



THE ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP  
Global Security  
and Non-Proliferation

## Summary of APPG Meeting: The 2023 Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy

*Written by Anahita Parsa, BASIC, on behalf of the APPG on Global Security and Non-Proliferation, and the All Party Parliamentary Group on the United Nations.*

On 28th March 2023, the APPG on Global Security and Non-proliferation hosted an APPG meeting on the 'Integrated Security Review 2023', chaired by Lord Hannay of Chiswick. The meeting was joined by speakers Bronwen Maddox, Director and Chief Executive Officer of Chatham House, Sir Mark Lyall Grant, former National Security Advisor and Former Permanent Representative of the UK to the United Nations, and Richard Reeve, Co-ordinator of Rethinking Security, and also the Former Chief Executive of the Oxford Research Group.

The session opened with a contextual statement that emphasised the importance of an Integrated Review Refresh at this time. In the intervening period since the last Integrated Review (IR), Russia's war in Ukraine has upended many previously held assumptions. None of the comments made during the APPG were political in nature, but an objective review that aimed to address the following questions: 1) Does the IR Refresh strike the right balance? 2) Is it resourced correctly? 3) Is the focus appropriate?

The three speakers touched on a number of similar themes throughout the event. Overall, the IR Refresh was a good account compared to 2021. The position of the UK, the US, and Europe, as well as other NATO allies, on *some* of the challenges within the Refresh may not always be entirely aligned. The focus on cultivating support among the "middle ground" powers may be more difficult than envisioned within the Refresh. The resources set out to meet the challenges in the Refresh are not currently sufficient.

On the overall positive assessment of the document, the remarks within are sensible and consistent with the UK's position, and have attracted a lot of consensus - specifically standing shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine. Events in the intervening years between IRs has shown the 2021 IR's characterisation of Russia as a threat as prescient. There are, however, several gaps in the current Refresh that could stand to be filled, especially with regards to Europe and the machinery of government.

With respect to China, speakers felt that it was far more difficult for the UK to determine a strategy. Framing this as a strategic challenge rather than a threat, however, is within the UK's interests, as it attempts to balance trade with a significant threat to data, IP, and industry. The



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speakers felt more action was needed on this. Attention was also drawn to the matter of human rights abuses in Xinjiang and Hong Kong. With respect to the Indo-Pacific tilt, speakers felt that carrier strike group operations and AUKUS were good steps (and specifically that the basing of UK SSNs in Australia would be a substantial increase in regional resources). However, speakers felt that there was more left to do to meet its objectives, and that wider questions remained regarding whether the UK could afford to shut China out of the economy, given its involvement in nuclear power plants, telecoms, and Chinese university students which remain substantial elements of the domestic economy. Speakers noted that the usual trade-off between prosperity, security, and values would remain in any interventions going forward.

There remains a Europe-shaped hole that has not been entirely filled since the 2021 Integrated Review, and that closer engagement with Europe and the US on these issues would be welcome, as transatlantic responses to China may not be entirely aligned. The focus on middle-ground powers was welcome, however, despite it being noted that this would be more difficult than presented in the IR, especially since the reduction in transparency in the 2021 IR was not taken well in those countries. There was also discussion of whether US-NATO continuity past 2024 was a given, in the same way that it has been for the past few decades.

On deterrence and the NPT, there was brief discussion of the UK nuclear enterprise being at the limits of what it is currently capable of, and that perhaps consideration of a new conceptualisation of both conventional and nuclear deterrence could be helpful.

But the main weakness was the money for the aspirations raised within the Refresh. The £3bn in nuclear submarine report, plus £2bn for Ukraine leaves no extra money, and all speakers agreed that the spending commitments were vague and insufficient.

The event ended with a call for a Parliamentary Debate on the Integrated Review Refresh.