

# Jeremy Corbyn speech at Chatham House

**Jeremy**

**Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party**, speaking at Chatham House, said:

**\*\*\*Check against delivery\*\*\***

Chatham

House has been at the forefront of thinking on Britain's role in the world.

So with the General Election less than a month away, it's a great place to set out

my approach: on how a Labour Government I lead will keep Britain safe, reshape

relationships with partners around the world, work to strengthen the United Nations and respond to the global challenges we face in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

And I should say a warm welcome to the UN Special Representative in Somalia, Michael Keating, who is here today.

On Monday, we commemorated VE Day, the anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany in Europe.

VE Day marked the defeat of fascism and the beginning of the end of a global war that claimed seventy million lives.

General Eisenhower, supreme commander of the Allied forces in 1944, went on to become Republican President of the United States during some of the most dangerous years of the Cold War in the 1950s.

In his final televised address to the American people as President, Eisenhower gave a stark warning of what he described as "the acquisition of unwarranted influence by the military-industrial complex."

"Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry", he said, "can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defence with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together."

Sadly, in the more than half a century since that speech, I think it's clear that Eisenhower's warning has not been heeded.

Too much of our debate about defence and security is one dimensional. You are either for or against what is presented as "strong defence", regardless of the actual record of what that has meant in practice.

Alert citizens or political leaders who advocate other routes to security are dismissed or treated as unreliable.

My own political views were shaped by the horrors of war and the threat of a nuclear holocaust. My parents met while organising solidarity with the elected government of Spain against Franco's fascists during the Spanish civil war.

My generation grew up under the shadow of the cold war. On television, through the 1960s and into the seventies, the news was dominated by Vietnam. I was haunted by images of civilians fleeing chemical weapons used by the United States.

I didn't imagine then that nearly fifty years later we would see chemical weapons still being used against innocent civilians. What an abject failure. How is it that history keeps repeating itself?

At the end of the cold war, when the Berlin Wall came down we were told it was the end of history. Global leaders promised a more peaceful, stable world.

It didn't work out like that.

Today the world is more unstable than even at the height of the cold war. The approach to international security we have been using since the 1990s has simply not worked.

Regime change wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria – and Western interventions in Afghanistan, Somalia and Yemen – have failed in their own terms, and made the world a more dangerous place.

This is the fourth General Election in a row to be held while Britain is at war and our armed forces are in action in the Middle East and beyond.

The fact is that the 'war on terror' which has driven these interventions has failed.

They have not increased our security at home – just the opposite.

And they have caused destabilisation and devastation abroad.

Last September, the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee published a report on David Cameron's Libyan war.

They concluded the intervention led to political and economic collapse, humanitarian and migrant crises and fuelled the rise of Isis in Africa and across the Middle East.

Is that really the way to deliver security to the British people?

Who seriously believes that's what real strength looks like?

We need to step back and have some fresh thinking.

The world faces huge problems. As well as the legacy of regime change wars, there is a dangerous cocktail of ethnic conflicts, of food insecurity, water scarcity, the emerging effects of climate change.

Add to that mix a grotesque and growing level of inequality in which just eight billionaires own the same wealth as the 3.6 billion poorest people.

And you end up with a refugee crisis of epic proportions affecting every continent in the world. With more displaced people in the world than since the Second World War.

These problems are getting worse and fuelling threats and instability.

The global situation is becoming more dangerous.

And the new US President seems determined to add to the dangers by recklessly escalating the confrontation with North Korea, unilaterally launching missile strikes on Syria, opposing President Obama's nuclear arms deal with Iran and backing a new nuclear arms race.

A Labour Government will want a strong and friendly relationship with the United States. But we will not be afraid to speak our mind.

The US is the strongest military power on the planet by a very long way. It has a special responsibility to use its power with care and to support international efforts to resolve conflicts collectively and peacefully.

Waiting to see which way the wind blows in Washington isn't strong leadership. And pandering to an erratic Trump administration will not deliver stability.

When Theresa May addressed a Republican Party conference in Philadelphia in January she spoke in alarmist terms about the rise of China and India and of the danger of the West being eclipsed.

She said America and Britain had to 'stand strong' together and use their military might to protect their interests.

This is the sort of language that led to calamity in Iraq and Libya and all the other disastrous wars that stole the post-Cold War promise of a new world order.

I do not see India and China in those terms. Nor do I think the vast majority of Americans or British people want the boots of their young men and women on the ground in Syria fighting a war that would escalate the suffering and slaughter even further.

