and it leads, supports and/or coordinates the law enforcement response as required. The NCA is already making a tangible difference, working closely with the police and other law enforcement agencies, international partners, the security and intelligence agencies, national and local government, and the private and voluntary sectors. As noted earlier (paragraph 30) it has achieved in its first year over 920 disruptions against serious and organised criminals.
87. Applying the framework used in counter-terrorism, the Strategy drives and coordinates action across *Pursue*, *Prevent*, *Protect* and *Prepare* strands to reduce both threats and vulnerabilities. Our work under *Pursue* to identify, disrupt and prosecute serious and organised criminals has been the priority over the last 12 months. With strong partnerships at the heart of our approach, we have fostered close cooperation with varied stakeholders in government, local authorities, the private and community sectors, and overseas. Direct engagement with nearly 1,000 local partners is enabling all relevant agencies to use their information and powers to tackle serious and organised crime.
88. We have also bolstered capabilities. The Government is providing £37 million of funding to Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU) in 2014/15 to support an increase in their capabilities and capacity. Continuing investment in new staff, technology, and training has strengthened the ability of the NCA and police forces to mitigate cyber threats. In line with the Strategic Defence and Security Review commitment to explore potential synergies between organised crime and counter-terrorism policing, the NCA is working with the ROCUs and CT Policing Network to develop closer collaboration and sharing of capabilities, including at the border, in prisons, and on technical issues, financial crime and money laundering, and through co-location where possible. Other developments include implementing a cross-government plan for tackling criminal finances, and consolidating the central fraud reporting system – Action Fraud – in the City of London Police, which is the UK’s national lead force for fraud.
89. New and comprehensive programmes of work under the *Prevent*, *Protect* and *Prepare* strands feature initiatives to stop people from being drawn into organised crime; to decrease reoffending; to reduce vulnerabilities across government, at our borders, and in the private sector; and to support those communities, victims and witnesses affected by serious and organised crime. Highlights include the “Cyber Streetwise” campaign to raise public awareness of cyber crime; developing a new exercise programme to test and improve our response to major incidents; building a secure database of illegal child abuse images to identify and help victims more effectively; and a new national Protected Persons Service.
90. The new Serious Crime Bill will make it more difficult for criminals to conceal and move illicit proceeds, increase prison sentences for failing to pay confiscation

orders, and create a new offence of participation in an organised crime group. The Modern Slavery Bill will strengthen powers to tackle this pernicious crime, provide new policing tools to help prevent further cases, and enhance protection and support for victims. Subject to parliamentary approval, these Bills are expected to secure Royal Assent by March 2015.

91. On **counter-proliferation and arms control**, the Government has continued working to deny terrorists access to CBRN materials and expertise. The Nuclear Security Summit in March 2014 re-affirmed states' commitment to shared goals of nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and focused on efforts to strengthen nuclear security. The UK has led international efforts to establish Nuclear Information Security as a global norm, making further progress at The Hague Nuclear Security Summit where 35 States outlined voluntary actions taken in support of the UK's sponsored multi-national statement. We hope to see the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) publish Nuclear Security Guidance in this area soon.
92. The Government's achievements include work to destroy Syria's chemical weapons programme following international outrage at the regime's repeated use of chemical weapons against the Syrian people, including the large-scale attack in the suburbs of Damascus last year. Under pressure, Syria accepted international oversight of the destruction of its chemical weapons stockpile and acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Its declared stockpile of chemical weapon agent has been removed from Syria, put beyond use and will soon be completely destroyed. This includes destruction in the UK of 200 tonnes of chemicals. The UK also provided a Royal Navy Vessel to support the safe removal of the chemicals by sea from Syria, and gifted specialist equipment to the United States to assist with the hydrolysis of the most sensitive chemicals before their final destruction. Work continues to address persisting concerns over the regime's continued use of chemicals as weapons, notably industrial chemicals such as chlorine, and over discrepancies in the declarations Syria made on its chemical weapons programme to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).
93. The Government's strategy also aims to support, strengthen and extend the rules-based international system of counter-proliferation treaties and regimes. The May 2014 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee agreed an agenda for next year's Review Conference. The UK with all other P5 states signed the Central Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Protocol. The UK has ratified the Arms Trade Treaty which is expected to enter force on 24th December 2014. Russia's incursion into Ukraine, in breach of assurances under the Budapest Memorandum, raised concerns about the value of Russian assurances. Russia's subsequent suspension from the G8 includes from the Non-Proliferation Directors Group and the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. The Global Partnership has, however, continued to meet to coordinate work on high priority CBRN security projects, including in Ukraine. The UK also continues to work hard with the United States, Russia and the United Nations to find a basis for convening a Conference on a WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East.

94. Overall progress with this Task, taking account of all commitments, is “on track” as defined in paragraph 54.

Task 5: Protect the UK and our interests at home, at our border and internationally, to address physical and electronic threats from state and non-state actors.

95. The Government’s **counter-terrorism** priority under this task has been to ensure that the police and security and intelligence agencies continue to have the powers and capabilities they need to tackle all new and existing threats, whether home grown or international; and that those powers are proportionate and subject to close scrutiny. Following public consultation, the port and border control powers in Schedule 7 to the Terrorism Act 2000 have been amended, reducing the maximum time a person can be examined; clarifying detained individuals’ right to legal advice; and introducing statutory reviews of detention. The Serious Crime Bill will extend extra-territorial jurisdiction for offences in sections 5 (preparation of terrorist acts) and 6 (training for terrorism) under the Terrorism Act 2006, so it will become a criminal offence to prepare or train for terrorism overseas.

96. The security and intelligence agencies and police are working to manage risks posed by foreign fighters returning from Syria and Iraq, including by deportation, exclusion and deprivation. Immigration Act 2014 powers enable the Home Secretary to remove citizenship from a naturalised British citizen acting in a manner seriously prejudicial to the vital interests of the UK. British citizenship has been revoked for eight people since August 2013; 29 passports have been refused or cancelled since criteria for using the Royal Prerogative to refuse or withdraw passports on public interest grounds were introduced in April 2013; and in 2014, 15 foreign nationals have been excluded from the UK on national security grounds.

97. We have also introduced the new Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill to Parliament. The Bill contains important new powers to help fill the gaps in our armoury in tackling the increased threat that we face. The provisions in the Bill will strengthen our counter-terrorism powers to prevent travel; stop suspects returning unless they do so on our terms; relocate individuals within the UK to help break their links with extremist networks; and strengthen our border and aviation security.

98. A major strand of *Prepare*, the **Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme** (JESIP) has aimed to improve the joint response of the emergency services to any major or complex incident, to save as many lives as possible and reduce harm. Over 10,000 priority police, fire and ambulance service personnel have now completed JESIP joint training, working to new joint guidance and principles. JESIP concluded in September 2014 with Exercise Joint Endeavour in Merseyside, involving over 800 people from emergency services, local authority and first responder organisations. Work continues to realise its legacy benefits.

99. The Government has continued to make it harder for terrorists to obtain materials for use in making explosives. In September, we implemented the Control of

Explosives Precursors Regulations 2014, under an EU regulation on marketing and use of explosives precursors. The regulations require the general public to show a valid explosives precursors licence and photographic identity document before the regulated substances can be supplied.

100. The threat from **Northern Ireland-Related Terrorism** (NIRT) remains at “severe” in Northern Ireland and at “moderate” in Great Britain (see also paragraph 13). Tackling this threat remains a priority for the Government. Excellent co-operation between PSNI and its partners has resulted in significant arrests, charges and convictions. The NCA’s support to PSNI, including around asset recovery, is restricted by the absence of a Legislative Consent Motion on the Agency’s remit there; but the Government remains committed to building on the successes to date using all available Government resources to tackle terrorist-related violence and criminality. This Government has provided an additional £231 million security funding between 2011 and 2015, clearly demonstrating our commitment to tackle NIRT threats. Key successes achieved as a result of the excellent work between PSNI and its partners this year include contributing to the most peaceful parading season that NI has observed in recent times. The Queen’s baton relay, the Giro d’Italia and the Queen’s recent three day visit all took place peacefully and with great success. However, the threat from NIRT is enduring and assessed by the JIC to remain beyond 2020.
101. Since 2010 we have made important changes to roles and responsibilities in **border security** and consequently up-dated the coordinating bodies responsible for implementing individual actions. Following the creation of Border Force (primarily responsible for protecting the border), the UK Border Agency was abolished in April 2013 and replaced by two commands with distinct remits and cultures sitting in the Home Office and reporting to Ministers: UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), and Immigration Enforcement (IE). UKVI is a high-volume service that makes high-quality decisions about who comes to the UK; and IE is an organisation that has immigration law enforcement at its heart. Strategic oversight is provided by the Border and Immigration System Directorate to ensure that appropriate intelligence sharing takes place. Working closely with these operational commands is the Border Policing Command (BPC). This is one of four operational commands within the National Crime Agency (that went live in October 2013), which is delivering a new strategic response to border policing and enabling us to better address the security threats from serious and organised crime. There is also improved co-ordination of intelligence and operational activity through BPC’s co-location with Border Force intelligence officers, Special Branch and other intelligence agencies in Joint Border Intelligence Units. Operational benefits are being realised from the richer intelligence picture resulting from such close and collaborative working across the law enforcement landscape.
102. Use of technology and intelligence to check people and goods remains central to tackling border security threats. Work continues to mitigate incomplete data coverage resulting from the European Commission’s stance on compatibility of advance passenger information (API) collection with EU free movement principles. We now check movements of over 185 million passengers and crew a year, both in-bound and out-bound, from passenger information from more than 160 carriers operating over 6,700 routes. Advance passenger data provide early

warning of individuals giving concern related to counter-terrorism, crime and immigration who intend to arrive in or depart from the UK. The Government aims to maximise passenger data across all sectors, and continues to work with carriers to deliver this.

