



Safer world, safer Britain: Submission to UK Strategic Defence and Security Review August 2010

“The nature of conflict is changing... and security threats themselves are more widely dispersed in parts of the world which are often difficult to access, lawless and in some cases failing, where the absence of governance feeds into a cycle of conflict and danger that we have yet to learn to arrest but are likely to face more often.”

- William Hague, Britain's Foreign Policy in a Networked World, July 2010

Introduction

As an independent, international NGO with 20 years experience working to prevent violent conflict, Saferworld welcomes the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR)¹.

We look forward to seeing HMG's updated National Security Strategy, but understand that it will express an ambition to more successfully address the challenges of conflict and insecurity in 'fragile and failing' countries. We would support this ambition and suggest that helping societies to more peacefully manage their conflicts will make a contribution to the UK's own long-term security, as well as directly benefiting those who live with the daily reality of armed violence. Conflict prevention is a component of national security.

And at a time when HMG's financial resources are severely constrained, comparatively modest resources spent to support the development of peaceful, stable and secure societies that are more resilient to the risk of violent conflict may also represent a sound investment over the long-term; saving lives, money and political reputation.

This short briefing outlines an approach that, based on our experience working in the Horn of Africa, South Asia and Eastern Europe, we believe would help the UK more effectively support lasting and sustainable solutions to conflict, insecurity and instability overseas.

1. Firstly, we outline an approach for promoting lasting stability overseas by addressing conflict and insecurity 'upstream'.
2. Secondly, we look at the implications such an approach might have for the UK's institutional architecture and some challenges in translating good policy into change on the ground.
3. Lastly, we look at how the UK's moral authority and international reputation can contribute to a more conducive global climate for conflict prevention, with particular reference to the UK's approach to strategic export controls.

¹ See annexe for more information about Saferworld

1. Promoting lasting stability overseas

“When we talk about deterrence we need of course to place it within a continuum of escalating posture and action which necessarily requires action from across government... At one end is conflict prevention, using all the levers of power short of force - aid, trade, diplomacy and sanctions among others.”

- Dr Liam Fox, Deterrence in the 21st Century, July 2010

Stabilisation or Prevention?

Much of the public and private discussions around the SDSR have highlighted an ambition to enhance or build upon the UK's capacity for 'post-conflict stabilisation'. Saferworld would support a more coordinated and effective approach to post-conflict stabilisation but we must be clear about what we are trying to achieve. 'Security', 'stability' and 'conflict prevention' are all terms that mean different things to different people, often radically so.

If 'stabilisation' in this context is to mean a relatively short-term activity with a strong military involvement (such as recent engagements in Afghanistan, Iraq, Sierra Leone, Bosnia and Kosovo for instance) then we would stress that this must be complemented by a coherent and effective long-term preventative approach designed to promote the development of more resilient, peaceful societies too. Helping to stabilise the patient must not come at the expense of helping to treat their ailment.

It is too neat to say that such an 'upstream' preventative approach is suitable for countries that are 'pre-conflict' whilst stabilisation is appropriate for countries immediately 'post-conflict' – in reality, most contexts are a complex tangle of 'pre-', 'mid-' and 'post-' conflict at any one time. However, there are many parts of the world which are of strategic importance for the UK and for which expensive 'boots on ground' stabilisation operations would be inappropriate. Somalia and Yemen would be two good examples of such contexts.

The UK also has a strong moral interest, concomitant with its commendable record on international development, in preventing violent conflict and promoting healthy, resilient societies in parts of the world where the UK's *direct* strategic interest is less clear².

The wide variety of contexts in which the UK has moral and strategic interests means that the SDSR must learn lessons from an equally wide range of prior engagements. *While stabilisation as practised in Helmand may be suitable in a small range of contexts, HMG should ensure its capacity for this kind of work does not come at the expense of a coherent, comprehensive and long-term vision of conflict prevention which goes beyond stabilisation alone.*

What does long-term conflict prevention look like?

Preventing violent conflict may sometimes involve short-term diplomatic crisis management to avert violence at the 'eleventh hour', and ensuring our diplomatic service has the capacity to do this well is extremely important. The SDSR should ensure that this contribution is recognised and protected.

But, crucially, 'conflict prevention' can also be understood as the process of supporting longer term societal change – helping countries to become more cohesive, resilient and able to manage conflicts without resorting to violence.

