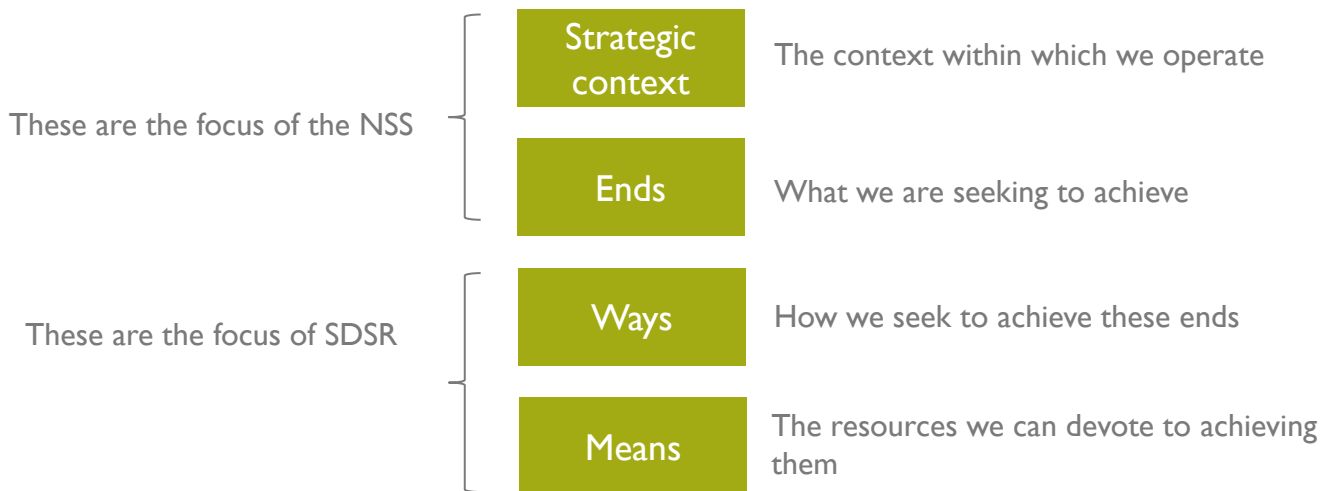


# Fact Sheet 1: Our Approach to the National Security Strategy

## How the National Security Strategy (NSS) was put together

The National Security Strategy (NSS) and the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) together comprise the Government's strategic decisions about defence and security. They cover both domestic and overseas elements of security. The NSS focuses on the country's "ends" or objectives, while the focus of the SDSR is the "ways" and "means" to achieve them.

### The National Security Strategy and the Strategic Defence and Security Review



## Strategic context

Before agreeing the relevant ends to be achieved (or the ways and means for achieving them) the National Security Council considered analysis relating to the strategic context in which the UK finds itself.

This included consideration of:

- the current security situation;
- trends (and uncertainties) affecting our security situation in the future;
- the particular position of the UK, and the strengths and skills that we can bring to bear (areas of UK comparative advantage);
- the positive contributions of allies and partners, and of the private sector, and the negative effect of adversaries seeking to thwart our objectives.

## We established clear ends through two overarching objectives

Having considered the strategic context, the National Security Council established two high-level objectives (our ends), which guide our strategic approach overall. These are:

- (1) To ensure a secure and resilient UK by protecting our people, economy, infrastructure, territory and ways of life from all major risks that can affect us directly; and
- (2) To shape a stable world, by acting to reduce the likelihood of risks affecting the UK or British interests overseas, and applying our instruments of power and influence to shape the global environment.

## We then sought to prioritise between the many risks threatening the UK

The National Security Strategy, following discussion at the National Security Council, identifies 15 priority risks across the spectrum of national security risks to the United Kingdom. The identification of these risks ensures that stronger focus can be given to priority areas when seeking to achieve the above two overarching objectives.

Four risks were identified as being of particular concern:

- Acts of **terrorism** affecting the UK or its interests
- Hostile **attacks upon UK cyber space**
- A major **accident or natural hazard** (e.g. an influenza pandemic)
- An **international military crisis between states**, drawing in the UK and allies

## This exercise allowed us to be clear about the ways we need to employ in order to achieve our ends through eight new National Security Tasks

The National Security Strategy's final section sets out how we will respond to these manifold risks to our national security. It sets out, for the first time, the UK's very first set of National Security Tasks. The means by which these are achieved, together with the more detailed Planning Guidelines and the resources devoted to them, are set out in the SDSR.

The eight, cross-departmental National Security Tasks are to:

- (1) Identify and monitor national security risks and opportunities;
- (2) Tackle at root the causes of instability;
- (3) Exert influence to exploit opportunities and manage risks;
- (4) Enforce domestic law and strengthen international norms to help tackle those who threaten the UK and our interests;
- (5) Protect the UK and our interests at home, at our border, and internationally, in order to address physical and electronic threats from state and non-state sources;
- (6) Help resolve conflicts and contribute to stability. Where necessary, intervene overseas, including the legal use of coercive force in support of the UK's vital interests, and to protect our overseas territories;
- (7) Provide resilience for the UK by being prepared for all kinds of emergencies, able to recover from shocks and to maintain essential services;
- (8) Work in alliances and partnerships wherever possible to generate stronger responses.