

Greater Manchester Labour CND Submission to Labour's Defence Policy Review

A. Britain's Place in the World: Values, Principles and Objectives

1) What role should Britain play in building a world that is more peaceful, more just and safer, how can we make a greater contribution to international peacekeeping and strengthen the capabilities of the under-performing UN system?

Britain needs to adapt to a changing multipolar world with nations like China and continents like S America, SE Asia and Africa emerging with developing economies and interests. In this context the UK needs to reconfigure its role from a 'world leader', sitting at the 'top table' and 'projecting power' around the world with a strong commitment to conflict prevention and resolution, promoting co-operation and assist in building/modernising international organisations, particularly by working through the UN.

Britain should work with the UN and other nations to promote non-military solutions to conflict. A safer world is more easily achieved through **conflict prevention** than conflict resolution. Recognising that causes of conflict lie in poverty, injustice, unequal and unfair treatment/discrimination/marginalisation and pre-emptive interventionism our contribution should be to **promote peaceful values across the world, denouncing injustice and inequality and working towards resource sharing.**

Labour should advocate methods that peacefully prevent tensions spilling over into war, ensuring adequate training in skills such as diplomacy, analysis, negotiation, languages as well as adequate resources to deploy skilled paid teams at neighbourhood, regional or national levels. Conflict prevention is too important to leave to teams of volunteers funded by charitable donations. Such a re-focus will enable Britain's role in the world to gradually be transformed into peace facilitator.

2) What should be the values and principles that drive Britain's strategic defence policy?

Solidarity should have primacy in the values underpinning Labour's policies, put into practice through **cooperation** with other nations to protect the weak and vulnerable. **Humanitarian protection of people** is incomplete if we do not also **protect the environment** that sustains them. Policies should be guided by a sense of **responsibility** towards people and towards the planet.

In the context of world security, solidarity would mean **giving solid support to the UN**. At the same time, we should work **to ensure that the UN is guided by its founding declaration** and not used by powerful nations to pursue unjust policies in the interests of a few rich countries. We should work to **widen the membership of the Security Council** to better reflect a global balance of representation and promote consensus as a foundation of a rule based order. Britain should contribute to peace-keeping missions and, working with other nation states, ensure that sufficient funding/money is given to the UN to support its peacekeeping and humanitarian missions.

Support for democracy: The British government should support countries which are democratic and where there is no evidence of cruel and inhumane punishment being carried out against people who oppose a government or journalists who seek to expose corruption. These values should be paramount and override any business interests, for example oil in the Middle East or minerals in Africa. We should not support corrupt regimes, for example, Israel or Saudi Arabia in the Middle East or the Burmese ruling military junta.

This means that Britain should cease to sell arms to dictatorial and corrupt regimes. This applies particularly to Saudi Arabia where execution is common, women are subjugated, do not have the vote and can still be stoned to death for adultery.

3) What objectives follow from these values for Britain's defence and foreign policy, and how can our objectives best be achieved?

Work for a global ban of nuclear weapons. This would demonstrate a tangible step to Global Zero (a plan for the complete abolition of nuclear weapons by 2030) pronounced by President Obama in his Prague speech of 2009;

To support the UN call for a Nuclear Weapons Convention to take immediate steps towards achieving a nuclear disarmament;

To support a greater role for the UN and for partnerships in place of military alliances;

Utilise diplomacy to resolve disagreement and difference, exercise even handedness, dialogue, conflict resolution, pragmatic problem-solving etc.

Uphold the international rule of law by fulfilling obligations under Article 6 of the NPT i.e. not renewing Trident;

Support an agreement on the prevention of arms race in outer space.

4) What are the strategic assets that Britain needs in order to protect our common security?

Review what is meant by common security. Equipping for conventional or nuclear warfare is inappropriate in a world where the dangers have shifted away from assaults by other nation states. This means altering our premise that we make ourselves secure by making others feel less secure (i.e. we can hold nuclear weapons but other nations can't). Common security means understanding, and taking into account, other countries' fears and threat perceptions, that is, the root causes of 'rogue' behaviour.

To strengthen security we need to put resource into anti terrorist 'police' forces, investing in counter-intelligence and cyber technologies and to train diplomats to work for social justice and conflict resolution.

Common security should now include confronting climate change with investment in schemes to avert flooding, energy conservation and generation. Rather than reducing funds for sustainable energy sources, the British

government should be of putting resource and subsidies into these as, for example, the German government is doing. This should also include reducing subsidies for nuclear power and cancelling any plans for new nuclear power stations.

B. The Threats to Britain's Security

A common or shared approach to security, means shifting definitions of security away from a military approach, which makes others feel insecure. Our responses should not be based on fear but with a commitment to international cooperation to tackle global threats e.g. climate change and terrorism as well as agreements dealing with nuclear security and cyber security.

1) What are the key security challenges facing the UK?

Tackling Tier 1 threats (identified in the SDDR) requires us to work in partnership with other nuclear weapons states, namely, Russia and China. We need to strengthen cooperation with Russia and China to tackle Tier 1 threats, which may serve to reduce tier 2 threats. Also money spent on tier 2 threats could be much better used and detracts from tier 1 threats. In summary the key security challenges are:-

- a) Terrorism in the many forms of for example, of Islamists;
- b) Climate change from global warming;
- c) Cyber warfare which could also threaten the control systems for the trident nuclear armed submarines;
- d) A vast natural disaster for example a volcanic eruption in Iceland.

