The youngest body of the UN system has matured and has greater potential

Thank you, President.

The United Kingdom is grateful for the work of Egypt and Bangladesh in driving the Commission these last 18 months. Sustaining Peace is the shared responsibility of all pillars of the United Nations, but the Commission is the only dedicated global forum for supporting countries with their peacebuilding processes.

Under Egypt's stewardship, the Peacebuilding Commission continued to expand its geographic reach, and increased its engagement with women peacebuilders. Under Bangladesh's leadership, we have an ambitious work plan and a renewed focus on impact.

And I also want to recognise the tireless work of the Peacebuilding Support Office.

President, the United Kingdom sees the potential of the Peacebuilding Commission. Through activist Chairs, including Egypt and Bangladesh, this youngest body of the UN system has matured.

By continuing to deepen its follow-up on the countries with which it engages, and by rallying collective responses to peacebuilding challenges, the PBC will continue to grow in value.

With emerging new threats to peace and security, it is more important than ever that we take a comprehensive approach to addressing global challenges. The PBC has a valuable role in advising the Council and its mandates on practical action to achieve this. I would like to thank Kenya in its role as Council coordinator here.

The world can no longer afford the cost of conflict. We must focus on prevention. Peaceful, just, and inclusive societies are critical to achieving sustainable development and resilience. And we encourage all national and international actors to put Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace at the centre of their policies and approaches.

This means more integrated, inclusive and strategic policy approaches, smarter financing, and casting the net of cooperation and partnership more widely.

The Peacebuilding Commission – through its bridging role and, increasingly, in and of its own right – is a critical part of this equation.

Thank you, Mr President.

Government publishes review into automation in horticulture

Defra has today (Wednesday 27 July) published the results of a review exploring how the horticulture sector can make use of innovative technologies such as packhouse automation, AI enabled robotics and autonomous guided vehicles to help with tasks like the picking, packing and transporting of fruit, vegetables and flowers.

With labour shortages continuing to affect the farming sector globally, the Environment Secretary George Eustice and Professor Simon Pearson from the University of Lincoln co-chaired the Review of Automation in Horticulture in support of the wider aim of reducing the sector's reliance on migrant workers.

The Review brought together experts across horticulture, technology and supporting industries to understand what would be required to accelerate the development and uptake of automation technologies, in both the edible and ornamental horticulture sectors. The recommendations include:

- establishing a consortium that brings together government and industry to drive adoption of proven technologies
- adopting a mission-led approach to fast-track new technologies;
- the horticulture sector setting up working groups to share novel harvest practices and consider how best to make the industry more attractive for workers.
- developing the sector's skills pipelines and consider ways to attract and retain staff
- considering a long-term Seasonal Workers Scheme for edible and ornamental horticulture to help stabilise workforce pressures;

The Government will consider the report's recommendations and publish a response in due course.

Environment Secretary, George Eustice said:

"I would like to thank Simon Pearson for chairing this review and for the technical knowledge he brought to it. There are opportunities for new robotic technologies to reduce costs and labour requirements in horticulture in the years ahead and this review highlights the potential for this."

Professor Simon Pearson, co-chair of the Automation Review said:

"Our successful horticulture industry is facing unprecedented pressure to step change labour productivity. Productivity gain reduces the reliance of the sector on seasonal migrant workers, secures vibrant rural businesses and the flow of high health foods at fair values to consumers. This review was

undertaken to understand how we can accelerate the development and adoption of automation and robotic technologies across the fruit, vegetable and ornamental production sectors.

“My role at the Lincoln Institute of Agri-Food Technology at the University of Lincoln is to support and enhance the future of food and agriculture productivity, efficiency, and sustainability through research, education, and technology. Therefore, I was delighted to Co-Chair the Automation Review and hope to see the recommendations taken forward to best support colleagues in the industry.”

COP president highlights urgency of climate action at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat in Fiji

Friends, Bula and good morning.

Now some of you will know

that my team and I have tried on a number of occasions to come out to the Pacific during last year but unfortunately the pandemic made it impossible.