² Although given that, for instance, the recent bombing in Kampala was likely conducted by a group drawing inspiration from Al Shabaab but taking advantage of support structures based in DRC and other nearby countries, the regional dynamics of much conflict and insecurity mean that a sophisticated reading of even 'direct UK interest' is likely to cast a large net.

This kind of long-term, 'up stream' approach prioritises addressing the root causes of conflict and requires a coordinated range of activities, tailored to individual contexts and delivered by many different parts of HMG. These might include (but are certainly not limited to):

- 'Defence transformation' which helps countries 'right size' their defence assets and transition towards the civilian control and oversight of the armed forces – currently crucial, for instance, in southern Sudan.
- Support for the development of 'security and justice services' (such as the police, armed forces and judiciary) that are not only capable but also democratically accountable, transparent and responsive to those they serve. One only has to think of the role played by elements within the Kenyan security services during 2007's post-election violence to see why this is so important.
- The successful 'disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration' of ex-combatants into everyday civilian life. The integration of ex-Maoist combatants into the Nepali Army is currently producing political deadlock and potential crisis, for instance.
- Support for the development of democratic space where conflicts of interest can be meaningfully dealt with through political institutions – an absolutely crucial component of supporting long-term peace in Bosnia, for example.
- Measures to control the proliferation of illicit arms within conflict prone countries. Easy access to small arms especially not only exacerbate the risks of violent conflict, but may also facilitate human rights abuses, terrorism and other forms of armed criminality (such as piracy in Somalia).
- Grassroots peacebuilding work with communities to help create more cohesive, resilient societies – essential along contested boundary lines, such as between South Ossetia and Georgian controlled territory.
- Ensuring that, at a bare minimum, the UK's international development assistance in fragile countries is 'conflict-sensitive' and 'does no harm'.
- Beyond this, the UK's development efforts in these contexts should always target the underlying causes of conflict and fragility *at the same time* as meeting broader development goals. For instance, job creation programmes in countries with large populations of young unemployed men, initiatives to empower marginalised sections of the population, and 'community-security' work to help individual communities identify and meet their security needs.
- Support to long-term, locally appropriate statebuilding efforts that help generate a 'social contract' between citizen and state

Even this, non-exhaustive list, represents a wide array of potential interventions and it is vital that the UK does not apply a 'template' approach to conflict prevention, but looks at the individual characteristics and realities of each context it is working in and uses these as the starting point for its efforts to prevent conflict. Afghanistan is not Yemen and neither of these places are Somalia. The SDSR should reflect this.

Always begin with the context

The SDSR should ensure that all the UK's long-term conflict prevention efforts are based on a thorough understanding of the context, gained from in-depth and participatory analysis which is continually updated and shared between relevant actors.

We recognise that this entails more work but suggest that fully understanding the contexts we engage in is not only a sensible but an *unavoidable* prerequisite for success in promoting social, institutional and political change in highly complex and conflicted countries.

This contextual understanding should look at several levels. It is not enough to only understand the high-level political dynamics or international diplomatic issues, though these are important. We must also understand what the perceptions of ordinary people and communities are – a lesson neatly captured by the former head of ISAF, US General Stanley McChrystal:

"In Afghanistan, things are rarely as they seem, and the outcomes of actions we take, however well-intended, are often different from what we expect... If you build a well in the wrong place in a village, you may have shifted the basis of power in that village... If you build a well and contract it to one person or group over another, you make a decision that, perhaps in your ignorance, tips the balance of power, or perception thereof, in that village. Therefore, with a completely altruistic aim of building a well, you can create divisiveness or give the impression that you, from the outside, do not understand what is going on or that you have sided with one element or another, yet all you tried to do is provide water." (1)

Putting people at the heart of conflict prevention

Closely related to understanding what local people really think is ensuring that they are involved meaningfully in the decisions that affect their lives. This is not just a moral issue: conflict and insecurity is a product of people's choices and, to a large degree, plays out at the local level³.

Neither the UK nor any other part of the international community can 'provide' security or 'deliver' stability – we cannot simply turn up with governance (or security, or development for that matter) 'in a box'. Instead, the UK can use its resources and influence to *promote* peace and security and support progressive elements. But achieving lasting stability and sustainable security will rely on not just the consent of local people, but also their active input and ownership. In the words of the Conservative Party's green paper on national security, it is "... *neither desirable nor affordable not to involve individuals in the safety and security of the communities and businesses they know best.*" (2) This will be particularly true of marginalised groups, whose exclusion is not only at odds with UK values around equality and human rights but also frequently helps to foster the grievances that sustain much insecurity.

