

News story: Defence Secretary to launch report warning of future threats to UK

The 'Future Starts Today' report indicates that the world has reached a critical point in the need to tackle the evolution of threats faced in the current climate.

Welcoming the report, Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

This report makes clear that we are living in a world becoming rapidly more dangerous, with intensifying challenges from state aggressors who flout the rules, terrorists who want to harm our way of life and the technological race with our adversaries. Identifying these threats means we can continue to build an Armed Forces that can stay ahead of them.

The last Strategic Defence and Security Review, published three years ago, identified four main areas of threat, including the evolution of extremist terrorism, the resurgence of state-based threats, the rapid advance of technology on all fronts and the erosion of the rules-based international order.

The sixth edition of the Global Strategic Trends report recognises the danger of those threats, but also sets out how they are continuing to speed up and intersect to create new and unparalleled risks.

It outlines how regional powers could develop nuclear capabilities with global reach, internationally accepted rules on chemical weapons are ignored, and non-state actors could acquire sophisticated missile technology. It also describes how the interaction between climate change, demand for resources and over-population drives competition, that could lead to conflict.

UK Defence has always been at the forefront of global military capabilities and has risen to meet threats ranging from global conflicts, insurgent warfare, disinformation campaigns and offensive cyber. This has ensured the UK maintains a military edge over adversaries.

The MOD's thinktank, the Development Concepts and Doctrine Centre, worked on this comprehensive report for two years. They drew on a range of analysis across academia, business, government departments and nations from across the globe. The findings support those who formulate Defence policy, strategy and capability development, and includes a range of innovations. This has been evident in the development of the MOD's Arctic Strategy, Space Strategy and approach to future autonomous systems.

The MOD's research teams used a suite of research methods to provide insight

into alternate, plausible futures, watchpoints and discontinuities. Through this analysis UK Defence has identified key areas that have the potential to profoundly change humanity over the coming years.

[The sixth edition of the Global Strategic Trends report can be read here.](#)