103. The Pre-Departure Checks Scheme (PDCS) identifies individuals known to threaten aviation or national security, stops them flying to or from the UK, and aims to ensure that individuals who may pose a threat to aviation are screened at the port of departure to the UK to confirm that they are safe to fly. We are extending the application of PDCS to individuals who are inadmissible to the UK or presenting false documents, preventing such individuals from arriving here. We are also enhancing the operation of PDCS by implementing interactive messaging between airlines' departure control systems and our Border System. Fourteen airlines operating more than 170 routes are now connected and a comprehensive plan is in place for all airlines operating to and from the UK. Provisions in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill will enhance the operation of PDCS and strengthen our security arrangements for international aviation, maritime and rail transport.

104. The Government's commitment to reintroduce exit checks by April 2015 is on track, where possible underpinned by existing arrangements including API and necessary on-departure checks. Under the Immigration Act 2014, carrier and port operator staff and other designated persons can conduct embarkation checks and collect relevant supporting data. We are engaging with carriers, port operators and other users on the most efficient and effective solutions for different operating environments. Trials enabling assessment of options for each transport area will ensure that existing business processes can accommodate solutions.

105. The **National Cyber Security Programme (NCSP)**, supported by £860 million of investment to 2016, is funding initiatives and programmes of work across departments and agencies to deliver the 2011 UK Cyber Security Strategy. Significant milestones in the past year across the breadth of the programme include improving critical national infrastructure resilience; incentives for business to improve cyber security and support for the UK's cyber security sector; investments in cyber skills and research; law enforcement operations to crack down on cyber crime (and cyber-enabled crime); and international efforts to protect and promote UK interests in cyber space. A recent National Audit Office review found that the Government was making "good progress" in implementing the strategy.

106. The NCSP has begun to transform UK cyber security capabilities, with particular emphasis on partnership with industry to improve awareness of, and enhance the response to, growing cyber threats. The UK's national Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-UK) was launched in March 2014 to enhance UK cyber resilience by coordinating the response to cyber incidents, and act as a focal point for international engagement. CERT-UK played a central role in protecting networks around the NATO Summit in Wales and with Police Scotland on cyber security for the 2014 Commonwealth Games. Within CERT-UK, the Cyber Security Information Sharing Partnership (CISP) helps to make UK

businesses more secure in cyber space by introducing a secure, virtual “collaboration environment” where Government and industry partners can exchange information on threats and vulnerabilities in real time. CISP now has over 750 member organisations, a 50 per cent increase on the target we set for the end of 2014.

107. On protecting the critical national infrastructure, the Government has continued to work with regulators and industry partners to improve awareness and cyber resilience. In May 2014, the Bank of England, Financial Conduct Authority and HMT, launched CBEST, a framework to improve understanding of financial cyber attack. In November 2013, the CISP supported Exercise Waking Shark II to test financial sector cyber defences.
108. Summer 2014 saw GCHQ launch a new initiative to enhance the protection of UK networks from threats in cyber space. The scheme will involve sharing timely and usable intelligence on hostile state and cyber crime activity with security-cleared personnel in trusted Communications Service Providers (CSPs). They will thus be able to use this privileged awareness to take early action on the networks they manage, whether Government or other critical UK networks. The first phase of this initiative is to bring in partners from the CSPs who are vital to delivering Government’s Public Services Network; but the long-term intent is to ensure the benefits are available to a broader community, ultimately raising the protection of the UK as a whole.
109. Increased awareness of cyber security offers great potential for UK business growth. The Cyber Essentials Scheme, an industry-led standard, was launched in June 2014 to give businesses a clear target baseline in addressing cyber security threats. From 1st October, suppliers to Government of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) contracts concerning personal and sensitive information will have to meet Cyber Essentials controls.
110. Skills are a continuing priority to ensure a growing pool of cyber security expertise. GCHQ has recently certified six university Masters Degree courses in Cyber Security. There are now 11 Academic Centres of Excellence in Cyber Security and three Cyber Security Research Institutes. A new Massive Open On-line Course in Cyber Security went live in October through the Open University, and is available free of charge to all. e-skills UK is working to strengthen cyber security understanding in secondary schools. The Cyber Security Challenge Schools competition runs “cyber battles” to identify new talent, working closely with the public and private sector to help attract and recruit talented individuals
111. The Internet’s global nature makes international engagement a priority. Government’s joint FCO/Cabinet Office International Cyber Policy Unit is shaping international cyber policies. The Global Cyber Security Capacity Building Centre at Oxford University helps international partners to improve their capability to defend against cyber threats. The Government also engages bilaterally and multilaterally to support the multi-stakeholder approach to internet governance and maintain an open, safe and resilient cyber space enabling free flow of commerce and protecting freedom of expression. In May, the Czech Republic,

France and the UK became full members of the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence.

112. The new National Cyber Crime Unit (NCCU), which is part of the National Crime Agency, has delivered a number of campaigns to tackle the most serious forms of cyber crime affecting the UK. In June 2014, with GCHQ assistance and with international and industry partners, the NCA disrupted (and continues to disrupt) the GAMEOVERZEUS and CRYPTOLOCKER threats. The American FBI estimated that this malware was responsible for multi-million pound fraud across the world. The NCCU also led the disruption of the SHYLOCK malware, a threat particularly targeting the UK. HMRC is increasing security of its customer-facing digital channels and protection from infrastructure threats. The Cyberstreetwise.com public awareness campaign launched last Autumn achieved in its initial phase a statistically significant change in individual behaviour; and a second phase will focus on small businesses.
113. The MOD is working to put cyber in the mainstream across defence, to develop a full-spectrum military cyber capability, including a strike capability, and to recruit cyber reserves ensuring that the Armed Services can draw on the best outside expertise.
114. The overall rating for this Task, taking account of all commitments, is “on track” as defined in paragraph 54.

Task 6: Help resolve conflicts and contribute to stability. Where necessary, intervene overseas, including the legal use of coercive force in support of the UK’s vital interests, and to protect our overseas territories and people.

115. **Ukraine** has faced a number of security, political and economic challenges in 2014. The decision of then President Yanukovich not to sign the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement in November 2013 prompted peaceful protests in Kyiv, which evolved into wider anti-government protests calling for change. Following a violent crack down by Ukrainian security forces in February, in which over 80 civilians were killed, President Yanukovich fled to Russia. President Poroshenko was elected in May, and (Rada) Parliamentary elections were held successfully, in most of the country, on 26th October. Throughout this political crisis, Ukraine has been subject to an unprecedented assault on its sovereignty and territorial integrity by Russia and the separatists it supports.
116. Throughout the crisis the UK has used our full range of political, diplomatic and economic levers to support Ukraine. A stable, open and democratic Ukraine contributing to regional stability and security in Europe is in the UK’s interest. The UK is providing up to £10 million in technical assistance to support the Ukrainian Government’s reform programme, focusing on good governance, public finance management, support for elections and humanitarian assistance. The UK has also increased defence engagement, including on crisis management, anti-corruption, strategic communications, and defence reform. In addition, through the Conflict Pool, the UK is spending £9 million in 2014/15 on a range of projects in Ukraine, including support to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission, peace-building activities, elections monitoring,

and support to the EU Advisory Mission (CSDP Mission); and has provided non-lethal equipment including body armour, helmets, winter clothing, medical assistance and winter fuel to the Ukraine Armed Forces. The UK has also provided aircraft for NATO's Baltic Air Policing Mission, and contributed to exercises in eastern Europe and Ukraine.

117. The UK helped to ensure that the 25th May presidential elections largely met international standards, providing £430,000 and 100 monitors to the OSCE / ODIHR (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights) Election Observation Mission. The UK also supported Ukraine in making the parliamentary elections on 26th October free, fair and transparent by providing 71 independent observers to the OSCE's election observation mission.

118. Through the EU, with EU partners, the UK has facilitated Ukraine's trade with the EU, bringing forward reductions in EU trade tariffs for Ukrainian goods and providing €11 billion of loans and support through European institutions. The UK has also been at the forefront of EU plans to help Ukraine and neighbouring countries to ensure more resilient energy supplies (see also paragraphs 164-167 and 181-183). The UK continues to support the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, and to support much needed sustainable political and economic reforms. With Poland and Sweden, the UK successfully pushed for an EU civilian Common Security and Defence Policy mission.