Failure to actively and meaningfully involve broad cross-sections of societies in conflict prevention efforts dramatically decreases the likelihood that interventions will be appropriate to the realities of the context, or supported by the population. Without first understanding people's perceptions and opinions, and then actively involving them in developing and implementing solutions to the conflict and insecurity they experience, successfully promoting peace and stability will remain elusive goals. As the MoD's early 2010 green paper suggested, "... *local people must be at the centre of our policy. Only local people will determine whether, in the long-term, a country or region will establish self-sustaining stability.*" (3)

'Community security'

It is important that we do not presuppose what makes communities feel unsafe or insecure, or restrict our definition of what constitutes 'promoting security' to a narrow set of interventions.

Saferworld has pioneered the elaboration of a 'community security' methodology that approaches communities as a 'blank slate' and works with them to identify their security problems. We specialise in issues such as small arms control and security and justice sector reform, but what communities initially expressed as making them feel insecure in pilot sites in Bangladesh were a lack of day care facilities in slum communities with high levels of child abuse (meaning that parents could not easily go out and work), and the sexual harassment of women in rural villages.

Having worked with communities to identify these issues, we helped bring them together with local authorities such as the police and other local officials to develop solutions to these problems (such as more community-based policing patrols, raising awareness of the penalties for sexual harassment and establishing a day care centre for the children of working parents).

³ The 2008 conflict in Georgia, for instance, was at least as much a product of local level conflict dynamics as it was of high level 'real politik'. Many analysts were surprised that this conflict centred around South Ossetia rather than Abkhazia and it has been suggested that this may be, in large part, down to the years of sustained and concentrated peacebuilding efforts that have been undertaken in Abkhazia.

In doing so, not only did the communities benefit from feeling a directly improved sense of safety but a closer relationship and increased levels of trust was built between them and local officials – a small, but important, step on the way towards building a more resilient society better able to manage conflict non-violently. In the case of the community in urban Bangladesh, family incomes also rose significantly.

In Kosovo, where our work with communities is more mature, the increased level of trust and feelings of greater security one community developed meant they felt comfortable enough to volunteer to local authorities a cache of illicit small arms they had been keeping ‘for their protection’ – highlighting the potential links between this type of ‘developmentally led’ approach and harder, more ‘traditional’ security concerns.

Developing a thorough, nuanced and evolving understanding of the contexts we work in and engaging meaningfully with local communities in this way is of course time-consuming and labour intensive (if relatively inexpensive in terms of financial outlay). But we cannot expect that promoting lasting solutions to highly conflicted societies is going to be ‘quick’, ‘easy’ or necessarily show short-term results that fit the UK’s domestic political cycle. Helping countries find a path to peace is a generational endeavour, though one in which success would pay handsome dividends in years to come.

Many parts of HMG have a role to play in delivering the vision of conflict prevention outlined above. If the UK is serious about addressing the challenges of failing states as a contribution to the UK’s national security, the SDSR should prioritise support for such work from the most appropriate parts of government. The next section outlines an institutional structure that may help facilitate this.

2. Delivering results – good intentions, practical realities

“We have brought together the three policy pillars of development, defence and diplomacy through our new National Security Council. This synergy will allow us to reduce poverty in fragile states, while also building capacity and guaranteeing security and stability.”

- Andrew Mitchell, Speech to the Carnegie Endowment, Washington DC, June 2010

We recognise that looking at HMG’s internal organisation risks distracting attention from individual conflict-affected contexts, which should always be the focus of the UK’s concern in preventing conflict overseas. However, there are a number of important ways in which we believe the UK could ensure it is better set up for meeting the unique challenges of a range of conflict-affected countries.

Analysis, strategy and measuring progress

A number of different government departments – especially the MOD, FCO and DFID (as well as cross-cutting bodies as the Stabilisation Unit) – each have comparative advantages in delivering the various elements of conflict prevention as outlined above. We believe it is vital that the SDSR recognises these different roles and clarifies the unique contribution each department can make, *and the links between them*, within a coherent HMG approach to conflict prevention.

Key to this will be developing a comprehensive HMG conflict strategy that flows from the new National Security Strategy. This should make explicit the link between conflict prevention and national security, coordinate at least the FCO, DFID and MOD’s work preventing and responding to conflict, and be appropriately supported by the Treasury.