And I can therefore appreciate just how challenging it must have been for those of you who did actually come to Glasgow and make that arduous journey.

And by doing so what you did was to add to the voices at COP26 calling for ambitious climate action.

So I am delighted to finally be here.

To indeed meet you in person, face to face, to hear about your lived experiences, and to try and understand what it is like to inhabit an island like this.

Which is at the front line of climate change.

You are forced to deal with the consequences of greenhouse gas emissions generated largely by the biggest emitting countries, a long way from here.

And let’s be frank, this is not a crisis of your making.

As your Prime Minister said ahead of COP23 when Fiji held the presidency, Frank said:

“We have not caused this crisis, your nations have.

“We have trodden lightly on the earth whereas you have trodden heavily.”

And those comments friends should weigh very heavily on all world leaders, many as you know who came to COP26 in Glasgow and made impassioned statements about tackling climate change.

The leaders of many of the biggest emitting countries, of course they talk the right talk.

But you know this, they haven’t yet walked the walk on the level of climate action required.

Frankly, you have spent years trying to educate the world on the dangerous predicament faced by the smallest, low-lying island states due to a changing climate.

You will have seen this yourselves on the television that in my country in the United Kingdom, some are only finally waking up to the long-term dangers of global warming.

As the mercury in the thermostats topped forty degrees centigrade last week, we were hit by wildfires,

Destroying property, torching grassland and damaging train tracks.

In fact, we are starting to experience, more acutely, the consequences of rising temperatures that you have here in Fiji, and indeed other Pacific Islands, were forced to start adapting to a long time ago.

At the recent Pacific Island Forum you reinforced this reality, declaring a Climate Emergency that reflects the threat that you face to your livelihoods, your security and indeed the overall wellbeing of Pacific Islanders and ecosystems.

You face this lived reality literally everyday.

That is why I have prioritised visiting and working closely with Small Island Developing States during the UK’s COP26 Presidency.

And it has been humbling.

When I visited the island of Barbuda last year, I met communities who are experiencing first-hand the devastating consequences of extreme weather, as they still struggle to recover from Hurricane Irma five years on.

The communities I met in Jamaica and Antigua were grappling with the challenges of rising seas, and forced migration, both equally prevalent here in the Pacific.

And on the boardwalk in Barbados, I saw the urgent adaptation work being done on the frontline of the fight to hold back the ever encroaching seas.

And whilst the pandemic prevented me from visiting the Pacific before we met

in Glasgow,

I was honoured to speak with Pacific leaders at the UK-Pacific High Level Dialogue in July last year, at the United Nations last September, and at the Foreign Ministers Meeting last month.

Now turning to COP26, the Glasgow Climate Pact, which was agreed by almost 200 countries, is a historic agreement.

But, you know this as well as I do that it involved making difficult and sometimes painful compromises.

But thanks in no small part to the tireless leadership of representatives from the Pacific,

the Pact was an agreement forged in the understanding that it is in our collective self-interest to tackle climate change, and to do that urgently.

And whilst I am sure many of you will have heard me championing the Pact in the months since COP26,

I understand how difficult it was for your representatives to swallow some of the compromises we reached, including at the very end,

We know that in these multilateral discussions, the final result often involves no one getting everything they want.

And I know that in areas such as finance and loss and damage, we didn’t go as far as you would have liked.

But I also think that it is worth reiterating some of the key commitments that we did garner from every nation.

We concluded the Paris Rulebook.

We bolstered the rules on mitigation, calling on countries to revisit and strengthen their emissions reductions targets, by the end of this year.

And we made progress on consigning coal power and fossil fuel finance to history.

But, crucially, the Pact also began to address many of the other important issues for negotiations.

The Glasgow Sharm-el Sheikh work programme, on the Global Goal on Adaptation,

underlined the imperative of all countries to prepare and respond to climate risks.

For the first time ever, we secured significant language on loss and damage in the cover decisions.

