

## Speech: “The spectre of biological, chemical, or nuclear materials falling into terrorist hands is the nightmare scenario.”

Thank you Mr President. Thank you also to USG Nakamitsu and her team, and particularly to Joe Ballard. It's always good to have the OPCW with us here in this Chamber and the cooperation between our institutions is vital.

While this agenda item is a regular feature of this Council's programme of work, there is in fact nothing regular about it. The spectre of biological, chemical, or nuclear materials falling into terrorist hands is the nightmare scenario for many of us in this Chamber.

The use of such materials by terrorists is sadly not a hypothetical. Thanks to the hard work of the Joint Investigative Mechanism in Syria we know what happens when terrorists' hateful intent is paired with these equally hateful weapons. We saw the results in Daesh's sulphur mustard attack on Marea in August 2015, leaving residents blistered and burning. Other cases are also under investigation.

Clearly, preventing weapons of mass destruction falling into terrorist hands is a vital lynchpin for preserving international peace and security.

That's why it's so crucial that, following the Comprehensive review and the adoption of resolution 2325, the Committee focuses on reaching the ultimate goal of full worldwide implementation; turning 1540 into reality. As the Committee does this, it must take account new and emerging challenges from the evolving terrorist threat and advances in science and technology.

The Committee must also look to improve technical assistance, including by strengthening the 1540 Committee's process for matching Member States' requests for support with offers for assistance. And we must do all we can to encourage Member States to submit their reports on national implementation of 1540. That applies in particular to those few remaining states yet to submit a national report.

So there is a lot to do, Mr President. But the Committee shouldn't do it alone. Indeed, the challenges we face are far too great to just rely on the 15 governments around this table. We must strengthen regional and international cooperation and outreach to civil society and industry to support implementation efforts. Every country and every sector has a role to play and we should embrace their help.

Mr. President,

While we must take every step to ensure that these terrible weapons never

fall into the hands of terrorists, we must also never overlook the horrific, and sadly growing, allegations of use of these weapons by state actors.

The United Kingdom unreservedly condemns the use of any chemical weapon in any circumstance. In particular, we're horrified at reports that Kim Jong Nam was apparently killed with VX in Malaysia earlier this year. If it's confirmed that a nerve agent, one banned by the Chemical Weapons Convention, was used at the instigation of a state, then this would be yet another troubling rejection of international norms.

The United Kingdom has also concluded that the Assad regime has continued to use chemical weapons against its own people, in breach of international law and the rules of war. We look forward to receiving further reporting from the OPCW Fact Finding Mission on chemical weapons use in Syria. Once we have the results of those investigations, the international community must then send a united response.

Let me close by calling on the 1540 Committee to redouble its efforts. The United Kingdom is committed to playing our part in ensuring that the Committee succeeds in its vital task ahead. The cost of failure, of allowing further weapons of mass destruction to fall into the hands of those who wish to wreak havoc, is simply too high to bear.

Thank you.

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## [News story: Introducing the Open Call for Innovation](#)

From 3 July 2017, the Enduring Challenge will be known as the Open Call for Innovation. This change is first of several planned changes for this funding route.

The [Open Call for Innovation](#) will continue to provide a route into defence and security for any supplier who thinks they have an idea that can benefit UK Defence and Security, at home or abroad. It exists because we can't possibly know all the potential solutions and novel approaches out there – whether that's more advanced technical capability, how we work or operate, or how we train our people. As well as all our existing suppliers, we want to attract those who haven't worked with defence and security before.

Earlier today, we held the final decision conference for the Enduring Challenge. We're delighted that 21% of proposals were approved for funding from cycle 3. The decisions have been released in the Accelerator submission service and the successful winners should be on contract within 3 weeks. Those who were unsuccessful will receive feedback by the end of July.

Since its [launch in January](#) by Harriett Baldwin, Minister for Defence Procurement, the Enduring Challenge has held 3 decision conferences to assess 83 proposals. 12 applications (14%) were approved for funding and received an average of £82,600 in research funding.

Cycle 4 is currently in assessment. Cycle 5, under the new banner of Open Call for Innovation is open.

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## **News story: Potential Army Officers meet Defence Secretary**

The latest intake of the Army's School of Education's Potential Officer Development Programme (PODP) visited MOD Main Building in London this Tuesday as part of their intensive 12-week development programme.

As part of their visit, the potential officers had the opportunity to meet and put questions to Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon during a question and answer session.

In welcoming the students to the Ministry of Defence, Sir Michael said:

Our Armed Forces are held in high esteem, and recent events have shown that in difficult times people look to us for support.

And in such challenging times, it will be vitally important that our future leaders are thinking soldiers, capable and able to adjust to and overcome those threats which come against us.

We need the best people of each successive generation. You've got what it takes to be our future leaders, and I look forward to you not just making it to Sandhurst but spearheading our nation's charge towards a brighter future.

Potential Officer Annabelle Mash, 21 from the Isle of Wight said:

I am passionate about working in an organisation with a disciplined environment where there is the opportunity for me to develop as a person and with the ability to lead men and women confidently.

The Potential Officer Development Programme has been essential to my development, enabling me to develop my weaknesses and acting as a stepping stone towards my future career.

Potential Officer Reece Munnery, 22 from Tavistock, currently serves as a Private in the Parachute Regiment. Before joining the programme he served as a Section Second in Command. He said:

The Potential Officer Development Programme course has been very helpful in reassuring me that commissioning is the route I would like to go down, in building my confidence, and has been one of the most enjoyable courses I have attended in my Army career.

Potential Officer Moiz Abusin, 23 from Chertsey, completed his secondary education abroad in Dubai, before completing a degree in Electrical and Electronic Engineering at the University of Nottingham.

He said:

I aspire to lead a life of adventure, achievement and service. Whether leading a platoon of soldiers on operations or helping to build critical infrastructure and rebuild lives after a natural disaster, I relish the prospect leading a life far from routine.

The programme supports serving soldiers and direct entry civilian candidates by equipping participants with the skills necessary to pass the Army Officer Selection Board (AOSB).

On completion of the PODP, students will attend the AOSB to determine whether they are suitable for commissioning. If successful at this stage, they will then go on to begin Officer Cadet training at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS).

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## [News story: First veterinary DNA vaccine authorised for Clynav](#)

First DNA vaccine authorised in the EU to protect Atlantic salmon against Salmon Pancreas Disease.

A new vaccine to protect Atlantic salmon against Salmon Pancreas Disease, for which the VMD played the lead assessment role, has been authorised across the EU through the [centralised procedure](#). Clynav is the first DNA vaccine to be authorised in the EU.

The VMD steered the authorisation application through challenging regulatory hurdles involving complex scientific debates and negotiation, championing the

adoption of this innovative DNA vaccine technology for veterinary use.

The authorisation of this vaccine has the potential to herald a new era of novel vaccines to protect animals against disease.

Clynav is marketed by Elanco Europe Ltd.

The Summary of Product Characteristics will soon be available through the EMA website and the VMD's Product Information Database.

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## **News story: Presentations from Ofqual's summer series symposium 2017**

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