2) What are the more fundamental long term threats to our common security, what or who is driving them?

The persistence of nuclear weapons states to retain and upgrade nuclear weapons presents a real, present and long term threat to our security. This persistence has extended nuclear weapons acquisition to other states such as Israel, India, Pakistan and N Korea. This proliferation along with risks of nuclear accident and procurement by terrorist groups further endangers the world considerably.

In 2016, the UN General Assembly, following a resolution supported by 138 nations, set up a working group to draft key elements of a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons outright. A unilateral measure by the UK to stop Trident replacement will have a significant impact on other nuclear weapons states and would be an effective way to break the nuclear disarmament deadlock.

3) How can we improve our ability to identify, predict and act upon underlying threats to Britain's security and work to prevent them developing?

See answers A 3 and 4.

C Britain's Military and Security Forces: Capabilities, Spending and Choices

1) What level of defence spending is required to keep Britain safe and help us promote a more peaceful and safer world.

The character of defence spending needs to reflect current and likely needs arising from humanitarian missions, natural disasters, conflict resolution;

Note that military missions under the UN have become regionalised such that conflict zones are often served by nationals in and around the affected region(s) concerned. This implicates a different type of input from the UK than conventional forces (e.g. intelligence, logistics support);

Defence spending then needs to be nuanced to modern requirements rather than skewed to conventional hardware.

2) What are the lessons from recent conflicts about the equipment and military capabilities required for the deployments Britain may face in the next decades?

The SDDR indicates that Britain does not face a military attack from any state, but is likely to face for years 'terrorist' attacks where those intent on violence do not wield advanced technological weapons. Our defence must principally rest on surveillance and countering cyber attacks.

3) How can Britain help to effectively stem the flow of weapons – chemical, nuclear and military – around the world and promote non-proliferation and disarmament?

Firstly Britain should begin to disentangle itself from the arms trade. For banned weapons – even those nuclear weapons for which there is not yet a treaty, there should be increased resource put into the United Nations inspection regime.

Britain's arms sales policies have exacerbated tensions (currently in Yemen). The Labour party should declare it **would not sell any arms, military equipment or violent means of crowd control to any regime that oppresses its citizens or threatens those of other nations.**

Arms sales are important to the UK economy but Labour policies should radically change the nature of these arms so that **primarily Britain produces defensive not offensive** equipment. Design constraints on any arms produced in the UK should ensure that their use does **not leave behind toxic remnants of war**, doing lasting damage to the environment. Companies surplus to such production needs should be required to use their skills and adapt their workplaces to produce socially useful products that answer transport or energy needs nationally and internationally.

Britain should not only **abandon all plans to replace Trident but should give up all existing nuclear warheads, delivery systems or design work on other nuclear weapons.** Nuclear weapons cannot be used solely on military targets. The millions of deaths and environmental damage that would ensue from their use make them **incompatible with Labour values**, as does the reckless squandering of resource on them when austerity is having such dire effects on poor and vulnerable people.

4. What training do our military and security forces need to carry out operations that protect Britain's security and pursue the values that guide our defence policy.

Our forces need to be trained in peace keeping if they are deployed in a conflict zone.

5) Will renewal of Britain's nuclear capability aid us in protecting Britain's security and pursuing the values that guide our foreign and defence policy?

Labour's new politics calls for a fresh relationship with the world, based on a foreign policy promoting mutual co-operation, conflict prevention and resolution rather than military aggression. The replacement of Trident, goes against the spirit of the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) according to which Nuclear Weapons States (NWS) commit 'to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to... nuclear disarmament'. Security of the UK will be enhanced by non-replacement of Trident in pursuance of the aims of the NPT. It will also enable resource to be targeted at dealing with present and projected threats as identified in the SDDR.

6) What new capabilities will our armed forces require to address the complex and dynamic threats facing our common security, especially the growing threats of cyber attacks?

This can only be achieved by putting resources into policing, surveillance and cyber security by highly trained computer specialists.

D. Protecting British Jobs and Skills

The UK economy is skewed towards armament production, finance and big pharma. Developing a wider national industrial strategy depends on diverting some of the high level skills employed in armament production to other technical/engineering/science based industry.

Work in the nuclear weapons industries should be refocused onto socially useful projects. Scientists and weapon designers, for example, could turn to solving the technical problems connected to harnessing the huge power of waves and tides to produce clean, non-polluting energy from the seas that relentlessly pound our shores. Their **skills** would be needed for many generations in **decommissioning nuclear warheads** and in **designing safe, monitorable ways of storing and keeping safe the nuclear waste** they produce. People currently building nuclear submarines could use their skills to transform warships into hospital ships or migrant reception and transport ships, or make the turbines needed for the production of clean marine energy or barrages to prevent flood damage. The **creativity, skills and resource released by a move away from nuclear weapons would thus return genuine manufacturing jobs to Britain** and enable it to export high quality products around the world.

Note that if **we are committing to the UN's non-nuclear future** the jobs in the nuclear weapons industry will have to go anyway, whether as a result of unilateral or multilateral disarmament.