We set up the Glasgow Dialogue to discuss how funding arrangements can be enhanced.

We agreed to operationalize the Santiago Network to deliver technical assistance.

Glasgow also endorsed the need for integrated action,

bringing together work on adaptation, disaster response and recovery.

And we affirmed that developed countries must double the finance for adaptation by 2025.

The Pact also directly addressed the participation of young people and women, and the vital role of Indigenous Peoples.

And it notes the importance of ensuring the integrity of all ecosystems, including the oceans, an issue that has been so effectively championed by the Pacific Island Nations.

All of this meant that yes, we left Glasgow with a large programme of work, and with tough compromises to allow us to achieve that global agreement, but I believe we also left with a sense of genuine momentum.

We were able to say with credibility that we had kept 1.5 alive.

Now as you know, the “keeping 1.5 alive” mantra originated from the SIDs.

It was given resonance in the Paris Agreement.

And we the UK recognised its vital importance and that is why we took it on as a central objective for our COP presidency in Glasgow.

But, I also know that 1.5 is not some dream result for those of you living on the frontline of climate change,

We are already at 1.1 degrees warming above pre-industrial levels and we can see the enormous impacts it is having everywhere.

I know that for many people 1.5 degrees is not about thriving,

It is literally about surviving.

And therefore it makes it even tougher when the richest countries, the biggest economies, those belching out the bulk of the emissions are still not doing enough.

Yes, we have seen 16 new NDCs submitted since COP26.

Five new long-term strategies.

Nine new adaptation communications.

And work to scale up finance.

You know that we have a deadline of September for revised NDCs to be submitted and I know that other countries, because I have these

conversations, including some of the biggest economies, have pledged to publish revised NDCs by the end of this year.

But friends, the world's progress since Glasgow has been too limited, and too slow.

And the fragile trust that we all generated amongst nations, large and small alike, is beginning to fray.

Since COP26 I have continued to urge governments to deliver on their commitments. I have made 23 international visits bringing the total to 65 visits to 45 countries since I took on the COP role.

Over the past eight months I have held bilateral discussions with 48 governments to press the case.

Now of course, the world has changed in the eight months since COP26. The global geopolitical and economic situation is perilous.

The Putin regime's illegal and brutal invasion of Ukraine has unleashed and exacerbated a series of global challenges, rising inflation, an energy crisis, food insecurity and rising debt levels. People around the world are struggling to make ends meet.

But the chronic threat of climate change has not gone away, in fact it is getting worse.

And just as the Pacific declared climate change its primary collective security risk years ago,

many now recognise that climate and environmental security are completely inter-linked with energy and national security.

The rest of the world is now waking up to what the Pacific has been warning about for decades.

So, I am going to be frank with you.

We have seen some productive conversations as part of the Glasgow Dialogue, and the Santiago Network.

Workshops on the Global Goal on Adaptation.

And as a G7 nation, the UK recognises our responsibility to take the lead.

Our own NDC is ambitious, committing to reduce emissions by 68 percent compared to 1990 levels.

And we are revisiting that NDC, to ensure it remains aligned with the Paris temperature goal.

That is the sort of action we must see from all the major emitters, and particularly the G20 countries, which are responsible for 80 percent of total global emissions.

The bright lights of the COP26 stage in Glasgow have long faded, but we need all G20 countries to live up to their words and promises. We need the substance behind the soundbites.

Separately, I was very concerned to know that, when Parties met in Bonn last month and some of you were there, the spirit of compromise that we saw in Glasgow, which underpinned the joint commitments we made there, was very sadly starting to erode

I hope that spirit of compromise and mutual trust will be reignited again on the road to COP27.

And it must, because I am all too aware that we simply have to quicken the pace.

And whilst I assure you that I will use the remaining months of the UK's COP Presidency to continue to urge action,

I also know that such promises are not enough.

We must drive further action on adaptation, on finance, on mitigation and on loss and damage,

This includes making further progress on the Global Goal on Adaptation, and operationalising the Santiago Network

On finance, whilst we know that the $100 billion will be met later than expected – in 2023, which is what we set out in the $100 billion Delivery Plan Report last year- it is imperative that we deliver on this pledge.

