

# The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

## Positions for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

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### I. Addressing NATO's Future Role in Countering Terrorism in the Middle East

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, hereinafter the UK, confronts terrorist activity in the Middle East through multilateral approaches such as providing training, advising, and military assistance to at risk countries. The UK reaffirms its commitment in the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) Mission Iraq and stands adamant in our support of Afghanistan in their stance against the unforgivable violence committed by the Taliban<sup>1</sup>. The UK demonstrates thorough involvement in countering terrorism through the recent domestic expansion of military and technological research, investing in burden sharing, and commitment to NATO missions. The UK is currently involved in two NATO missions addressing terrorism in the Middle East specifically in Afghanistan and Iraq. The UK aids in the NATO Mission Iraq, a mission grounded in the fight against the Daesh terrorist group, by providing professional military training to over 120,000 Iraqi and Kurdish security forces<sup>2</sup>. In Afghanistan, the UK trains future Afghan military leaders in the Afghan National Army Officer Academy, advises the Afghan security ministers, and leads in the NATO'S Resolute Support Mission, a mission dedicated to providing additional training, advice, and assistance to Afghanistan<sup>3</sup>. The UK firmly believes that through education, research, investment, and adoption of new technologies that the Middle East could seek a sustainable agreement to peace which is the only means of ensuring the continued security of the Middle East, the UK, and the other Member States of NATO.

The UK exemplifies leadership through a long history of deterring global terrorism and after the events of the September 11, 2001 attack on the United States of America, the UK drastically increased counterterrorism efforts<sup>4</sup>. The UK domestically expanded the Strategic Defense Review of 2002 to include the "New Chapter" that contributes Armed Forces in counterterrorism efforts<sup>5</sup>. In 2006, the UK implemented a cross-governmental counter terrorism strategy dubbed CONTEST that works to reduce the risk of terrorism both domestically and globally<sup>6</sup>. The UK voted affirmative on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2006 that worked to address the measures that lead to terrorism, prevent and combat terrorism globally<sup>7</sup>. As a member of the United Nations Security Council, the UK monitors Al-Qaida and Taliban sanctions regime, instituted in 2007, that requires all States to impose an asset freeze, travel ban, and an arms embargo on any association of the aforementioned terrorist groups<sup>8</sup>. In 2020, the UK joined other Member States in the United Nations Security Council by voting affirmatively on Resolution 2309 that focuses on deterring terrorism in airspace<sup>9</sup>. Recently, in 2021, the UK reaffirmed commitment to NATO Missions Iraq and Afghanistan with plans of increasing funding and military involvement<sup>10</sup>. The actions taken by the UK exemplify dedication to a world free of terrorism.

Regarding NATO's future involvement of countering terrorism in the Middle East, the UK continues to act against these threats and believes multilateral approaches such as providing training, advising, and military assistance to at risk countries is the most beneficial approach. The UK has seen these techniques return success in both Iraq and Afghanistan. With respect to these education techniques, the UK finds it imperative that more women are involved in the peace-building process to create a spillover effect of signaling to more women involved. Additionally, the UK calls for an update to the Strategic Concept of 2010 in order to integrate counter terrorism into NATO's core tasks and provide a larger platform for this discussion. Furthermore, the UK suggests that consultation and information sharing of other Member States regarding terrorism and terrorist activity be more refined and easier to access. To do so, the UK encourages all other Member States to provide transparency to their data collected. Finally, the UK asks that cyber terror threats and attacks be

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<sup>1</sup> Defence, Ministry of. "UK Renews Commitment to NATO Missions." GOV.UK. GOV.UK, February 18, 2021. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-renews-commitment-to-nato-missions>.

<sup>2</sup> UK Renews Commitment to NATO Missions

<sup>3</sup> HM Government, National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015 § (n.d.).

<sup>4</sup> United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. SIXTH COMMITTEE, SEVENTY FIFTH SESSION, AGENDA ITEM 114, and Naureen Fink. *MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM*, pp. 1–3.

<sup>5</sup> Smith, Paul J. "Counterterrorism in the United Kingdom." CENTER FOR HOMELAND DEFENSE AND SECURITY DEPT. OF NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS. Counterterrorism in the United Kingdom, NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL, NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL.

<sup>6</sup> Counterterrorism in the United Kingdom

<sup>7</sup> *Human Rights, Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism*, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2008.

<sup>8</sup> *Human Rights, Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism*

<sup>9</sup> *MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM*

<sup>10</sup> UK Renews Commitment to NATO Missions

integrated into current counter terrorism protocols and shared information databases to assist in deterring and anticipating threats. The UK looks forward to further discourse on this topic.