119. The UK continues to support diplomatic efforts to find a political solution to the crisis in Ukraine, and has contributed to funding for the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, which was deployed following a request to the OSCE by Ukraine's government and agreement by all 57 OSCE participating States. The monitors' role is to contribute to reducing tensions and fostering peace, stability and security (see also paragraph 180).

120. The UK has been at the forefront of the EU in ensuring that pressure is put on Russia to stop destabilising Ukraine and to support a political solution (see also paragraphs 181-183). With our EU partners we are also ensuring that there are long-term consequences for Russia as a result of the illegal annexation of Crimea, including through imposition of restrictive measures.

121. In **Afghanistan**, the UK set itself a goal in 2010 of withdrawing British troops in a combat role by the end of 2014, and of supporting the Afghan government to develop the Afghan security forces and build a more effective Afghan state that could control its own security, and to prevent Afghan territory from being used by Al Qa'ida as a secure base from which to plan attacks on the UK and its allies. The National Security Council has, as set out in the National Security Strategy, continued in 2014 to give strategic direction to the efforts of the Armed Forces in Afghanistan to secure this outcome. Military drawdown is on track and the last British troops withdrew from Camp Bastion in good order, on time and on budget at the end of October. All UK combat forces will have left Afghanistan by the end of 2014. The UK has a continuing role in assisting Afghanistan to secure its own future, including by leading the development of the Afghan National Army Officer

Academy and creating a legacy of strong leadership within the Afghan National Army.

122. The Afghanistan National Security Forces have led the fight against the Taliban for the second successive fighting season.
123. At the NATO Wales Summit in September 2014, the international community set out three parallel, mutually reinforcing, strands of activity on Afghanistan: the short-term Resolute Support Mission; medium-term contribution to the financial sustainment of the ANSF; and long-term NATO-Afghanistan Enduring Partnership. UK troops will continue to support the ANSF as part of NATO's new non-combat training, advice and assistance mission, primarily through its leadership of international support to the Afghan National Army Officer Academy. The first cohort of officers graduated from the Academy in September. A UK mentoring team will remain after 2014 to build the Academy as an enduring institution to continue to professionalise the armed forces. At Wales, the UK confirmed in principle an annual financial contribution of £70 million to help sustain ANSF until at least 2017. The UK remains committed to supporting the ANSF through the "decade of transformation" until 2024.
124. The UK will continue to provide institutional development assistance in the form of civilian and military advisers to the Afghan security ministries. Their work includes supporting the development of a professional Police Service to complement the Afghan Armed forces. They provide a range of technical assistance including support to the Afghan Government in tackling the narcotics trade and the networks and individuals involved in trafficking opiates to the UK; law enforcement mentoring to the Afghan Counter Narcotics Police; building capacity, including on tackling corruption, in the Ministry of Counter Narcotics and Ministry of Interior; and working with Afghanistan's neighbours to enhance related regional cooperation.
125. The peaceful transfer of power from President Karzai to President Ghani and his National Unity Government in September was an historical achievement for Afghanistan. Some 7 million Afghans participated in the presidential elections, including a high proportion of female voters. This event would have been inconceivable under Taliban control. The UK supported the electoral process with £20 million technical assistance and £4.5 million to support campaigns to increase women's participation. The UK will continue to provide support to Parliamentary elections currently scheduled for 2015. The UK also supports the Afghan Government's efforts to secure a lasting political settlement through reconciliation.
126. Despite this progress, Afghanistan's economy remains fragile. The UK has committed to providing £178 million per annum until at least 2017 as the UK's contribution to an internationally coordinated programme of assistance to help the Afghan Government tackle extreme poverty, improve governance, create jobs and achieve sustainable economic growth. The UK continues to encourage Afghanistan's neighbours to do more to assist development using established mechanisms such as the Heart of Asia and South Asia dialogue. As part of its commitment to help Afghanistan set the tone for the decade of transformation,

the UK co-hosted with the Afghan Government an international conference on Afghanistan in London on 3rd-4th December. The Conference signalled political solidarity with the new Afghan government, reaffirmed the international community's commitment to Afghanistan's development, and will shape the post-2014 partnership between the international community and Afghanistan. The Conference is the first part of a two-stage approach and will be followed by a technical level Senior Officials meeting in Kabul in 2015.

127. In **Iraq**, the UK has promoted an inclusive, sovereign and democratic new Government; able to push back ISIL and restore stability and security across the country. ISIL's attacks have threatened Iraq's territorial integrity and created a humanitarian crisis affecting all communities. The Iraqi Government has requested international support, including military assistance, to defend itself against the ISIL threat. There is now a substantial international coalition now in place of over 60 countries – including regional partners – committed to confronting and defeating ISIL. The UK is playing an active role internationally: within the anti-ISIL coalition, through action at the UN, and in cooperating with our closest allies and partners.
128. Defeating the threat ISIL poses to the UK and the world will require an intelligent and patient approach. Our strategy involves military, political, humanitarian and counter-terrorism elements, all of which will require a sustained effort over the longer term. The Government is under no illusion as to the severity of the challenge to regional stability and to UK security from ISIL.
129. The UK has provided £23 million of assistance, at the time of writing, to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Iraq. This is providing vital supplies, including shelter, food and equipment to those most in need, as well as supporting a range of delivery partners on the ground. During August, RAF aircraft joined an international effort to deliver air drops of vital help for Iraqi civilians trapped on Mount Sinjar and in the town of Amerli, as well as providing a number of aid flights into Erbil.
130. The Government has strongly welcomed the new democratically-elected Government of Iraq, under Prime Minister Dr Haider al-Abadi. We will continue to support him to deliver an inclusive programme of Government that commands the trust and support of all Iraqis; to implement promised reforms, including decentralising power and reforming the security forces; and to deliver an effective and unified response against ISIL. Lieutenant General Sir Simon Mayall has also been appointed as Government Security Envoy to the Kurdistan Region to support Kurdish and wider Iraqi efforts to counter ISIL.
131. With the United States and others, UK surveillance aircraft have been helping with intelligence gathering and logistics in support of Iraqi Security Forces and the efforts of the wider anti-ISIL coalition. Following the debate in Parliament on 26th September, this was extended to include UK air strikes in Iraq to support local security forces fighting ISIL on the ground. In October, the Defence Secretary confirmed that UK aircraft would also begin surveillance missions over Syria to gather intelligence, as part of our efforts to protect UK national security from the terrorist threat emanating from there. At the Iraqi Government's request,

the UK has also provided heavy machine guns and ammunition and transported other vital equipment to help the Kurdish Peshmerga defend the front line, protect civilians and repel ISIL advances. Specialist teams have also been deployed to train Iraqi forces on both the equipment provided and how to counter the threat from improvised explosive devices (C-IED training).

132. The Government has been active in driving forward international efforts to tackle ISIL from every angle. We helped secure UN Security Council Resolution 2170 to cut off ISIL's financing and have worked to reinforce sanctions on those who try to recruit fighters. The Government co-sponsored a UN Human Rights Council Resolution in September, mandating the UN urgently to investigate and report on ISIL abuses. We also agreed the unprecedented UN Security Council Resolution 2178 against the foreign fighter threat, which reinforces states' domestic obligations to counter recruitment, limit movement and prosecute fighters, and harnesses the UN's counter-terrorist bodies to give technical assistance. At both the NATO Summit and the UN General Assembly in September, the Government helped rally international support behind a comprehensive response to ISIL. We are also actively working to de-legitimise and isolate ISIL, its ideology and its narrative, including by working closely with religious leaders.
133. The conflict in **Syria** has further deepened, with the Asad regime – rather than focusing on fighting ISIL terrorists as Asad claims – continuing its indiscriminate air attacks on civilian areas, unlawfully detaining and torturing civilians, carrying out further chemical attacks, and continuing to prevent humanitarian support from getting to those who need it. This brutality has led some in Syria to turn to extremism. There are widespread reports exposing the Asad regime's links with extremist groups, including both ISIL and groups such as Hizbollah. ISIL now operates in both Syria and Iraq across a porous border.
134. Government's response remains focused on alleviating humanitarian suffering, supporting those who have a pluralistic and democratic vision for Syria's future, building local resilience, maintaining pressure on the Asad regime including through sanctions, and implementing a comprehensive, long-term approach to degrade ISIL and other extremist groups. To date, the UK has pledged over £700 million of humanitarian assistance to Syria and its neighbours.
135. The UK strongly supports the air strikes against ISIL in Syria currently being conducted by the United States and Arab nations. However, it is clear that ISIL and its ideology cannot be effectively countered without political progress in Syria. The UK continues to push for an inclusive political transition which would replace Asad's regime with a Government able to represent all Syrians. We welcome the UN Secretary General's appointment of Staffan de Mistura as the UN Special Representative on Syria to this end.
136. We have also welcomed the election of Hadi Al-Bahra as President of the Syrian National Coalition and, working closely with international partners through the Friends of Syria Core Group, continue to support and strengthen the moderate opposition. This has included hosting sessions with the National

Coalition to help build international support, such as in the margins of the UN General Assembly in September.