And on the commitment to double adaptation finance to $40 billion by 2025.

Because we all know that we need a radical step-change in delivery.

That is why I continue to urge all climate finance providers, including the Multilateral Development Banks, who I will be convening next week, to set out clear and ambitious adaptation finance targets by COP27.

And all climate finance providers should align with the principles of the Taskforce on Access to Climate Finance, which Fiji and the UK jointly chair.

That Task Force's pioneer country trials, here in Fiji, as well as Bangladesh, Jamaica, Rwanda, and Uganda, are underway and they are there to prove that money can be made accessible and that it can support national priorities, not just those decided from afar.

And of course for the SIDS, we have to ensure vulnerability is guiding finance allocations, including ODA eligibility, whilst improving the quality of aid as well.

Alongside all this work we know that those already living with historic forms of inequality are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

That is why my team and I continue to engage with a diverse network of youth and civil society organisations, such as those with us here today, as well as Indigenous Peoples.

And that of course that includes those in Buretu village, who I am very much looking forward to meeting this afternoon.

These groups are an example to all of us, and they are vital agents of change.

So many young people, including my own daughters, are relentless in reminding all of us of what is at stake.

And Indigenous People, as stewards of 80 percent of the world's remaining biodiversity, are indeed powerful leaders in our work to develop nature-based and resilient climate solutions.

Finally, I know that ocean protection is of critical importance to Fiji, who were of course pioneers of the "Blue COP" at COP23, and I know this matters of course to all the SIDS and Pacific Island nations.

That is why I continue to champion the Global Ocean Alliance when I meet governments around the world, to mobilise the international community to protect 30 percent of oceans by 2030.

And I am pleased that the UK is working internationally to scale up science-based and innovative ocean action, to maintain momentum in this "super year" of ocean summits.

Again, I know that this is a large programme of work.

But I remain positive that we can make significant progress in the months ahead.

We have ample opportunity to do so.

I am going to be convening the Climate and Development Ministerial in New York in September in the margins of the UN General Assembly.

Pre-COP, hosted by the DRC, will of course be an important milestone.

And we will be pushing for progress on finance, and particularly finance for adaptation, at the Annual Meetings of the IMF and the World Bank in October.

Now COP27 friends, where we hand the baton over to Egypt, will be a critical moment to judge who is living up to their promises and who is not.

As I have said, I believe we set a high bar at COP26, and we made progress.

I hope that the issues such as loss and damage, and adaptation will feature as a key part of the discussion in Sharm el-Sheikh.

But of course what we need to make sure is that we move from negotiation to implementation.

The UK I can promise you will be there, working alongside the Pacific and other climate vulnerable countries, to ensure that is the case.

But you also know that no one country, and no one Presidency, can do this alone.

So, whilst I am clear that the major emitters must take a significant amount of the responsibility for the climate action we need to see in the months and years ahead,

I would request humbly that the Pacific, and indeed all the climate vulnerable countries, continue to work with us to encourage them all to go further.

We are going to need once again your uniquely powerful voice and moral authority, which was deployed so well in the lead up to, and at, COP26, to challenge countries around the world to honour the promises they have made.

Now not every world leader, and indeed not every COP President in the future, will have the honour to visit Fiji and restate the case for climate action in one of the most vulnerable places on earth.

But with just over 100 days to go to COP27

We know what needs to be done.

The world should be in no doubt. We are facing a global climate emergency.

We are almost at the end of the line.

Some nations are already looking over the precipice. I have to ask you, how many more warnings from the science and from severe climate events do the world leaders actually need to wake up from their stooper and hear the piercing siren of the emergency.

I arrived here yesterday from Australia, where they have a new Government with a fresh mandate from their voters to tackle climate change.