## II. Improving Defense Against Cyber-Attacks

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland recognizes that cyber threats are a direct impact to a nation's economy, safety, and prosperity; therefore, the UK is in favor of a reform in cyber defense. The UK increased its own defense budget by 2.5 billion euros as well as trained 1900 additional security and surveillance staff to deter from cyber, terrorist, and other global threats.<sup>11</sup> The UK exemplifies the urgent need for an increase in global cyber security domestically by establishing the Joint Force 2025, a group dedicated to making use of new technologies to improve security in cyberspace<sup>12</sup>. The UK has increased cyber security globally through the UK's Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-UK) which shares information with NATO and European Union members<sup>13</sup>. The UK is also currently working with other nations to build an open, secure, and resilient cyberspace through the London Cyber Process<sup>14</sup>. The UK further confronts cyber-attacks through their own National Cyber Security Centre by dealing with over 1000 malicious cyber-attacks each year<sup>15</sup>. Furthermore, the National Cyber Security Centre works with NATO to monitor Russian relations after a multilateral breach on the Vienna Convention on the Laws of Treatise and the interference of elections<sup>16</sup>. The UK strongly urges an improvement in defense against cyber-attacks to prevent any other multilateral breaches in cyberspace and wishes to expand to current NATO cyber defense programs.

The UK is a leader in cyber security, both globally and domestically. Since 2008, the UK is a sponsoring member of the NATO Cyber Defense Center of Excellence, a cooperative partnership between NATO member states where information can be shared and recorded<sup>17</sup>. In 2014, the UK launched their first National Computer Emergency Response Team that works closely with industries, governments, and academia to enhance cyber resilience<sup>18</sup>. The UK founded a National Cyber Security Centre in 2016, and in just two years of existence, dealt with over 1000 malicious cyber acts.<sup>19</sup> Additionally in 2016, the UK worked to create the CyberFirst program that helps youth explore the world of cyber security<sup>20</sup>. In 2019, the UK joined other United Nations Member States in forming the Group of Governmental Experts on Advancing responsible State behavior in the global cyberspace that will have consultations on retaining a violence free cyberspace<sup>21</sup>. In 2020, the UK unveiled the Integrated Operating Concept 2025 that creates a new use of armed forces in a rapidly evolving era of warfare with a focus on cyberwarfare<sup>22</sup>. These constant innovations in cyber security demonstrate the need for a frequently updated cyber defense plan.

Respecting the improvement of defense against cyber-attacks, the UK recommends the expansion of transparency in all consultations with other Member States to ensure efficiency and efficacy in anticipating, preventing, and combating cyber-attacks. The UK endorses formulating a cohesive resilience plan for when there are successful cyber-attacks on a Member State. Furthermore, the UK requests that NATO develop a goal and level of ambition in this sector for clear and easy reference. This dialogue should also include defining what cyber-attacks constitute an enactment of Article 5 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treatise. Additionally, the UK encourages the use of scenario games to be orchestrated as means of preparation. The UK asks that NATO focus on the expansion of education, research, and employment in cyber defense and security. The UK, again, looks forward to further discourse and cooperation on this topic.

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<sup>11</sup> UK Renews Commitment to NATO Missions

<sup>12</sup> UK Renews Commitment to NATO Missions

<sup>13</sup> UK Renews Commitment to NATO Missions

<sup>14</sup> UK Renews Commitment to NATO Missions

<sup>15</sup> "NATO Cyber Defence Pledge Conference: Foreign Secretary's Speech." GOV.UK. Accessed February 26, 2021.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/foreign-secretary-speech-at-the-nato-cyber-pledge-conference>.

<sup>16</sup>NATO Cyber Defence Pledge Conference: Foreign Secretary's Speech.

<sup>17</sup> "National Cyber Security Organisation: United Kingdom." CCDCOE. [ccdcocoe.org/library/publications/national-cyber-security-organisation-united-kingdom/](http://ccdcocoe.org/library/publications/national-cyber-security-organisation-united-kingdom/).

<sup>18</sup>"UK Launches First National CERT." GOV.UK, [www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-launches-first-national-cert](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-launches-first-national-cert).

<sup>19</sup> "NATO Cyber Defence Pledge Conference: Foreign Secretary's Speech." GOV.UK, [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/foreign-secretary-speech-at-the-nato-cyber-pledge-conference](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/foreign-secretary-speech-at-the-nato-cyber-pledge-conference).

<sup>20</sup> "CyberFirst." Ncsc.gov.uk, [www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/cyberfirst](http://www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/cyberfirst).

<sup>21</sup> "Group of Governmental Experts – UNODA." *United Nations*, United Nations, [www.un.org/disarmament/group-of-governmental-experts/](http://www.un.org/disarmament/group-of-governmental-experts/).

<sup>22</sup> *Human Rights, Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism*, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2008.