137. We are providing a range of support to Syrians to improve security and justice provision, counter extremism, promote human rights and accountability, and to lay the foundations for a more peaceful and democratic future. This includes allocating up to £27 million this financial year (2014-15) through the cross-government Conflict Pool to bolster the work of the moderate opposition (including the National Coalition and interim Government, local councils, NGOs, civil society, media and human rights activists). As part of this support to the moderate Syrian civilian opposition, we are delivering a three-year £10 million local governance programme in opposition-held areas.
138. We are providing technical assistance on how to maintain security in areas no longer controlled by the regime and to protect civilians, including: helping the opposition counter regime forces as they attack towns under opposition control; coordination between civilian and military councils; and on how to maintain security during transition. UK support along with that of our allies has helped the opposition to have real impact on the ground. Examples include providing non-lethal equipment to moderate armed groups, the establishment of Free Syrian police stations in liberated areas, and training and equipping hundreds of volunteers in civil defence stations across northern Syria to carry out search and rescue, fire-fighting and first aid. This support helps to save lives and to make life better for the citizens of the areas controlled by the Syrian moderate opposition.
139. The UK also expects to make a significant contribution to the United States-led programme to train the Syrian moderate armed opposition, which is fighting both Asad's tyranny and ISIL's extremism. Details of how that contribution will be delivered are currently being scoped.
140. The political, security, economic and humanitarian situation in **Yemen** deteriorated further during 2014. The year started with some progress on transition, including the conclusion of the National Dialogue Conference in January. The UK's support to this process has helped to give women, youth and other marginalised groups an unprecedented opportunity to engage élites and political parties in the negotiation of a more inclusive political settlement. But the occupation of Sana'a and cities across the north and west of the country by armed militia linked to the Houthi movement has stalled further reform. A Peace and National Partnership Agreement (PNPA), mediated by the United Nations, was reached in September; and a new Prime Minister was appointed on 13th October and a new technocratic government subsequently approved. The future of the PNPA, and whether it will be adhered to by all parties, remains unclear.
141. Increasing instability has undermined the Yemeni central Government's ability to tackle the dire economic situation, the acute humanitarian crisis, and the continued threat from Al Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Yemen's security ministries and agencies lack capacity, equipment, and the ability to make much-needed reforms. AQAP continue routinely to target government and security officials; and in September, they called for all Sunnis to attack Shias, including the Houthi movement. AQAP remains an extant threat to UK interests at

home and overseas: tackling this threat remains a top priority, and threats to aviation remain a particular concern. The UK Government works closely with the Government of Yemen and with international partners to increase Yemeni security forces' capability to disrupt AQAP. The UK Government co-chairs the Friends of Yemen Ministerial group, which provides direct support to Yemen's political, economic and security reform agenda. The UK is providing £196 million over three years in support of Yemen from 2012-2015. This includes £70 million targeting the 15 million Yemenis - half of the population - who are in need of humanitarian assistance.

142. **Libya** faces significant challenges following four decades of Qadhafi misrule. Despite progress since 2011, including parliamentary elections on 25th June 2014, some parties reverted to violence to achieve their aims. The current security situation is severely hampering the process of agreeing to a political settlement leading to a new constitution, the rebuilding of state security forces, and integration of militias.
143. While the Libyans must work out the substance of any settlement, the UK is committed to supporting transition to a more permanent democratic system; fully supports the democratically elected House of Representatives; and urges all sides to respect its role as the legitimate, inclusive, and democratic voice of the Libyan people. The UK Prime Minister's Special Envoy, Jonathan Powell, is working with Libyans and international partners in support of UN-led mediation efforts aimed at finding a lasting political agreement. Our Envoy's activity includes working with key militia leaders from all sides to identify common ground, establish agreed principles and work towards ceasefires throughout Libya. Once a ceasefire has been agreed, a demobilisation process for the militias will need to begin as the foundation for a lasting inclusive political agreement. We continue to assess that there is no military solution to the situation in Libya.
144. Through our Embassies and our Envoy we are revising an agreement on which groups should be excluded from a political process. UN Security Council Resolution 2174 makes clear that the international community will act against those continuing to use violence for political purposes. The UK welcomes the action taken by the UN Al Qa'ida Sanctions Committee to list Ansar Al Sharia Benghazi (AAS-B) and Ansar Al Sharia Derna (AAS-D) on 19th November. Both groups have links with Al Qa'ida and are responsible for acts of terror in Libya, including bomb attacks, kidnappings, and murder. All UN Member States are now required to freeze funds and other financial assets belonging to these groups. Separately, a domestic proscription Order for AAS-B was laid before Parliament on 24th November.
145. Deteriorating security led the Government on 26th July 2014 to advise "against all travel to Libya". This advice stands. In August, the UK Government arranged two assisted departures for British Nationals, and then relocated the British Embassy temporarily to Tunis: the Embassy can no longer offer consular assistance in Libya. Growing instability and violence led our in-country programme partners temporarily to reduce activities or draw down staff, but some are now starting to return. Some partners have continued selected activities

remotely wherever possible and have also worked through local staff who remained in Libya.

146. The UK has supported political participation, security, justice and defence and economic development in Libya since 2011. Following a recent comprehensive review of all our programming activity in Libya, we have recalibrated our programme portfolio to better support political mediation efforts as the best long-term solution to the current conflict. We continue to provide practical support in the form of training, mentoring, capacity-building and the provision of expert advice to help enhance the quality and coverage of reporting of events in Libya. We are providing support to efforts to mark and make safe post-conflict unexploded munitions and to educate the local population on the dangers. We are also supporting the provision of expert advice to the Constitutional Drafting Assembly on how to ensure good natural resource management in the future Libyan Constitution. We trained 238 Libyan Armed Forces personnel in the UK. The majority of recruits responded positively to the training despite the continuing political uncertainty in Libya. Unfortunately there were disciplinary issues and allegations of criminal behaviour. As a result the UK Government agreed with the relevant Libyan authorities to bring forward the training completion date. Those Libyan trainees not under UK police investigation have returned home on leave until the Libyans agree on how to employ them.

147. **The Sahel** remains unstable, affected by insecurity in Libya, and other challenges such as drugs- and people-trafficking, jihadist extremism and food insecurity. The Government's Sahel Strategy is guiding our work to address the security threats and root causes of instability, in partnership with international organisations and bilateral partners. Its three pillars – Security, State-building and Resilience – have enabled the UK to influence others' approaches, and will underpin our programme work under the new Conflict, Security and Stability Fund. The new UN Special Envoy for the Sahel, Mme Hiroute Guebre Selassie, will lead on implementing the UN Sahel Strategy. The EU has increased its activity in the Sahel; and Government's proactive approach has enabled us to influence the shape, mandates, and staffing of CSDP Missions in the region.

148. The UK has made significant contributions to stability through the EU military Training Mission in Mali, both military and civilian staff, including delivery of training on International Humanitarian Law and the protection of civilians, the UN Mission in Mali (MINUSMA, two staff officers) and civilian CSDP Missions in Mali and Niger (one in each). Matching our security work, the Government has given £103 million in humanitarian aid; committed £110 million for resilience; and will soon start a £111 million multi-year humanitarian programme for the region. The UK Special Representative for the Sahel, the Rt Hon Stephen O'Brien MP, has been at the forefront of the UK's engagement in the region.

149. **Mali** has been largely stabilised but underlying risks remain. After a slow start, political dialogue between the Government and northern groups began in Algiers in July 2014, aiming for agreement by the end of the year. President Keita has been in power for a year, and has provided valuable stability. MINUSMA continues to deploy across the country, but has faced attacks by jihadist groups intent on derailing the peace process. Summer 2014 saw France replacing

Operation Serval with Operation Barkhane, deploying 3,000 troops across the Sahel.