Britain deserves better than simply outsourcing our country's security and prosperity to the whims of the Trump White House.

So no more hand holding with Donald Trump.

A Labour Government will conduct a robust and independent foreign policy – made in Britain.

A Labour Government would seek to work for peace and security with all the other permanent members of the United Nations security council – the US, China, Russia and France.

And with other countries with a major role to play such as India, South Africa, Brazil and Germany.

The 'bomb first, talk later' approach to security has failed. To persist with it, as the Conservative Government has made clear it is determined to do, is a recipe for increasing, not reducing, threats and insecurity.

I am often asked if as prime minister I would order the use of nuclear weapons.

It's an extraordinary question when you think about it – would you order the indiscriminate killing of millions of people? Would you risk such extensive contamination of the planet that no life could exist across large parts of the world?

If circumstances arose where that was a real option, it would represent complete and cataclysmic failure. It would mean world leaders had already triggered a spiral of catastrophe for humankind.

Labour is committed actively to pursue disarmament under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and we are committed to no first use of nuclear weapons.

But let me make this absolutely clear.

If elected prime minister, I will do everything necessary to protect the safety and security of our people and our country.

That would be my first duty.

And to achieve it, I know I will have to work with other countries to solve problems, defuse tensions and build collective

security.

The best defence for Britain is a government actively engaged in seeking peaceful solutions to the world's problems.

But I am not a pacifist.

I accept that military action, under international law and as a genuine last resort, is in some circumstances necessary.

But that is very far from the kind of unilateral wars and interventions that have almost become routine in recent times.

I will not take lectures on security or humanitarian action from a Conservative Party that stood by in the 1980s – refusing even to impose sanctions – while children on the streets of Soweto were being shot dead in the streets, or which has backed every move to put our armed forces in harm's way regardless of the impact on our people's security.

Once again, in this election, it's become clear that a vote for Theresa May could be a vote to escalate the war in Syria, risking military confrontation with Russia, adding to the suffering of the Syrian people and increasing global insecurity.

When you see children suffering in war, it is only natural to want to do something.

But the last thing we need is more of the same failed recipe that has served us so badly and the people of the region so calamitously.

Labour will stand up for the people of Syria. We will press for war crimes to be properly investigated. And we will work tirelessly to make the Geneva talks work.

Every action that is taken over Syria must be judged by whether it helps to bring an end to the tragedy of the Syrian war or does the opposite.

Even if ISIS is defeated militarily, the conflict will not end until there is a negotiated settlement involving all the main parties, including the regional and international powers and an inclusive government in Iraq.

All wars and conflicts eventually are brought to an end by political means.

So Labour would adopt a new approach. We will not step back from our responsibilities.

But our focus will be on strengthening international

co-operation and supporting the efforts of the United Nations to resolve conflicts.

A Labour Government will respect international law and oppose lawlessness and unilateralism in international relations. We believe human rights and social justice should drive our foreign policy.

In 1968, Harold Wilson's Labour Government signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

As prime minister, I hope to build on that achievement.

Labour's support for the renewal of the Trident submarine system does not preclude working for meaningful, multilateral steps to achieve reductions in nuclear arsenals.

A Labour Government will pursue a triple commitment to the interlocking foreign policy instruments of: defence, development and diplomacy.

For all their bluster, the Tory record on defence and security has been one of incompetence and failure.

They have balanced the books on the backs of servicemen and women.

Deep cuts have seen the Army reduced to its smallest size since the Napoleonic wars.

From stagnant pay and worsening conditions, to poor housing.

The morale of our service personnel and veterans is at rock bottom.

And as the security threats and challenges we face are not bound by geographic borders it is vital that as Britain leaves the EU, we maintain a close relationship with our European partners alongside our commitment to NATO and spending at least 2 per cent on defence.

That means working with our allies to ensure peace and security in Europe. We will work to halt the drift to confrontation with Russia and the escalation of military deployments across the continent.

There is no need whatever to weaken our opposition to Russia's human rights abuses at home or abroad to understand the necessity of winding down tensions on the Russia-Nato border and supporting dialogue to reduce the risk of international conflict.

We will back a new conference on security and cooperation in Europe and seek to defuse the crisis in Ukraine through

implementation of the Minsk agreements.

We will continue to work with the EU on operational missions to promote and support global and regional security.

This means our Armed Forces will have the necessary capabilities to fulfil the full range of obligations ensuring they are versatile and able to participate in rapid stabilisation, disaster relief, UN peacekeeping and conflict resolution activities.

