

UK and Australia conclude first AUKMIN since pandemic

UK and Australian ministers concluded vital defence and security talks today (Friday 21 Jan) following the first Australia UK Foreign and Defence Ministerial meetings (AUKMIN) since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

Discussions focussed on key geopolitical challenges, including concerns around the situation in Ukraine. Ministers agreed on the vital need to defend freedom in the face of Russia's growing aggression and underpinned their steadfast solidarity with Ukraine.

The ministers agreed to step up collaboration to deter malign threats, promote positive critical technology standards and to support the development of quality infrastructure and standards.

They reiterated their commitment to supporting countries in the Indo-Pacific to strengthen their resilience, security and sovereignty.

Foreign Secretary, Liz Truss said:

With the world facing increasing aggression from malign actors, it is vital that the UK strengthens and deepens our partnerships with our closest allies.

Today (Friday 21 January, 2021) we have committed to new and enhanced opportunities to collaborate with Australia in areas including maritime security, counterterrorism, misinformation, cyber and technology.

Alliances between freedom loving democracies like the UK and Australia are essential if we are to win the battle of ideas.

Discussions also reflected on the progress that has been made to date on AUKUS – our landmark partnership to strengthen our security and defence interests alongside our US allies.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

Britain and Australia share one of the oldest and strongest defence and security alliances.

Operating and exercising side by side, we continue to work together to promote stability, and tackle our shared threats with our like-minded ally, head on.

This week, I have met with my friend and close Defence counterpart Peter Dutton to discuss our cooperation across the Indo-Pacific through AUKUS – the trilateral UK, Australia and US security partnership which will see us collaborating on world leading technologies including nuclear powered submarines.

The AUKUS partnership seeks to deliver a nuclear-powered submarine capability to the Royal Australian Navy. The UK has built and operated world-class nuclear-powered submarine capability for more than 60 years and we bring deep expertise and experience to this partnership.

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