150. Security in parts of **Kenya** has deteriorated during 2014. The UK's top priority in Kenya remains tackling the significant threat from Al Shabaab. Al Shabaab has the intent and capability for large-scale attacks in Kenya proven in September 2013 (Westgate) and in June 2014 (Lamu County). Of particular concern are Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), one of which was detonated at Nairobi International Airport in January 2014 and another found in a vehicle in Mombasa in March, in addition to a spate of attacks in north-eastern Kenya. Al Shabaab aims to weaken Kenya in response to its military deployment in Somalia, but also poses risks to British Nationals in Kenya. We judge that the risk to British Nationals in parts of Kenya has grown during 2014 and the Government has changed its Travel Advice accordingly.
151. Kenya's security agencies are reasonably well-equipped but face challenges, particularly in terms of command and control and inter-agency coordination. Allegations of state involvement in extra-judicial killings and human rights violations by security forces are also fuelling radicalisation, particularly on the Coast. The UK continues to work closely with the Government of Kenya and international partners to address these challenges, primarily through building Kenyan criminal justice system capacity to arrest, detain and prosecute terrorists in accord with Kenyan and international law. The Overseas Security and Justice Assistance Guidance is used to mitigate risk of human rights violations. We are also working with the Governments of Somalia and other regional countries to ensure a co-ordinated approach to tackle Al Shabaab threats at their source. UK development programmes are working towards peace-building, police reform (including improved crime data collection and use of statistics) and community security, particularly a reduction of violence against women and girls. These actions will contribute to a safer environment in which men and women, girls and boys are more confident that security providers are there to serve their interests.
152. The UK is working to increase security, political and economic stability and resilience in **Somalia** so that it does not provide a base for serious threats to UK interests. The UK has invested £31 million to support programmes to improve security and justice. Following the May 2013 London Somalia Conference, and September 2013 New Deal Compact agreed in Brussels, the UK has now taken over from the EU as the lead donor on the New Deal and also leads the justice working group. The UK contributes over £100 million a year in development assistance to Somalia, creating 56,900 long-term jobs including over 15,000 for women. DFID's work will also help prevent malnutrition and life-threatening diseases for up to 500,000 people each year until 2015. The High Level Partnership Forum in Copenhagen in November measured progress against New Deal objectives.
153. Despite continuing insecurity, instability and violence, significant political progress has been made in 2014 which should allow agreement on a future federal structure for Somalia. The gains remain fragile, however; and it is important that the Federal Government sustains its programme of outreach to the regions to ensure balanced, sustainable agreements. More rapid progress is

needed on agreeing the draft Constitution and enabling a legitimate electoral process in 2016. Piracy in Somalia has been successfully suppressed by naval operations in the Indian Ocean, the last successful pirate attack being in May 2013. Longer term work is also needed to create a viable economy, reducing the attraction of piracy. 2014 has seen important progress against Al Shabaab, including territorial gains by the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), and the death of Al Shabaab leader Ahmed Abdi Godane in an American air strike on 1st September. However, Al Shabaab still controls territory in south central Somalia and seeks to destabilise the Federal Government and Regional Administrations through asymmetric attacks on political targets and targeted assassinations, underlining the need for continued support to AMISOM while also enabling Somalia to provide its own security. In September, Government hosted a London event to galvanise international support for development of the Somali National Army (SNA).

154. The Boko Haram insurgency continues to threaten stability in north-east **Nigeria** and northern Cameroon, killing over 3,000 innocent people this year and displacing over 1.5 million people. The UK, working closely with France and the United States, is supporting Nigeria in its fight against Boko Haram and to find the missing Chibok schoolgirls. On 12th June, the then Foreign Secretary, William Hague, hosted a Ministerial meeting in London to co-ordinate international support to the Nigerian Government, and announced a substantial new package of UK military, intelligence and development support, including through the deployment of RAF Sentinel and then Tornado aircraft. Minister for Africa, James Duddridge, attended the follow up meeting in Abuja on 3rd September to up-date partners on the significant progress made on implementation. Our package includes training and advice to Nigerian units deployed against Boko Haram; intelligence support; support for bringing increased development to the north-east; and a commitment to draw 1 million more children into education in Northern Nigeria by 2020. The Government continues to stress to the Nigerian authorities the importance of total human rights compliance in its response to terrorism. On 26th June, the UN placed Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau and splinter group Ansaru on the Al Qa'ida Sanctions List, meeting a central commitment of the London Ministerial and following Boko Haram's listing on 22nd May.

155. The overall rating for this Task, taking account of all commitments, is "on track" as defined in paragraph 54.

Task 7: Provide resilience for the UK by being prepared for all kinds of emergencies, able to recover from shocks and to maintain essential services.

156. Improving the collective ability of responders to work together and share information in preparing for and responding to **emergencies** continues to be a high priority. A new, secure, web-based service, ResilienceDirect, went live in March 2014 and is enabling over 900 organisations and in excess of 5,700 (users) responders and planners to share information, plan responses to emergency situations and manage incidents in real time. It will also include a mapping capability that will enhance multi-agency planning and communications.

157. The cross-government National Resilience Capabilities Programme continues to help strengthen preparedness by trialling new ways to assess more accurately capabilities needed to respond to the consequences of emergencies. Building on lessons from exercises, the Government is up-grading crisis management capabilities; and linked to this, an MOU with Ordnance Survey will provide mapping and imaging facilities within central Government's response arrangements. Implementation of JESIP (see paragraph 98), aimed at improving inter-agency interoperability, is progressing well.
158. Experience gained from civil contingency planning for the 2012 Olympic Games was used to good effect in planning for and delivering a safe and secure Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. Following last winter's severe weather, a new Flooding Committee chaired by the Prime Minister met to coordinate flood resilience strategy. This Committee has reviewed lessons learned from the period of severe weather, including a strengthened role for military assistance to the civil authorities in emergencies.
159. Pandemic influenza is one of the most significant risks to the UK. Plans are to be tested in a major national exercise next year, with guidance to Local Resilience Forums having been published following the 2011 Pandemic Influenza Strategy and health sector changes in England. Work continues to test preparedness for flooding, building on lessons learned from the 2013/14 severe weather, the 2013 National Response Guide for Coastal Flooding, and Exercise Watermark in 2011.
160. The Ebola outbreak in West Africa is an unprecedented human tragedy, which the UN has declared a public health crisis requiring urgent international response. Its rapid spread, and the speed with which transmission rates have increased, present a major challenge to the governments in the worst-affected countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone (see also paragraphs 15-17). It has put huge pressure on an already vulnerable region still recovering from civil war. The Ebola outbreak has the potential to become a serious threat to UK international security: left unchecked, the disease could spread beyond the region and present a serious public health risk with economic and security consequences. In addition to work on treatment centres and community care centres, UK military and civilian experts have supported the Government of Sierra Leone in establishing District Ebola Response Centres to increase coordination and command and control at the district level, including safer burials. The first of these centres in the Western Area has secured significant results: 100% of reported deaths in the Western Area are now buried safely and there is effective coordination of patients being placed in isolation beds. This command and control model is now being rolled out to other districts including Bombali, Pot Loko, Moyamba, Tonkolili and Kambia.
161. The UK is coordinating the international effort in Sierra Leone at the request of its Government. The UK has so far committed £230 million to tackle Ebola. This includes supporting 700 treatment beds, more than tripling Sierra Leone's capacity, and providing care to up to 8,800 patients over six months, as well as shoring up the country's stretched public health services to help contain the disease. Using military oversight, the Government is also working to provide a

forward command and control logistical hub as the backbone of infrastructure, commodities, training and management needed to scale up the response. The scale of this crisis requires an immediate and a long-term response from the international community. The UK hosted a pledging event on Sierra Leone on 2nd October at Lancaster House in London, organised under UN auspices and co-chaired by the Foreign and Development Secretaries. The conference highlighted the scale of the crisis, and generated over £100 million in pledges of in-kind assistance as well as financial contributions to the UN Trust Fund. UK diplomatic leadership was successful in pushing the EU and its Member States to scale up their response to a commitment of €1 billion at the October European Council.

162. Central to ensuring UK readiness and ability to handle disruptive challenges is awareness of communities and the wider public of challenges facing the country. Accordingly, the Government continues to publish an annual National Risk Register. Recent experience has also highlighted the importance of rapidly alerting the public about major incident response. Trials of a new national public alerting capability focusing on landlines were reported in March 2014, and Government is exploring how recommendations might be taken forward.

163. The resilience of essential services is a key focus of preventing and dealing with emergencies. Each year the Government departments with responsibility for the Critical National Infrastructure sectors in the UK produce Sector Resilience Plans (SRPs). These SRPs set out the resilience of the UK's most important infrastructure to the relevant risks identified within the National Risk Assessment, with the aim of identifying any vulnerabilities and tracking measures to improve resilience where it is necessary. The summary of the 2014 SRPs was published in early November.

164. One of the most critical of all essential services is energy. The UK **energy sector** is resilient to a wide range of risks including malicious threats, natural hazards and technical failure; but mitigating measures are kept under review as risk understanding improves and new risks are identified. The National Emergency Plan for Down-stream Gas and Electricity sets out decision-making processes and response mechanisms to maintain system integrity and safety, and facilitate protection and timely restoration of supplies. EU legislation also requires the UK to address gas supply infrastructure resilience, and develop risk assessments, a preventative action plan and the National Emergency Plan.

165. The UK currently enjoys a high level of energy security, being rated first in the EU and fourth worldwide by the American Chamber of Commerce. This level of security is rooted in the Government's commitment to competitive energy markets along with effective regulation. Further, the Green Deal, Energy Demand Reduction, smart meters and the Government's business energy efficiency policies (including household installations funded through the Energy Company Obligation) all target reducing energy demand and directly contribute to more secure and sustainable supplies.