As we left to travel here yesterday, I saw some protestors along the roadside holding up placards and colourful banners,

Two of these caught my eye: The first stated CLIMATE CODE RED

The second: THIS IS THE DECADE – 2050 IS TOO LATE

My friends, our populations know that the world is running out of time.

We also know that if we act now we will reap an economic as well as environmental dividend.

Jobs, growth and a boost for all of our economies.

But it is a climate code red right now and unless we act, we

are in danger of allowing 1.5 to slip irreversibly out of reach,

and frankly of moving beyond the limits of our ability to adapt.

For those leaders, and those countries, who do not yet

appreciate this reality, my message is a simple one:

Climate change does not recognise borders.

It is no longer something that happens to other countries] .

Tackling climate change, and protecting the most vulnerable, is absolutely the single most important challenge of our time, whether and how we rise to the challenge will define all of our futures.

So, whilst I am acutely aware that the issues that we are collectively facing will not be solved by the end of the UK's Presidency,

I want you to know that I, and my country, will not stop championing climate action.

But for now, as COP27 looms ever larger, let's continue to work together to cajole countries around the world, and particularly the major emitters, to honour the promises they made in Glasgow, and to turn commitments into action.

Once again, it is time for leaders to lead.

Our shared futures depend on it.

Thank you.

Sir Stephen Lovegrove speech at CSIS, Washington DC

Introduction

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, thank you to Dr John Hamre and Seth Jones, and the Center for Strategic and International Studies for hosting us today.

And thank you to all joining us here at CSIS or virtually.

I must begin by talking about the war in Ukraine.

We recently passed the grim milestone of 150 days since Putin launched this unprovoked, illegal war, bringing untold suffering to the innocent people of

Ukraine.

I'm afraid the conflict fits a pattern of Russia acting deliberately and recklessly to undermine the global security architecture. That's a pattern that includes the illegal annexation of Crimea, the use of chemical and radiological weapons on UK soil, and the repeated violations that caused the collapse of the INF Treaty.

And we will continue to hold Russia to account for its destabilising actions as an international community.

A new security order

What is happening in Ukraine is also a manifestation of a much broader contest unfolding over the successor to the post-Cold War international order.

This contest has profound implications.

It will decide whether we live in a world in which regionally-aggressive powers such as China and Russia can pursue 'might is right' agendas unchecked – or a world in which all states can ensure their sovereignty, competition does not spill over into conflict, and we cooperate to protect the planet.

As this contest unfolds, we are entering a dangerous new age of proliferation, in which technological change is increasing the damage potential of many weapons, and those weapons systems are more widely available.

We need to start thinking about the new security order.

Both elements that have guaranteed strategic stability in the past – effective deterrence in all of its forms, combined with a renewal of a functional arms control framework – need urgent attention.

Policy makers have been urged recently to learn to navigate the absence of order. That is in part good advice. But it is important to build some handrails to guide our thinking as we prepare to negotiate the complex landscape ahead.

In the 1950s and 60s, policy makers faced similarly uncertain terrain.

The advent of nuclear weapons had created a tension between 'strength' and 'stability'.

'Strength '– having the speed, initiative, and surprise to ensure security – and 'stability' – there being nothing for either side to gain from striking first.

Out of this period, academics and policy makers developed the concept of strategic stability, building on the work of Thomas Schelling, Herman Kahn and Samuel Huntington.

In simple terms, strategic stability meant establishing a balance that minimised the risk of nuclear conflict. It recognised that an atmosphere of ‘competitive armament’ generated the need for continuous dialogue.

It was delivered through two core components – deterrence and arms control.

In Madrid last month, NATO reaffirmed strategic stability as essential to our collective security.

But we should be honest – strategic stability is at risk.

During the Cold War, we thought in terms of escalation ladders thanks to Herman Kahn: largely predictable, linear processes that could be monitored and responded to.

Now, we face a much broader range of strategic risks and pathways to escalation, driven by developments of science and technology including rapid technological advancement, the shift to hybrid warfare, and expanding competition in new domains such as space and cyber.

