

Fact Sheet 4: The National Security Tasks

The Strategic Defence and Security Review identifies, for the first time, a cross cutting set of eight National Security Tasks which we will carry out to deliver defence, deterrence and wider security. These are:

To identify and monitor risks



Why? The UK needs maximum warning of threats to tackle, and opportunities to exploit, so that effort is directed where it is needed most.

Who? Information is gathered in many ways, including covertly by the intelligence agencies and police. The Joint Intelligence Committee leads on this analysis.

How? The UK needs to ensure that its long-established tools for gathering and assessing information keep up with advances in technology.

Where? The UK needs to be able to operate in cyberspace and in priority geographical areas worldwide, as well as looking at the domestic picture.

To tackle causes of instability



Why? It is better to deal with problems before they become direct threats to the UK. Preventing conflict is more efficient than fighting wars.

Who? We will take an integrated approach to building stability overseas, bringing together our diplomatic, development and defence resources.

How? New Stabilisation Response Teams drawing on civilian and military expertise will deploy to assess and help stabilise emergent crises and build overseas.

Where? The UK could double the Official Development Assistance going to fragile and conflict-affected states – some of the poorest countries in the world.

To exert influence



Why? Elevated bilateral relationships will help us to achieve mutually beneficial economic, political, societal, security and defence links.

Who? The FCO-led overseas network will coordinate UK efforts.

How? The FCO will lead the production of integrated strategies for countries and regions. Ambassadors and High Commissioners will be responsible for implementation.

Where? EU and NATO allies, and other strategically important partners such as India, Pakistan, Japan, The United Arab Emirates and other Gulf States.

To enforce the law and strengthen international norms



Why? A strong, rules based system underpins cooperation between states and multilateral organisations and supports UK objectives (e.g. countering proliferation); law enforcement in the UK brings criminals and terrorists to justice.

Who? The FCO coordinating overseas and the law enforcement authorities operating in the UK.

How? The FCO will lead efforts in multilateral organisations and bilaterally and law enforcement authorities using relevant powers in the UK.

Where? Overseas, including through the UN and EU, and at home across the UK.

To protect the UK



Why? To protect the UK public and our nationals overseas from imminent or potentially imminent state or non-state threats.

Who? A cross-Government effort including security and intelligence services, the police, border protection, the military, and cyber-expertise.

How? By retaining a strategic deterrent, keeping the capabilities to disrupt threats to the UK and our overseas territories, ensuring that our borders are secure and investing in new technologies such as cyber security.

Where? Predominantly in the UK and at our borders, but also internationally where the threat overseas is linked to the threat at home.

To resolve conflicts, intervening when necessary



Why? To contribute to the resolution of conflicts before they become threats to the UK, or to protect our overseas nationals and territories.

Who? The armed forces will lead efforts in intervening, stabilising and, as necessary, evacuating British nationals. The civilian response will be scaled to support concurrency and scale of the military operation.

How? Through military planning and action, including the legal use of force where necessary, in coordination with other national security tools.

Where? Wherever there is a conflict that is a threat to our nationals overseas or that might escalate into a threat to the UK.

To provide domestic resilience



Why? Despite our best efforts, it isn't always possible to prevent emergencies in the UK. We have to be prepared to recover from shocks.

Who? An integrated crisis response capability using the COBR crisis response mechanism and bringing together the police, the military, transport authorities, industry, local authorities, and others as appropriate.

How? The Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat leadership of an "all risks" approach, ensuring that all parties are prepared and coordinated.

Where? Efforts will ensure that the preparation is in place to respond to a crisis wherever it occurs within the UK.

To work in alliances and partnerships



Why? If we work together with our allies and partners to achieve the mutual goal of improving security and stability where it matters most we can achieve more with fewer resources.

Who? Through NATO, as the basis for transatlantic defence and through the EU and UN. But we will also explore a range of formal bilateral agreements, including on sharing of military capabilities.

How? Through better coordinated, foreign policy-led activity overseas.

Where? We will increase cooperation with traditional EU/NATO partners and build new partnerships with key regional powers.