166. The Energy Security Strategy (2012) sets out the Government's vision for energy security, which the Government continues comprehensively to monitor and assess including through annual Statutory Security of Supply Reports (see

also paragraph 37). The June 2014 EU Energy Security Strategy expresses the EU's need to reduce its dependency on Russia by developing indigenous resources, particularly shale gas, renewables and nuclear; diversifying supply routes; removing bottle necks; increasing Europe's interconnectedness; and increasing energy efficiency.

167. The Government continues to monitor and mitigate emerging risks, including support for energy reform in Ukraine, and to develop strong bilateral engagement with critical energy partners, consumers and producers such as China, India, Norway, Japan, Qatar, Brazil, America, Canada and Saudi Arabia. Work to improve price stability continues through engagement with the International Energy Forum and the International Energy Agency, and includes the IEA's "Association" initiative to strengthen engagement with major emerging economies.

168. The overall rating for this Task, taking account of all commitments, is "on track" as defined in paragraph 54.

Task 8: Work in alliances and partnerships wherever possible to generate stronger responses.

169. **NATO** is the bedrock of our national defence, the cornerstone of UK security and our ultimate defence guarantor. The UK-hosted Wales Summit on 4th-5th September 2014 was a significant point at which Allies marked progress in Afghanistan; considered regional security issues, including Ukraine, Syria and Iraq; and made commitments to ensure an Alliance agile, equipped and funded to deliver Allied security with Partner countries and organisations. Work is underway to implement Summit decisions before the 2016 Warsaw Summit.

170. NATO Allies condemned Russia's illegal military intervention in Ukraine and illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea. In response, NATO has taken measured, reversible steps to assure Allies of the security guaranteed firmly by membership (including UK contributions to Baltic Air Policing). Allies have also provided wide responses in support of Ukraine, including UK contributions to two of four new Trust Funds.

171. The new Readiness Action Plan outlines how NATO will ensure faster and more effective responses to today's security threats, including through creation of a rapidly deployable Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF).

172. Allies have pledged to halt declining defence expenditure, and aim to raise real defence spending as GDP grows so as to approach the 2% guideline within a decade, meet NATO Capability Targets and tackle NATO's capability shortfalls. In a decade, Allies will also aim to increase expenditure on major new equipment, including related Research and Development, to 20% or more of defence spending.

173. NATO's new Partnership initiatives announced in Wales include an Interoperability Platform enabling regular dialogue with Partners who contribute to operations, prominent exercises or other NATO training programmes. NATO also

offered enhanced opportunities to five NATO Partners contributing significantly to NATO operations and exercises (Finland, Sweden, Georgia, Jordan, and Australia).

174. NATO will also enhance support to Partners through a new Defence Capacity Building initiative. NATO experts will train, mentor and advise defence institutions in countries requesting it. Missions will soon be launched in Georgia, Jordan and Moldova.
175. The defence element is central to the UK's wider bilateral relationship with the **United States**. The House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee's April 2014 report on "Government Foreign Policy Towards the US" assessed the bilateral relationship to be in "good shape", commenting positively about both the Government's engagement with the United States and the relationship's value and beneficial impact on the UK; assessing positively how we co-operate and work together; and concluding that the UK has taken an effective approach to its relationship with the United States based on UK national interests. The Foreign Secretary, Chancellor, Defence Secretary, Home Secretary and International Development Secretary all met their American counterparts in Washington DC during 2014. Our strategies, policies and plans have been well aligned.
176. The past year has seen the UK and the United States work together on global challenges including Syria, Middle East Peace Process, Iraq, Iran, Ebola, Ukraine, and the emerging threat of ISIL; and on the successful NATO Summit in Wales. Our collaboration in critical areas underpins the defence and security relationship, including over intelligence, organised crime, nuclear, cyber, and counter-terrorism.
177. Cooperation with **France** on security and defence continues to deepen. At the January 2014 Brize Norton Summit, the Prime Minister and President Hollande confirmed the strength of the relationship, agreeing a wide-ranging programme of work for the next two years. Operationally this year the UK supported French-led operations in the Central African Republic; and France supported deployment of UK ISR Tornados to West Africa as part of international action against Boko Haram (see also paragraph 154). Development of the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force remains on track with a successful major land exercise in northern France in May 2014, and planning for subsequent exercises in 2015 and 2016. The British and French Defence Secretaries agreed at Farnborough in July 2014 to a collaborative two-year feasibility study for a Future Combat Air System, funded by each nation contributing £60 million. The UK and France are supporting each other on our respective evaluations of the VBCI armoured combat vehicle and the Watchkeeper unmanned air system. Construction of the joint nuclear facility at Valduc in France under the Teutates treaty has made good progress.
178. Government has continued to work closely with France on issues including initiation of an African security dialogue and initiation of expert dialogues on security and defence issues. France has hosted major commemorations including the D Day 70th Anniversary Commemoration linked to the Queen's very successful fifth State Visit to France; the 70th Anniversary of the landings in

southern France; and events commemorating the centenary of the First World War.

179. A very active **UN Security Council** has played a vital part in ensuring an effective multilateral response to continuing crises, with the UK taking a leading role. On Syria, the Council unanimously adopted UNSCR 2165 authorising cross-border humanitarian convoy movements. On Ukraine, Russia vetoed Security Council moves to condemn its actions; but the UK strongly supported efforts to deliver 100 votes supporting a similar UNGA Resolution. More widely, the UK has worked closely with the P3 to agree a Central African Republic peace-keeping mission; and our August UNSC presidency successfully delivered a Resolution on conflict prevention. Ensuring a strong, international response to the threat from ISIL was a focus of UNGA, including UNSC agreement to extended measures for travel bans on potential foreign terrorist fighters (see also paragraphs 76-77).
180. Government continues to work through the **Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)** as a forum for comprehensive dialogue and political agreements linking political-military issues and arms control with human rights and democracy, governance and the rule of law, and environment / energy issues. During 2014, the OSCE has been active throughout the Ukraine crisis, with full UK support including over £2 million, staff secondments, and the provision of armoured vehicles for a large-scale civilian monitoring mission; a UK-led unarmed military observation mission for activity under the Vienna Document 2011; and over 170 UK observers in support of large-scale observation of May's Presidential elections and October's parliamentary elections. The OSCE has also facilitated talks between Ukrainian, Russian and separatist representatives through its Trilateral Contact Group. In December 2013, the UK supported adoption of OSCE Kyiv Ministerial Council Decisions, including on combating the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons; up-dating the OSCE's non-proliferation principles; the first internationally recognised confidence-building measures in cyber security; up-dating the OSCE Action Plan on trafficking in human beings; statements on the Transnistrian and Nagorno-Karabakh conflicts; and continuation of the "Helsinki+40" process tasking current Swiss and future 2015 Serbian OSCE Chairmanships to find new ways to tackle evolving threats.
181. Government has successfully worked with the **EU and its Member States** to address crises and security challenges over this period. The UK has been at the forefront in shaping EU support for Ukraine against Russian aggression, and has strongly advocated sanctions as a means to apply a cost for Russia's actions and to encourage change in Russian behaviour. The UK also continues to lead the EU's response to the crisis in Syria and now Iraq, including responding to the threat from ISIL, and to play a leading role in EU negotiations with Iran.
182. The EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) contributes to conflict prevention, crisis management and stabilisation, helping strengthen European security and Europe's contribution to transatlantic security. The Government has worked for a more efficient and effective CSDP complementing NATO. The December 2013 European Council on defence agreed on the importance and primacy of NATO to European defence, with the Government

ensuring that NATO-EU coordination was a central theme throughout the Council agenda. At the Council, European nations agreed to continue developing new defence capabilities to build their contributions to transatlantic security and defence, and agreed measures to improve European defence industry competitiveness, encouraging innovation while both minimising bureaucracy and boosting economic growth.

183. The UK has continued to contribute civilian and military personnel to CSDP missions and operations. The following new CSDP missions have been established: an EU Advisory Mission in Ukraine to support civilian security sector reform, and an EU Capacity Building Mission in Mali supporting internal security forces. The UK has continued to host the HQ for Operation Atalanta countering piracy off Somalia; and an EU military operation in the Central African Republic has worked to support achievement of a safe and secure environment in its capital Bangui. The EU Policing mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo has closed.

184. The UK continues to provide significant support for **international criminal justice**, working to tackle impunity for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity by supporting efforts to ensure that perpetrators of atrocities are held to account and that victims see justice done. In November 2013, the Special Court for Sierra Leone sentenced Charles Taylor to 50 years imprisonment; and under an agreement of the Court with the UK, he has since been held in a UK prison. In 2014, the Government contributed about £16 million to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the international tribunals, and £1 million to the ICC Trust Fund for Victims earmarked for projects supporting survivors of sexual violence in conflict. This complemented wider UK work to shatter the culture of impunity for perpetrators of crimes of sexual violence in conflict through the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative and the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict (see also paragraph 72).