Because security is not only about direct military defence, it's about conflict resolution and prevention, underpinned by strong diplomacy.

So the next Labour Government will invest in the UK's diplomatic networks and consular services.

We will seek to rebuild some of the key capabilities and services that have been lost as a result of Conservative cuts in recent years.

Finally, while Theresa May seeks to build a coalition of risk and insecurity with Donald Trump, a Labour Government will refocus Britain's influence towards cooperation, peaceful settlements and social justice.

The life chances, security and prosperity of our citizens are dependent on a stable international environment.

We will strengthen our commitment to the UN. But we are well aware of its shortcomings, particularly in the light of repeated abuses of the veto power in the UN Security Council.

So we will work with allies and partners from around the world to build support for UN reform in order to make its institutions more effective and responsive.

And as a permanent member of the Security Council we will provide a lead by respecting the authority of International Law.

To lead this work, Labour has created a Minister for Peace who will work across the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

We will reclaim Britain's leading role in tackling climate change, working hard to preserve the Paris Agreement and deliver on international commitments to reduce carbon emissions.

Labour will re-examine the arms export licensing regulations to ensure that all British arms exports are consistent with our legal and moral obligations.

This means refusing to grant export licences for arms when there is a clear risk that they will be used to commit serious violations of international humanitarian law.

Weapons supplied to Saudi Arabia, when the evidence of grave breaches of humanitarian law in Yemen is overwhelming, must be halted immediately.

I see it as the next Labour's Government task, as my task, to make the case for Britain to advance a security and foreign policy with integrity and human rights at its core.

So there is a clear choice at this election.

Between continuing with the failed policy of continual and devastating military interventions, that have intensified conflicts and increased the terrorist threat.

Or being willing to step back, learn the lessons of the past and find new ways to solve and prevent conflicts.

As Dwight Eisenhower said on another occasion:

If people "can develop weapons that are so terrifying as to make the thought of global war almost a sentence for suicide, you would think that man's intelligence would include also his ability to find a peaceful solution."

And in the words of Martin Luther King "The chain reaction of evil – hate – begetting hate, wars producing more wars – must be broken, or we shall be plunged into the dark days of annihilation".

I believe we can find those solutions.

We can walk the hard yards to a better way to live together on this planet.

A Labour Government will give leadership in a new and constructive way, and that is the leadership we are ready to provide both at home and abroad.

Thank you.

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# Building political alliances to reconnect citizens with the EU

As the two EU political institutions with a direct link to citizens, the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the European Parliament today joined forces to restore citizens' trust ahead of the European Parliament elections in 2019. They proposed joint measures to bring the European Union closer to citizens and deliver concrete answers to their concerns. From the side of the European Commission, the CoR was tasked to help bridge the gap between what people expect from the EU and what Europe is actually able to deliver on the ground.

Despite the recent victories of pro-EU candidates in France, the Netherlands and Austria, political leaders in Europe's regions and cities are still hearing calls from their citizens for Europe to change. Opening the CoR plenary session, alongside European Parliament President, **Antonio Tajani**, today, CoR President Markku Markkula stressed: " *As politicians elected in Europe's regions and cities, we have to use our leverage to show the concrete results and added value of the European project, while also addressing their real concerns. It is up to each one of us to bring the EU closer to them.* " This echoes the Declaration of Rome, in which Member States and EU leaders made a plea to better listening to citizens by working "together at the level that makes a real difference, be it the European Union, national, regional, or local, and in a spirit of trust and loyal cooperation, both among Member States and between them and the EU institutions, in line with the principle of subsidiarity."

**President Tajani** responded by highlighting that citizens have granted the EU an opportunity to change: " *As local representatives, you have a leading role in increasing the efficacy of EU funds in your regions and communicating Europe to our citizens at the local level. Last week's vote in France indicates that when properly explained, citizens can endorse the added-value of the single currency, and Europe as a whole* ", he stressed, before citing cohesion funds as the most visible part of the EU budget for citizens. " *We believe that our money should follow our political objectives and make a leap forward on the governance of EU funds while focussing on priorities to address citizens' concerns* .", he said.

CoR First Vice-President **Karl-Heinz Lambertz** added: " *Citizens rightly expect more from the European project. To restore trust, everyone working for and with the EU must fulfil the promise of more social and economic progress whilst standing up for European solidarity. This needs a far more flexible approach to local public investment to demonstrate that the EU does benefit the daily lives of every citizen* " .