These are all exacerbated by Russia’s repeated violations of its treaty commitments, and the pace and scale with which China is expanding its nuclear and conventional arsenals and the disdain it has shown for engaging with any arms control agreements.

Indeed, Rebecca Hersman and Heather Williams – former and current directors of the CSIS Project on Nuclear Issues – have argued that we are now more likely to see escalation wormholes – sudden, unpredictable failures in the fabric of deterrence causing rapid escalation to strategic conflict.

Moreover, the Cold War’s two monolithic blocks of the USSR and NATO – though not without alarming bumps – were able to reach a shared understanding of doctrine that is today absent.

Doctrine is opaque in Moscow and Beijing, let alone Pyongyang or Tehran.

So the question is how we reset strategic stability for the new era – finding a balance amongst unprecedented complexity so there can be no collapse into uncontrolled conflict.

The new NATO Strategic Concept sets the direction on which we must now build.

This will be difficult. But we have a moral and a pragmatic duty to try.

A more expansive and integrated approach

The circle can only be squared if we renew both deterrence and arms control, taking a more expansive and integrated approach to both.

In March last year, the UK published the Integrated Review, our broadest and deepest review of national security and international policy since the end of the Cold War.

The Integrated Review's emphasis on integration was a deliberate response to the blurring of the boundaries between war and peace, prosperity and security, trade and development, and domestic and foreign policy.

In both the US and UK, we have already started moving to deeper integration in our approach to deterrence.

From a UK perspective, integrated deterrence means bringing together all of the levers of state power – political, diplomatic, economic and military – to deliver effect.

It means tailoring our responses, be they military, diplomatic or economic, to the specific context – taking into account our understanding of our adversaries' motivations.

Integrated deterrence also means working in a more joined up manner across government and society more broadly.

It means working more closely with our allies and our partners – through NATO, but also through new groupings such as AUKUS, and strengthening our relationships with partners in the Euro-Atlantic, Indo-Pacific and around the world.

And we must give due, arguably overdue, regard to improving and strengthening deterrence by denial. In an age of revanchist aggressive powers, committed to the concept of spheres of influence, we must ensure that the vulnerable have the ability to defend themselves, thereby deterring aggression in the first place.

A central challenge though is to avoid this leading to inevitable proliferation.

So the next step should be to develop our thinking on integrated arms control, advancing a dynamic new agenda that is multi-domain, multi-capability and draws together a much wider set of actors.

Historically, arms control has consisted of a set of regimes imposing limits on specific capabilities, alongside strategic stability dialogues focused on risk reduction.

Much of the existing architecture remains vital – such as the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

That last, the NPT, has been the cornerstone of nuclear security and civil nuclear prosperity for the last 52 years, and the UK remains committed to its implementation in full.

We will work with all States Parties at the forthcoming Review Conference to strengthen the treaty as the irreplaceable foundation and framework for our common efforts.

The reality, however, is that current structures alone will not deliver what

we need a modern arms control system to achieve.

Many other long-standing agreements have fallen apart as a result of Russian violations, despite them offering the conflict management, confidence building and transparency that Moscow claims to seek, and that logic would dictate it should desire.

These include the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe; the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and Open Skies, all of which were designed to provide stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.

Other proposals – such as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons – simply do not address the obstacles that must be overcome to achieve lasting global disarmament.

And many of the frameworks that are still in place were designed for a world that no longer exists:

- They offer patchy coverage and don’t cover all capabilities, including some dangerous new and emerging technologies;
- They often rely upon a clear distinction between civilian and military-use cases;
- They were largely designed for a bipolar context;
- They do not fully take into account for the pace of technological development and information-sharing, which can challenge the efficacy of control lists; and.
- And they rely on an information environment that is increasingly susceptible to corruption and disinformation.

Integrating arms control across categories of proliferation

Further integrated arms control will need to extend across several interlinked and overlapping categories of proliferation.

First, we need to look at the increasingly large set of weapons where the barriers to entry and ownership are low and getting lower such as cyber weapons, low-tech drones, small arms and light weapons, and chemical and biological capabilities.