185. The overall rating for this Task, taking account of all commitments, is “mixed” as defined in paragraph 54.

Defence transformation

186. Government has continued to make good progress on the challenging programme of Defence Transformation in force structures, equipment, personnel, bases, efficiency and reform:

- Implementation of the new Defence operating model recommended by Lord Levene’s 2011 Defence Reform review is now complete, increasing delegation of capability planning and financial responsibility to the single Service Commands and the Joint Forces Command. Top Level Budget holders are held to account for delivery against their plans and a new control framework is in place.
- April 2014 saw Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) launched as a bespoke trading entity, with the necessary business freedoms to inject new

expertise and deliver sustained organisational improvement (see also paragraph 226).

- Defence Business Services and the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency have merged, forming a single shared services centre to provide finance, support and HR services for the Service and Civilian workforce.
- A new DG-level Chief Information Officer has been appointed in the Joint Forces Command to lead Information and Communication Technology delivery across Defence.
- A new leadership team is in place in the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), following Capita's appointment as its Strategic Business Partner.

Equipment capability: MOD

187. Good progress continues with procurement of high-quality new equipment for our Armed Forces. Having brought the budget under control, the Prime Minister announced in July 2014 a £1.1 billion investment programme of which £800 million was for Joint Force Command Intelligence and Surveillance equipment, and £300 million for existing capabilities. An £800 million contract for the development of a new electronic radar system for the Eurofighter Typhoon was signed in November on behalf of the UK, Germany, Spain and Italy.

Royal Navy

188. Her Majesty the Queen formally named the first of two Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers on 4th July 2014. The second, Prince of Wales, began construction as HMS Queen Elizabeth left the dry dock in Rosyth. Both ships will eventually enter Royal Navy service. On 5th September 2014, the Prime Minister stated that the Government intended to "...ensure that we will always have one carrier available, 100 per cent of the time". The total capital procurement cost to Defence will be £6.2 billion, with any variation around that price shared equally between the Government and the Aircraft Carrier Alliance. Flying from HMS Queen Elizabeth will begin in 2018 after her sea trials conclude.

189. HMS Ambush, the second of seven Astute class submarines, is now fully operational. The third, HMS Artful, was launched in May 2014 and is expected to start sea trials in 2015.

190. Approval of the Successor Deterrent Assessment Phase in spring 2011, at a cost of £3 billion, covers work to Main Gate in 2016 including submarine platform design. This is now 60% complete. More recent approval of £261 million will enable purchase of long lead items and BAe Systems facilities improvements. The Successor programme remains within the 2006 White Paper cost and is on track to deliver an operational future Deterrent Capability from 2028.

191. The Type 26 (T26) Assessment Phase has continued throughout 2014 and aims to replace all thirteen Type 23 frigates from 2022. On current plans, the first T26 will begin construction from May 2016.

192. HMS *Illustrious* was decommissioned in August 2014 as HMS *Ocean* returned to Fleet operations following extensive refit.
193. BAe Systems started to build the first of three new Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) in October 2014. Current plans envisage delivery of the three ships in 2017-2019 at a cost of £348 million.
194. The Royal Navy's next generation ship-borne Merlin Mk2 submarine-hunting helicopters entered service four months ahead of schedule in July 2014. The £800 million programme has sustained more than 1,400 UK jobs and delivered one of the most advanced and effective anti-submarine helicopters in the world.
195. The Royal Navy's new ScanEagle unmanned air system began operations from the Type 23 frigate HMS *Somerset* in early 2014, seven months after announcement of the contract for its provision with Boeing Defence UK.

Royal Air Force

196. With delivery of the first production Joint Strike Fighter Lightning II test and evaluation aircraft in 2016, the first front-line Lightning II squadron will become operational by 2019. The fifth Typhoon squadron is due to stand-up at RAF Lossiemouth from 1st April 2015. Typhoon synthetic training will optimise aircraft operational efficiency.
197. Transition from legacy to new Air Transport or Air-to-Air Refuelling Aircraft is underway, with nine A330 Voyager aircraft being accepted into military service for Air Transport and cleared to refuel Tornado, Typhoon and C-130J aircraft. The first A400M Atlas was accepted into service in November 2014; and delivery of two aircraft has been brought forward to manage their entry into service.
198. Royal Air Force Reserves expansion continues. In the past year, the final existing Royal Auxiliary Air Force Squadron to change its role under Future Reserves 2020 has started recruiting. Planning to stand up a further three new squadrons in the south-west, west Midlands and north of England has started.
199. The first of three Rivet Joint signals intelligence aircraft delivered in November 2013 began flying for capability development with the RAF in May 2014. In July 2014, it was deployed to support operations in Afghanistan well ahead of the planned December 2014 In-Service Date. The remaining two aircraft are being converted and will be delivered in 2015 and 2017.
200. Development and manufacture of the Future Anti-surface Guided Weapon (FASGW) capability have continued with approval of the FASGW (Heavy) and FASGW (Light) weapons, and the common elements of their integration onto the Wildcat helicopter. The weapons are planned to enter service in October 2020.

Army

201. Significant developments in the Land environment will both enhance overall capability, as the Army makes progress towards the Army 2020 structure, and ensure that it remains amongst the best equipped in the world.
202. The Prime Minister announced in September a procurement contract with General Dynamics (UK) for 589 of the Army's new multi-role, fully digitised Scout armoured vehicles. This will be underpinned by Warrior and Challenger 2 life extension and sustainment programmes, significantly enhancing the Army's armoured manoeuvre capability. Six variants of Scout will provide nine different roles including reconnaissance and surveillance, joint fire control specialist capabilities, command and control, and battlefield repair. Scout specialist vehicle deliveries are planned to start in 2017, equipping the first squadron by mid-2019 and enabling the first brigade to deploy from the end of 2020.
203. Scout will augment the fleet of protected battlefield mobility vehicles already delivered by incorporating Mastiff, Wolfhound and Jackal into the core equipment programme through Urgent Operational Requirements (UOR) procurement. The UOR to Core programme has now approved 41 of the 74 equipment capabilities identified, totalling 75% of planned £1.34 billion spending on conversion. The most recent capabilities to be brought into the core are for route proving and IED clearance, improved ballistic protection helmets and body armour.
204. The first three of 14 new Chinook Mk6 helicopters have been delivered for Joint Helicopter Command. They will begin operating by January 2015. Full operational capability will follow in 2017. The total Chinook fleet will rise to 60 aircraft. The Julius modification programme and incorporation of digital automatic flight control systems will improve coherence across the entire Chinook fleet.
205. The Army's new light utility Wildcat helicopter programme will be the mainstay of the Aviation Reconnaissance Force at Yeovilton, having become operational on 28th August 2014. Full operating capability is scheduled for April 2017, based on two full squadrons capable of complex interventions. The recommendation to the Secretary of State to approve a single technical option sustaining to 2040 an Attack Helicopter capability is a major step forward for the Army.
206. The Watchkeeper Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Operational Capable Unit has met initial operating requirements through deployment to Afghanistan until October 2014. Five more Reaper remotely piloted aircraft have supported operations in Afghanistan.
207. Finally, delivery of dismounted close combat equipment (personal equipment, weapons, sight units and similar items) underpins the Army's commitment to develop the Army Reserve within the Future Reserves 2020 programme.

Personnel

208. Government continues to strengthen the Armed Forces Covenant, upon which the second statutory report was published on 16th December 2013. The Covenant

aims to reinforce bonds of trust and mutual respect between the Armed Forces and society, and ensure that the Armed Forces community is not disadvantaged in access to public and commercial services. The Armed Forces make enormous sacrifices for their country; and the Covenant ensures their recognition as valued members of society able to go from strength to strength in their vital and often dangerous role. Work at a local level and through the Devolved Administrations is in hand. Measures over the past year include:

- a £40 million Veterans Accommodation Fund to support Service Charities and other benevolent organisations accommodating Veterans' housing needs;
- a £20 million Childcare Fund to improve Defence personnel access to childcare;
- enduring funds for the Covenant, with a further £10 million p.a. from 2015/16;
- introduction of Forces Help to Buy, a three year £200 million scheme to help Service Personnel onto the property ladder: to date, about 830 Service Personnel have benefited to a value of approximately £13 million;
- from April 2015 widows, widowers and surviving civil partners of all members of the Armed Forces Pension Scheme will retain their pension for life;
- all local authorities in Great Britain have signed the Community Covenant and are working to bring Service and local communities closer together;
- almost 300 companies and charities have signed a Corporate Covenant making commitments to support the Armed Forces Community, including supporting employees to become Reservists; and
- eligibility criteria for the South Atlantic Medal (without Rosette) have been extended resulting in issue of a further 202 South Atlantic Medals.

209. The widest-ranging review of Terms and Conditions of Service (TACOS) for Service personnel in over 40 years will inform a New Employment Model (NEM). Further, changes introduced in 2014 to separate Reimbursement Expenses from the wider allowances framework, and amalgamation or deletion of 17 allowances, will help reduce its complexity.