This debate was further enriched with the participation of the European Commission Vice-President responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, **Jyrki Katainen**, who encouraged the CoR to take an active role in the debate on the [White Paper on the Future of Europe](#) . Addressing

the CoR members, Vice-President Katainen said: " I count on the European Committee of the Regions to continue participating to the reflection process on the Future of Europe, and make sure this debate will also reach the citizens. As representatives of regional and local authorities you play a crucial role in bridging the gap between what people expect of Europe and what Europe is actually able to deliver. I am looking forward to hearing the ideas and priorities Europe's regions and cities have for the future development of our Union. They will be an important part of our common answers ."

CoR members also took the occasion to welcome the European Commission's [reflection paper on "Harnessing globalisation"](#), which was published one day earlier and underlines that forging resilience is a shared responsibility at EU, national, regional and local level. " We want a more transparent and democratic EU, which defends the principles of subsidiarity, partnership and multilevel governance. In the face of increased globalisation, investment needs to address skills gaps and regulatory obstacles while being adapted to the territorial specificities ", President Markkula concluded.

This White Paper is intended to be a wake-up call: the starting point for an honest and wide-ranging debate in the Union's future beyond Brexit and will be the subject of a [Resolution](#), which is due to be adopted by the CoR tomorrow. Debates on the "Future of Europe", as well as the next Commission's reflection papers, will continue to be a priority for the CoR, including on the occasion of a conference on the "Future of Europe" as part of its [CIVEX](#) external meeting in Caen (France) on 21-22 September.

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### **CoR's "Reflecting on Europe" campaign**

As part of the ongoing reflection on the past, present and future of Europe, the CoR has launched a bottom up process called " [Reflecting on Europe](#) ", which aims to provide people with a local space to participate in an honest and open discussion about the way forward for the EU. This citizen-oriented process follows a request from the European Council's President, Donald Tusk, asking the CoR to send its recommendations on the ways to rebuild trust in the EU, through the voice of cities and regions. More recently, the European Commission 1 March White Paper calls for debates on the future of Europe in Parliaments, regions and cities. The CoR has also launched a [public online survey](#) that includes questions related to the future of EU policies. It will be used to collect and present citizens' feedback during local events and citizens' dialogues.

· Photos from the plenary session can be downloaded from our [CoR flickr gallery](#) .

**Contact:**

## [Ross: SNP plans would threaten Scottish defence jobs](#)

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- Ross: SNP plans would threaten Scottish defence jobs

12 May 2017



Scottish Conservative MPs elected on June 8th will stand up for Britain's military – and back a commitment to increase spending on defence, the party said today.

Douglas Ross, who is standing in the Moray constituency, highlighted this week's commitment by the Prime Minister to spend an extra £1 billion a year on defence.

He is calling on the SNP to explain their own plans – after senior SNP MPs suggested earlier this year that, if Scotland became independent, they would “start from scratch” with a new “bespoke” independent Scottish defence policy.

Such a plan could threaten the 30,000 jobs in Scotland that rely on the military, either directly or indirectly.

By contrast, the Conservatives will go into the June 8th election with a clear pledge to meet a commitment to spend 2% of GDP on defence.

Such spending will underpin existing commitments to Scottish military bases, including RAF Kinloss, RAF Lossiemouth and HMNB Clyde. Recent spending decisions have ensured that RAF Lossiemouth is to benefit from £400 million as one of the RAF's three fast jet bases. A further £1.3 billion has been earmarked for upgrades to the Naval base on the Clyde.

### **Scottish Conservative candidate for Moray, Douglas Ross said:**

“The fact is that the Conservatives are the only party at this election who will back our military wholeheartedly and secure the thousands of jobs here in Scotland that rely on defence spending.

“We will always put Britain’s national security front and centre.

“It’s now clear that, if ever given the chance, the SNP would ‘start from scratch’ and put tens of thousands of jobs in danger.

“We must not allow that to happen. And the best way to ensure it cannot happen it by saying No to a second referendum on June 8th and voting Scottish Conservative.”

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### **SNP defence plans could destroy 30,000 jobs**

New analysis of SNP defence plans shows they would destroy over 30,000 jobs across Scotland. SNP Defence spokesman Brendan O’Hara has confirmed that ‘a bespoke independent Scottish defence policy’ should ‘start from scratch’ rather than take a population share of 8 or 9 per cent of existing forces and assets – because that would mean ‘we’re pushed down a road from which it is sometimes very difficult to come back’.