We suggest that from this cross-Whitehall conflict strategy should come shared MOD, FCO, DFID strategies for *each and every* conflict-affected and fragile state where the UK is active. These strategies should begin, as noted above, by developing a thorough analysis that is shared across the three departments. Presently, DFID conducts very good ‘political economy’ analyses, ‘conflict’

analyses and 'drivers of change' analyses for many (but not all) of the fragile countries it works in. However, it is unclear whether these are shared with – or sought by – other departments. Similarly, the FCO is usually possessed of superior insight into the diplomatic dynamics and high level politics of individual countries, whilst the MOD, especially through its defence attaches, can bring a unique insight into the hard security dynamics of a country. All of these perspectives are vital and so it is important that HMG has a mechanism to ensure that all three departments are actively sharing, and using, joint analysis and working towards a shared vision and strategy for each country.

Having established a common and thorough understanding of the context in any given fragile country, DFID, FCO and MOD – accompanied by relevant Treasury and Cabinet Office officials – should develop a *UK* strategy for engaging with that country. This should draw upon all the levers available to the UK and be led by the individual and specific needs of that country, as elaborated by the shared analysis. Such a strategy should also include outreach aimed at influencing other countries' and multilateral institutions' policies and approaches towards that context. From this set of UK-wide objectives, departments can collectively decide where each has a comparative advantage in delivering the UK's strategy for that country and funding be allocated accordingly.

It would be important that these cross-Whitehall 'country teams' meet regularly to update their analysis in light of contextual developments, review progress against objectives and make any adjustments necessary. In country, we suggest that co-locating DFID and FCO offices wherever possible may both directly reduce administrative costs and also help encourage a closer working relationship.

It will also be necessary for the Treasury to work together with other parts of HMG to ensure that such work is both funded and evaluated appropriately. Although the flexibility of the Conflict Prevention Pools gave them a certain nimbleness, the uncertainty and fluctuations in how the pools were allocated, and the usually short-term nature of such funding, presented a problem for delivering effective long-term conflict prevention. If the UK is to move beyond short-term crisis management, these issues will have to be addressed in whatever funding modality replaces the Conflict Prevention Pools.

Similarly, when assessing progress against objectives it will be important not to set unrealistic or hard to assess targets, as proved problematic for the Public Service Agreement on conflict (PSA 30). On the other hand, any targets must avoid the risk of over simplifying complex issues or even creating perverse incentives. We appreciate that, especially post-financial crisis, all public money must be shown to be having maximum impact and delivering real value for money. But, at its worst, a simplistic approach to measurable outputs could actually risk undermining conflict prevention efforts. For instance, in promoting the reform of security and justice services it is no good simply counting the number of police officers that have been trained without looking at how well their training prevents them preying on vulnerable communities or whether they are accountable to civilian oversight. But measuring what are sometimes 'vital intangibles' in a simple metric is challenging. The issue may be outside the scope of the SDSR but, going forward, the Treasury should work together with other departments and civil society groups to develop ways to meet these challenges⁴.

Bridging the 'implementation gap'

It is essential to get the policy and decision-making architecture in Whitehall right. However, in our experience in numerous fragile and conflict-affected countries, the ability to translate HMG commitments and ambitions into action on the ground is equally important. The SDSR is an important opportunity to ensure this capacity is properly developed.

⁴ For example, Saferworld recently produced a report on the effective monitoring and evaluation of security sector reform programmes and are now working to develop a practical tool kit on this area for inclusion in the OECD's handbook on SSR. See <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/smartweb/resources/view-resource/415>

There are many reasons why implementation can be a challenge, including a lack of HMG capacity, the difficult politics of many host countries, a lack of (or even too much) funding, competition and a deficit of coordination between donors, and rapidly changing, complicated contexts to name but a few. However, one particular area Saferworld sees as posing an increasing challenge is around the support given to HMG officials to effectively manage the delivery of major commitments.

Over recent years, HMG's interest in security-building activities has increased significantly – with a corresponding increase in the number, size and complexity of related programmes. The project management function often falls to staff in-country who, in our experience, are often performing an essentially advisory role (conflict or governance advisers for instance). In most cases, these people are able and committed, but there is a significant difference between the skills required to be a good advisor and those needed to be a good project manager. Furthermore, staff allocations have not kept pace with the size and complexity of programming; indeed they have been frozen or downscaled so staff are ever more thinly spread and juggling more – and larger and more complicated – programmes.