210. NEM consultation from June 2013 to February 2014 engaged about 30,000 Service personnel and their families. Results published on 21st July 2014 will inform effective policy-making. Other NEM changes being implemented from April 2015 to 2020 include:

- working with the Services to align their regular engagement structures to the Armed Forces Pension Scheme in April 2015;
- a new Combined Accommodation Assessment System (CAAS);

- examination of ways to enhance training and education delivery;
- developing career management and career streaming policy to enable focused professional development of officers; and
- work to develop a new pay system.

211. NEM work is also considering how current Reserve pay and allowances packages might change to support the Reserves, and aligning engagement structures to facilitate transfer between regular and reserve employment.

212. In June we announced the final Armed Forces Redundancy Programme (AFRP) phase. About 10,540 Armed Forces personnel had left MOD by 30th June 2014 under AFRP Tranches 1, 2 and 3; and in June 2014, about 1,060 personnel were notified of selection for redundancy in Tranche 4, of whom 72% were applicants. No further redundancy is required to meet 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review personnel targets.

213. In the year to 1st April 2014, civilian personnel were reduced by 2,900 bringing the overall reduction since 2010 to 23,350. Total civilian numbers are expected to have fallen by more than 27,000 by 2015, bringing the total below 60,000.

214. The first Defence People and Training Strategy has been published encompassing all Whole Force Approach² (WFA) elements for the first time. Replacement strategies will be published after each Strategic Defence and Security Review, supported by annual plans detailing how milestones will be achieved. The WFA is increasingly embedded in capability development across the Armed Forces, particularly in organisations delivering new capabilities. Few barriers remain to further WFA policy development; and these are subject to Defence Board review concluding in March 2015.

215. The July 2013 White Paper “Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valued and Valuable” detailed proposals for the future relationships required with society, employers, Reservists and their families in order to deliver and sustain the Reserve Forces required³.

216. As we restructure our Armed Forces to meet the security challenges of the future, Reservists will play an even greater role and will be required for almost all military operations, both at home and abroad. They will provide a larger proportion of the force, particularly capability in certain specialist areas that it is not practical or cost-effective to maintain full time.

² “Whole Force Approach” describes a way to deliver a balanced, resilient and fully integrated force structure, comprising Service Personnel (Regular and Reserve) and civilians (MOD Civil Servants and contractors), optimised to deliver the people (Human Capability) component of Defence’s Operational Capability, at declared readiness and defined risk, in the most cost-effective and affordable manner.

³ For the purposes of Table 1 assessing progress against National Security Tasks, the defence transformation commitment on the Future Reserves 2020 is noted under item 6(c) on a civilian response scaled to support military operations.

217. The contribution of our Reserve Forces, will deliver – in a cost-effective way - the capable and usable Armed Forces the nation needs; better harnessing the talents of the country and enhancing the links and understanding between the Armed Forces and wider society.
218. We are committed to increasing our total Reserve Forces to 35,000 by the end of 2018/19 and all three Services are actively recruiting. The FR20 Programme business objective is to increase trained strength by the end of 2018/19 as follows:
- from 19,410 in 2012 to 30,000 for the Army Reserve;
 - from 1,830 in 2012 to 3,100 for the Maritime Reserve (Royal Naval Reserve and Royal Marines Reserve); and
 - from 970 in 2012 to 1,800 for the Royal Auxiliary Air Force.
219. As part of our plans to encourage more people to join the Reserves, we are investing an additional £1.8 billion in them over ten years, including financial incentives, integrated training and better provision of equipment. Overall tri-service trained strength as at 1st April 2014 was 22,480, against a target of 21,780 by that date.
220. The Defence Reform Act entered into force on 1st October 2014. This will enable Reservists to have the opportunity to be used for a wider range of tasks, with access, for both them and their employer, to the full benefits and protection that mobilisation provides. In addition, new payments have been introduced for small and medium-sized employers, of up to £500 per month when a Reservist employee is mobilised.

Bases

221. The Regular Army Basing Plan, with Army rebasing from Germany at its core, was announced by the Defence Secretary on 5th March 2013. The Basing Plan represents a £1.8 billion infrastructure investment in the UK over the construction period from late 2013 until late 2019. Its recommended baseline infrastructure solution has largely been defined with commercial processes for development partners underway.
222. We remain on target to return 100% of our personnel in Germany by 2020 and to exceed the original target of 50% returning by 2015. Finalising this number continues to depend on other MOD change programmes. Concurrent return of manpower and materiel from Afghanistan exacerbates the challenge; and the Defence Board is monitoring progress closely.
223. The Army Basing Programme – with Chief Operating Officer Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) as the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) – is supported by Army and DIO delivery teams drawing upon industry support. Infrastructure-related work is under way to deliver ecological surveys, planning work, site-level assessment and options studies. Work is advancing with councils to prepare planning applications, and commercial processes are in hand.

224. Work has now started on the longer term future of 38 sites surplus to Reserve requirements and to develop plans for meeting requirements of affected lodger units and cadets. Further rationalisation work is expected to commence in 2016 once the impact of structural change on reserve recruiting becomes clearer.

Efficiency and reform

225. The Materiel Strategy was launched to investigate how DE&S can operate differently to become more efficient and effective. Reforming the acquisition system, delivering lasting improvement in the management of the MOD's ten-year £164 billion equipment and support programme, is a core element of the Transforming Defence programme. The Strategy had originally considered two options: a Government Owned Contractor Operated (GOCO) body, and DE&S+ as the enhanced internal option. In December 2013, the then Defence Secretary announced that, following withdrawal of a second GOCO bidder, the Government would not proceed with the competition as the risks of continuing with only one remaining bidder were too great. Instead, it was decided to establish DE&S as a bespoke trading entity in the public sector. The new DE&S was launched on 1st April 2014 as part of the MOD but operates at arm's length from the Department.

226. A DE&S Corporate Plan and Framework Document have been published; and a new governance and oversight structure includes an independently chaired Board, and a Chief Executive responsible to Parliament for DE&S performance. A number of freedoms and controls underpin this, agreed with HM Treasury and the Cabinet Office, particularly on how DE&S recruits, rewards and manages its workforce. A DE&S Executive Board is leading transformation, adding specialised external support secured through contracts for Managed Service Providers to provide assistance in Project Delivery; Finance / Management, Information / Information Technology; and Human Resources. Contracts for the first and third of these work packages were awarded on 17th November.

227. The Defence Reform Act 2014, which received Royal Assent in May 2014, covers MOD proposals for strengthening single source procurement. The Act establishes a new independent regulator and introduces a comprehensive and far-reaching reform. This means a radical improvement to how the Department procures services and equipment through single source contracting, delivering a more efficient and effective way of supporting the Armed Forces.

228. Working to deliver non-front line savings of at least £4.3 billion over the 2010 Spending Review period (to 2014/15), the Department has been able to operate within its budget over the last two financial years. A tracking process has been developed to mitigate risk of savings erosion.

229. Finally, plans to deliver savings of £900 million by 2020/21 under the Submarine Enterprise Performance Programme (SEPP) are being taken forward. Following agreement of Rolls-Royce and BAe Systems Foundation Contracts in 2013, signature in October of the Maritime Support Delivery Framework as the Foundation Contract for Babcock Marine secures related benefits.

230. The overall rating for Defence Transformation, taking account of all commitments, is “on track” as defined in paragraph 54.

Wider issues

Gibraltar

231. Spain continues to violate UK sovereignty over Gibraltar through unlawful maritime incursions into British Gibraltar Territorial Waters. Government protects British sovereignty by challenging all incursions on the water as they happen and through timely diplomatic protests. Incursions violate sovereignty but neither threaten nor weaken it, nor undermine the legal basis in international law for British sovereignty over Gibraltar, including British Gibraltar Territorial Waters. All elements of the situation, including the maritime security capabilities available to the Royal Navy Gibraltar Squadron, are kept under review. Our maritime posture and diplomatic action to promote dialogue aim to de-escalate tensions rather than increase them.

232. The Government is disappointed that Spain’s NATO reservation against ships or aircraft travelling between Spanish and Gibraltarian ports or air space remains in place. Government will continue to raise Spain’s unacceptable position in Madrid and with other NATO Allies.

Conference on unconventional threats

233. Recent developments in international security have highlighted the need to learn from experience of unconventional threats and to reflect on their policy implications. Such threats could include use of subversion, proxies, non-state actors, propaganda, intimidation and other ways of exploiting an adversary’s apparent vulnerabilities. The Cabinet Office, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Ministry of Defence and Home Office co-sponsored a conference on this theme in October 2014. The event convened senior officials responsible for security policy at national and intergovernmental levels along with experts, including from the academic community, the private sector and non-governmental organisations.

Conclusions

234. This report has documented significant further progress in implementing the National Security Strategy through the adaptable approach detailed in the Strategic Defence and Security Review. Over 90% of the 220 commitments in 2010 are broadly on track or have been delivered. This is also reflected in assessment of progress with the National Security Tasks. Challenges of a technical, resource, and legislative nature remain, but particularly also in areas of international policy where the underlying issues may not be subject to direct influence by the Government.