Official statistics show this would mean losing over 10,000 military personnel and almost 4,000 MoD civilian jobs based in Scotland.

It would hit the 9,570 jobs directly supported by UK government spending, and over 20,000 jobs created by defence industries.

The SNP’s own figures suggest the MoD’s assets in Scotland are worth £7.8 billion.

**Brendan O’Hara, the SNP’s Westminster defence spokesman, said that an independent Scotland may choose to ‘start from scratch’ rather than claim UK military assets.** ‘One of the big debates is what do we do with the military assets? Do we start from scratch, do we take an eight per cent share or a nine per cent share of them? If we do take a share, what do we take? What are the maintenance contracts? There’s a whole load of things. I’m personally very much of the opinion that if we adopt a nine per cent share of the hardware, then we’re pushed down a road from which it is sometimes very difficult to come back. I don’t think you can have a bespoke independent Scottish defence policy if you are immediately saddled with taking eight or nine per cent of asset’ (*Daily Record*, 18 March 2017, [link](#)).

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## **[Greens announce final candidate numbers](#)**



12 May 2017

**\* Greens stand in 80% of seats in England and Wales\***

**\* Jonathan Bartley, co-leader: "With Britain at a crossroads we're giving voters a real choice"**

The Green Party will stand candidates in 80% of seats in England and Wales on June 8 giving the majority of voters the chance to vote for a candidate who will fight for a new kind of politics.

Greens will stand in a total of 457 seats across England and Wales. At least 22 Greens stood aside to increase the chance of a progressive candidate beating the Conservatives. The Women's Equality Party stood down for the Greens in five seats, while the Lib Dems stood down in one.

A total of 467 Green candidates will stand for election across the UK with bold policies to create a better Britain – including giving voters a final say on Brexit with the chance to stay in Europe

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party of England and Wales, said:

"The vast majority of people in England and Wales have the chance to vote Green. With Britain at a crossroads we're giving voters a real choice.

"In a handful of seats Green Party members took the brave decision not to stand – and we're proud that our party has put the opportunity to create a more compassionate country above narrow political divides.

"For a confident and caring country, vote Green on June 8th."

**ENDS.**

For more information: [press@greenparty.org.uk](mailto:press@greenparty.org.uk) / 0203 691 9401

**Notes:**

1. Green candidates include:

- Aimee Challenor, 19, in Coventry South: Aimee is Green Party LGBTIQ+ spokesperson and the only openly trans spokesperson of a UK Political Party.

- Larry Sanders, 82, in Oxford East: Larry is Green Party health spokesperson and brother to US Senator Bernie Sanders.

- Lawrence McNally, 18, in Cities of London and Westminster constituency: Lawrence is the Green Party's youngest candidate.

2. Green Party candidate numbers since 1974:

- 1974: 6

- 1977: 5
- 1979: 53
- 1983: 109
- 1987: 133
- 1992: 253
- 1997: 89
- 2001: 145
- 2005: 182
- 2010: 310
- 2015: 535
- 2017: 467

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## [Lib Dems offer 'daddy month' of paid parental leave for new fathers](#)

The Liberal Democrats will introduce an additional month of paid parental leave especially for fathers to encourage greater sharing of parental responsibilities.

The policy will build on our achievement of introducing Shared Parental Leave in order to ensure that new parents can make the decisions which work best for their family.

Jo Swinson, who introduced the original Shared Parental Leave in the Coalition Government, said:

“The Liberal Democrat introduction of Shared Parental Leave was a massive step towards more equal parenting, and recognising the vital role that fathers play. Parents across the UK have already benefitted from greater flexibility and freedom in how they share the care for their new baby.

“But more needs to be done in order to encourage men to take leave when they

become a dad, to bond with their child during the early weeks and months of their life. Research shows that fathers being more involved in their children's lives is good for children's development and good for the health and happiness of the whole family.

"That is why the Liberal Democrats want to give dads across the country the chance to spend more time with their children.

"A vote for the Liberal Democrats is a vote to change the direction of this country. If you want an open, tolerant and united Britain, this is your chance."

Susan Kramer, Liberal Democrat Shadow Business Secretary, said:

"Creating a fair system for parents everywhere not only benefits new mums and dads but also helps our business sector.

"Having a workforce that is both more flexible and more motivated will benefit UK businesses greatly.

"It is the Liberal Democrats who are standing up for fairness and flexibility for parents. Theresa May has never cared."