These weapons alone may not change the strategic balance – though the jury is still out on cyber – but they will interact in unpredictable ways with broader strategic competition.

Second, we need to look at new weapons systems or technologies that only the most powerful states could develop and that threaten to upset the strategic balance. Again, cyber is a key capability in this category, alongside space-based systems, ‘genetic weapons’, nuclear-powered cruise missiles, directed energy weapons and hypersonic glide vehicles.

We must also remain vigilant as technological development means that some of this second category could – over time – shift into the first.

For example, the International Institute for Strategic Studies has assessed that in 2001 only three states possessed dedicated land-attack cruise missiles.

Today, at least 23 countries and one non-state actor have access to these weapons. And that last point is important. Many non-state actors could, absent proper control, develop further capabilities.

A third category, we must be eternally vigilant for traditional nuclear weapons being developed by rogue states, dangerous in its own right of course but also potentially sparking a rush amongst regional neighbours to do the same.

As the P5 leaders agreed in January this year, and to use Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev’s resonant phrase, a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.

And a fourth category, we must acknowledge that existing nuclear states are investing in novel nuclear technologies and developing new ‘warfighting’ nuclear systems, which they are integrating into their military strategies and doctrines and into their political rhetoric to seek to coerce others.

For example, we have clear concerns about China’s nuclear modernisation programme that will increase both the number and types of nuclear weapon systems in its arsenal.

Combined, this is a daunting prospect.

Binding legal frameworks should remain our long-term goal.

But there is no immediate prospect of all of the major powers coming together to establish new agreements.

So, as we agreed in the NATO Strategic Concept, our immediate focus should be getting on with the work of strategic risk reduction.

Principles for integrated arms control

Today I propose four principles to guide our approach to integrated arms control.

The first principle is that we should have a pragmatic focus on establishing and regulating behaviours.

That does not rule out the possibility of new formal agreements to regulate capabilities. We should keep pursuing them where they are useful and achievable, and look for opportunities to update existing ones, as the UK did in supporting the extension of New START.

But the breadth and complexity of the proliferation landscape means there is no one-size-fits-all approach. We need to establish new norms for behaviour in the context of hybrid- and tech-enabled conflict, setting red-lines for the grey-zone as it emerges as the new arena for strategic competition.

It is more likely that we will be able to find initial common ground and mutual benefit by raising our thinking above tit-for-tat exchanges on individual systems or technologies.

And we can take encouragement from, for example, the work our two countries have led in the UN to introduce a framework to reduce space threats through norms, rules and principles.

This has helped to galvanise a global discussion on what constitutes responsible space behaviour.

Here I commend the US commitment earlier this year not to conduct destructive, direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing.

This behaviours and norms model is one that already has strong foundations for expansion.

For example, the UK Attorney General spoke earlier this year about the importance of bringing non-intervention principles to life in the context of cyber.

She proposed an international congress on the kinds of cyber behaviours that could be unlawful in peacetime – such as using cyber to disrupt supply chains for essential medicines or vaccines.

The second principle is that we should widen the conversation.

Strategic stability has historically been the business of major powers.

But in the current context, strategic stability cannot be negotiated by this group alone.

There remains a clear need for certain, specific conversations between limited partners. But we need to make a far stronger case that building and maintaining stability is in every nation’s interest and that there is a shared pool of responsibility.

Future deliberations on arms control should – where appropriate – be global by design, extending not just to traditional allies and partners in Europe but to a much wider group of countries.

And we need to create a bigger tent, thinking beyond states to industry experts, to companies and technologists who will play a critical role in

understanding the risks and opportunities of dual-use and other new technologies, and in setting the standards that govern them.

The third principle is that we should start with dialogue.

We must create and preserve space and channels for dialogue to build trust and counter disinformation.

In time, this may lead towards our long-term aim of new or updated binding agreements.

But there is a significant intrinsic value in dialogue itself. In the obligatory Churchill quotation, we want “jaw-jaw, not war-war”.