Although this has been done in the name of efficiency and cost-saving, we suggest that, on balance, having staff increasingly try to do 'more with less' in difficult contexts does not always equate to a real value for money saving when the *effectiveness* of those programmes is taken into account. Especially in conflict-affected and fragile contexts, it is not enough to 'get money out of the door' – significant time and human resources are required to ensure that money is achieving its ambition. And so, if HMG engagement in this area is to keep growing, more consideration is needed of how to ensure that management capacity keeps pace with ambition.

One response to 'doing more with less' has been an increase in the outsourcing of programmes, from design through to delivery and evaluation. While such an approach can potentially fill vital capacity gaps and deliver better value for money⁵, it should not be seen as an 'easy option'. The management and co-ordination of security related programmes is inherently difficult, even when all functions are kept in-house. When many activities are outsourced, often to more than one actor, this adds an extra layer of complexity for donors who bear ultimate responsibility for the programme. Negotiating the politically sensitive areas of policy and practice these programmes touch upon – as well as ensuring that they are integrated with wider national conflict prevention strategies – will need sustained and proactive management.

Winning support internationally

The UK's contribution alone will not be enough to deliver lasting peace and security in fragile contexts. HMG's cross-departmental conflict strategy should, therefore, include an ambition to promote a world class approach to conflict and insecurity internationally and play an active role in helping to make the various institutions, multilaterals and informal groupings of which it is a member to work more effectively and in greater coordination.

Part of this will be ensuring that any reorganisation of the UK's institutional capacity for addressing and responding to conflict retains the capacity for analysis and policy development represented by, for instance, the FCO's 'Conflict Group' and DFID's 'Conflict, Humanitarian and Security' team. The UK currently leads the world in much of its policy responding to conflict and insecurity (for instance, the conflict chapter of DFID's 2009 white paper) and building support for this policy could be seen as multiplying the value of its development, as well as increasing the potential for impact.

⁵ For instance, HMG will need to ensure it has the capacity needed to gather and analyse the views and perspectives of local people as a routine part of its work in fragile states. Sometimes this will face significant operational challenges (such as in Afghanistan) and, in every context, it will be important to ensure a 'conflict-sensitive' approach is taken to ensure that the very act of trying to gather opinions doesn't in itself inadvertently provoke conflict (for instance, by seeming to privilege one group over another or putting individuals at risk). HMG may want to consider commissioning third parties to conduct such participatory analysis – especially local civil society partners who often have good access and existing levels of social capital and trust to draw on in such work.

Ensuring public accountability and civil society involvement

Lastly, the SDSR should ensure the UK has the right set up to provide adequate parliamentary oversight of its efforts to prevent conflict overseas in order to promote ever higher standards of policy and implementation. Current structures for parliamentary oversight most often mirror individual departments and are increasingly inadequate for such complicated cross-departmental challenges as successfully addressing fragile states. The SDSR could suggest a range of alternatives for parliament and HMG to consider without adding an unnecessary financial burden (such as perhaps requiring more joint inquiries between committees, drawing on geographic All Party Groups or reconfiguring the last parliament's National Security Strategy Committee to scrutinise the work of the National Security Council, under which responsibility for conflict prevention ultimately rests).

Similarly, and within the context of some confidential aspects of HMG's approach to conflict-affected and fragile states, the SDSR should outline a mechanism for ensuring UK civil society can input into and play a role in HMG's approach to addressing overseas conflict and security. The UK is home to many think tanks, academic institutions and NGOs with a great deal of relevant expertise and experience HMG can draw from – and which HMG often partially funds. Ensuring that this expertise is fully accessed and used by HMG would not just be good practice, but would also ensure the UK is receiving maximum value from its outlay. HMG could also consider involving civil society and academics in developing, and critiquing, its assessment of future threats to ensure it is as well informed and robust as possible.

3. Upholding our values, strengthening global standards

“The networked world requires us to inspire other people with how we live up to our own values... because now they are able to see in more detail whether we meet our own standards... we should always strive to act with moral authority, recognising that once that is damaged it is hard to restore.”

- William Hague, Britain's Foreign Policy in a Networked World, July 2010

Because of their intrinsically sensitive nature, exports of conventional weapons – more than nearly any other class of export – have the potential to exacerbate conflict dynamics at the national and even regional level. One only has to think of the recent tension created when France announced plans to export a Mistral class warship to Russia in February this year and a senior Russian naval figure publicly commented that had Russia had a Mistral during the 2008 conflict with Georgia, it would have allowed them to invade ‘in 40 minutes rather than two days’.

The UK operates a strict strategic export controls regime that should be seen as a vital instrument in conflict prevention, given its emphasis on mitigating the risk of UK exports inadvertently exacerbating conflict or insecurity or supporting terrorism and armed criminality. Although there are uncommon exceptions and ‘near misses’ (such as when India attempted to re-export helicopters containing UK components to Burma in 2007⁶), the quality of current UK strategic export controls means UK manufactured equipment rarely finds its way directly into conflict-affected or fragile states.

As such, these controls should be referenced by the SDSR and the conflict prevention elements of the UK's National Security Strategy in order that measures aimed at preventing conflict and fragility are not trumped by other pressures – for instance immediate pressures to increase defence sales as part of the UK's economic recovery. This goes beyond protecting the instruments that are available and entails ensuring that those instruments are also *implemented* accordingly. Whilst there may be interest in using strategic exports to ‘reward’ allies and ‘punish’ intransigent states, Saferworld would stress in the strongest possible terms that such a short-termist strategy would be

⁶ See http://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/Myanmar_report_July07.pdf

very likely to undermine efforts to ensure a responsible approach to the transfer of conventional weapons that backs up the UK's long-term national security objectives.

Maintaining the UK's high standard of export controls will also reinforce the coalition government's commendable commitment to continuing UK efforts to establish higher global standards of arms export controls, specifically through support for an international Arms Trade Treaty. Conversely, sacrificing these high standards would risk undermining the UK's moral standing and leadership in this area.

This matters for the UK's ambition to better address conflict and insecurity overseas. Whilst UK strategic exports may on the whole be responsible and well regulated, the same cannot be said for all parts of the world. Conventional weapons continue to pour into regions of conflict and instability across the globe where they aggravate and prolong existing conflict, facilitate human rights abuses and contribute to regional destabilisation and armed criminality.

In 2012, the UN will negotiate a global Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) to provide legally binding international minimum standards on the transfer of conventional weapons. The ATT has the support of the UK defence industry who have a commercial interest in creating a more level playing field by ensuring other countries' defence industries are accountable to similar high standards as the UK's. The ATT is also entirely consistent with UK national security objectives around promoting a more stable and secure international order and so the SDSR should reaffirm the Coalition's position on the ATT and commit the UK to making every possible effort to ensuring these negotiations deliver a robust, comprehensive treaty that is able to live up to ambitions.

Conclusion

'Security' is coy, meaning different things to different people.

But if ensuring the security of the UK is about meeting and deterring threats to our interests, then we must look at where those threats come from. Saferworld suggests that many of the things that threaten us at home – and our servicemen and women abroad – find their roots in the problems that afflict the lives of so many across the globe.

But having made this observation, it is not enough to respond hurriedly and crudely to the symptoms of conflict, insecurity and political fragility: the ongoing (but not 'intractable') problems of Somalia, Afghanistan, the Caucasus and too many other parts of the world should teach us that.

Instead, we must address the root causes of these challenges with patience, realism and careful thought – as well as ensuring that our own actions and wider priorities are consistent with what we are trying to achieve. The SDSR represents a timely opportunity for HMG to develop a coherent, coordinated strategy for doing this.

Because ultimately, supporting a safer world for others is fundamental to creating a safer world for ourselves.

(1) General Stanley McChrystal Address, IISS, October 2009

(2) Conservative Party, A Resilient Nation, January 2010

(3) MOD, Adaptability and Partnership, Issues for the Strategic Defence Review, February 2010

Annexe: About Saferworld

Saferworld is an independent, international NGO that works to prevent violent conflict and promote cooperative approaches to security. We believe everyone should be able to lead peaceful, fulfilling lives free from insecurity and armed violence.

Through our work in the Horn of Africa, South Asia and Eastern Europe we aim to understand what causes violence by talking to the people it affects and then bringing together communities, governments, civil society and the international community to develop solutions. Using this experience, we also work with the UK, EU, UN and others to develop ways of supporting societies address conflict and insecurity.

We always seek to work constructively with others and do not usually engage in public campaigning. While we are not a traditional development agency, we seek to understand and influence the relationship between conflict, security and international development.

We have over 60 staff based in London and abroad – with registered offices in Brussels, Colombo, Juba, Kampala, Kathmandu, Nairobi and Pristina, and a permanent staff presence in most of the countries we work in. Our funding for 2008-2009 was around £4.7million – mainly in the form of government grants from Canada, the EU, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, Norway and the UK.