During the Cold War, we benefited from a series of negotiations and dialogues that improved our understanding of Soviet doctrine and capabilities – and vice versa.

This gave us both a higher level of confidence that we would not miscalculate our way into nuclear war. Today, we do not have the same foundations with others who may threaten us in the future – particularly with China.

Here the UK strongly supports President Biden’s proposed talks with China as an important step.

Trust and transparency built through dialogue should also mean that we can be more active in calling out non-compliance and misbehaviours when we see it.

And at the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in August, we will stress the importance of Russia respecting its obligations under the NPT, in both deed and word.

The final and fourth principle is that we should take early action to renew and strengthen confidence-building measures.

The goal of confidence-building measures is to contribute to, reduce, or even eliminate the causes of mistrust, fear, tension and hostility.

They help one side interpret correctly the actions of the other in a pre-crisis situation through an exchange of reliable and interrupted, often private information on each other’s intentions.

Confidence and trust grow when states are open about their military capabilities and plans. That is why governments can report every year their national military spending to the UN, as well as their recent weapons transfers.

I’m afraid Is there any clearer example of the collapse of these mechanisms than the invasion of Ukraine?

When I and others questioned the build-up of forces on the border we were assured “it’s just an exercise”. We didn’t believe it, and were right not to do so. Nevertheless, we must try to get back to a point where “reassurances”

like that are worth something.

So we now need to re-energise the existing Euro-Atlantic architecture, and extend the approach into new geographic regions.

As we seek to strengthen confidence-building measures there is also a major opportunity to harness new technology and make better use of open source materials to improve our capabilities and capacity to identify, share and verify information.

For example, the UK's recently-published Defence AI strategy sets a clear ambition for Artificial Intelligence to play a key role in counter-proliferation and arms control, including for verification and enforcement.

Again, confidence building is an area where I believe we should – as a global community – be able to make progress irrespective of wider political contexts. The indices of self-interest and mutual benefit are both clear to see.

Conclusion

Let me be clear: this new agenda for arms control will be difficult to deliver. We will need to take incremental steps, but we can make progress.

History shows us that we can forge a path through uncertainty.

After World War Two, the world had no template for managing the atom bomb's destructive power. So we created new frameworks.

It took years. But it was possible. And it was done. And it was possible despite the advent of the Cold War.

Indeed, some of the most significant breakthroughs in arms control – including both nuclear arms control and the advent of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe – came when tensions between the West and the USSR were at their peak.

Let me be clear: arms control frameworks, open to abuse and violation as they always have been, are only one side of the coin. Effective deterrence mechanisms and capabilities, tailored to the current and developmental threats are indispensable.

So let us not neglect either side of the coin – deterrence or arms control – and start on the foundations from which we can build a strategic stability in these perilous times.

Thank you.

Robin Simcox appointed as Commissioner for Countering Extremism

News story

Robin Simcox confirmed in substantive role.

The Home Office today confirmed the appointment of Robin Simcox as the substantive Commissioner for Countering Extremism (CCE). His tenure will last for a three-year period.

Robin was first appointed to the role of Interim Commissioner in March 2021. Following a robust open competition for the substantive role, Robin's appointment has been agreed by the Home Secretary.

Home Secretary, Priti Patel, said:

> Robin Simcox is extremely distinguished in the field of countering-extremism and brings considerable experience and expertise to the substantive Commissioner role he is taking up at the CCE.
>
> His wealth of knowledge will help to improve our understanding across a range of ideologies and behaviours, tackling extremism which has no place in our society.

Robin Simcox, Commissioner for Countering Extremism, said:

> It is a privilege to be appointed the substantive Commissioner for Countering Extremism. Our core values must be robustly defended in the face of extremist ideologies.
>
> The CCE will help increase the sophistication of our response to extremism by scrutinising the approach taken not only by government but also wider society.

The CCE is a non-statutory expert committee of the Home Office which operates independently that supports society to fight all forms of extremism and advises the government and external partners on new policies to deal with these threats.

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