

# Scottish Independence Convention

## Transition Paper No. 2

### SCOTLAND'S SECURITY

Scotland must be guided by a clear and realistic assessment of the security challenges it might face as an independent state. This is not only important in choosing the basic structures and the resources required to address risks, it is also essential to have clarity on this for the process of negotiations with the rest of the UK (rUK) – England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Decisions about hardware, real estate, workforce/personnel capacity and cooperation could leave us with completely inappropriate resources for our needs if we are not strongly focused. We need to avoid being trapped in “inheritance”. We do not want a damaging and expensive disjuncture between inherited infrastructure and personnel from the UK and the security needs and objectives appropriate for the next few decades in an independent Scotland.

#### The UK Security Context

The UK recognizes, in theory, that a security risk assessment should be the framework for resource priorities and defence services. But the last five-year UK Strategic Defence and Security Review in 2015 produced a risk assessment which does not appear closely-aligned with the pattern of UK Defence planning and expenditure. The six main suggested threats in the Security Review were:

- Increasing threat of terrorism, extremism and instability.
- The resurgence of state-based threats and intensifying wider state competition.
- The attack on the rules-based international order, making it harder to build consensus or tackle global threats.
- The importance of technology, especially cyber-threats.
- The ongoing growth of serious organized crime (costing the UK at least 37 billion pounds a year).
- Diseases and natural hazards (climate change, floods and fires).

Two of these (terrorism and organized crime) are clearly policing responsibilities. One is a public health/economic policy area (diseases and natural hazards). One is a technological and security service problem (cyber-threats). And one is a core diplomacy/soft power task (coalition and consensus building). Even the “intensifying wider state competition” appears to have a stronger economic dimension than a traditional military aspect. You cannot have more of everything. This illustrates very clearly what a security strategy should do – help governments decide whether it is better to spend more on police than on the army, more on aircraft or on diplomacy and foreign aid, more on submarines or on cyber security expertise. Aircraft carriers, nuclear weapons, fast jets and tanks all seem rather marginal, if not superfluous, to the perceived security threats. This is in the context of the UK with its strong aspirations to have an independent global role.

Perceived UK security threats and UK defence priorities do not appear to be a close fit. UK defence policy and procurement continues to be almost entirely configured not only for expeditionary warfare but to furnish an auxiliary capability in another state's expeditionary wars. For almost two decades these interventions have been destabilising and ultimately unsuccessful in their stated aims. This expeditionary global role at the tail-end of empire is largely illusory. The UK's nuclear capacity is entirely dependent on the US. Britain can make the warheads but the US supplies and services the delivery system and in doing so keeps control over targeting. The overseas interventionist role also depends on the US and in NATO the UK is very much within the close US sphere of influence.

Even a decade ago some US thinking was emphasising the change in threats. The head of the CIA forecast (in 2011) that “The next Pearl Harbour that we confront could well be cyber-attack that cripples our power stations, our grid, our security systems, our financial systems, our government systems”.<sup>1</sup>

The UK Government's new Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy initiated a request for submission of views in August 2020,<sup>2</sup> with the stated goal to “set the long-term strategic aims of our international policy and national security”. The “key trends and drivers of change over the next decade” they suggested are:

- Intensified great power competition, shift in economic power towards Asia, decline in G7s share of international GDP.
- The effect of climate change.
- Deterioration of natural environment, unprecedented loss of bio-diversity.
- Impact of technology, increased power of non-state actors (Apple, Microsoft, Google).
- Increasing challenge to global governance, highest number of state-based conflicts.

In particular they seek submissions on cyber technology, on developing soft power and on effective resilience to natural hazards and malicious threats. UK Government briefings suggest a shift in security threat assessments away from the traditional military focus. Officials are quoted as saying that the UK should be prepared for a different type of conflict to counter what they see as China's political and economic aggression, including cyber-attacks.<sup>3</sup> The briefing suggested that they did not expect a military attack.

All of this emphasizes the importance of fresh thinking and the opportunity that independence will give Scotland to shape a security policy that is appropriate to 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges and our geographical position and aspirations. We cannot allow traditional approaches and vested interests to bias the decisions that will have to be taken in transition planning.

## A Human Security Approach

Traditional models of defence have been based on the concept of protecting state boundaries and access to economic resources. There is still an assumption that defence organization and procurement should be based on the belief that the main purpose is preventing attack from opposing armed forces or protecting overseas interests. But ideas of security shaped by 20<sup>th</sup> century European wars, cold wars and lingering echoes of empire are inappropriate as the guiding framework for contemporary challenges.<sup>4</sup> The perspective of human security has developed out of the experience of many of the poorer countries, particularly in the global south, whose citizens face serious deprivation, internal violence and lack of any legal protection.<sup>5</sup> But the existential threats of climate change and global pandemics affecting all of humanity make a human security approach just as relevant to more economically developed states. Its advantages for developed countries is in providing a framework to evaluate serious threats that could undermine the viability of the structures that play a fundamental role in sustaining the core essentials of community and personal safety and survival. It provides a holistic threat assessment model rather than one driven by the interests of the military-industrial complex.

Using the term "security" on its own can be too closely identified with the existing "security services". Using the concepts and language of human security enables us to rationally prioritize, to integrate flexibly with other state services and to respond rapidly to changing situations. The traditional defence approach has tended to compartmentalise, to solidify and to tie us into technologies and organisational structures that are determined by the past rather than the needs of the future. Which, to take just one recent example, is why the UK ended up with highly vulnerable and massively expensive aircraft carriers.

Ireland provides a useful example of alternative security approaches. It has focused mainly on "soft power" that builds international cooperation, respect and reputation. It has recently been elected as one of the rotating members of the United Nations Security Council and the Irish Minister for Finance has been elected as president of the Eurogroup of finance ministers. As well as years of participation in United Nations peacekeeping missions it has played a significant role along with Norway in rescuing the Cluster Bomb Treaty.<sup>6</sup> Ireland spends around 0.3 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on military expenditure.<sup>7</sup> While this might be low for Scotland, it illustrates the choices independent states have in choosing priorities for security and international objectives.

The problem of a human security approach is, of course, that it risks becoming a catch-all for every desirable social policy and in so doing loses its analytical value. This can best be addressed by having a "Secure Scotland Commission" as an integral part of Scottish state structures comprising government and its agencies, parliamentary and civil society representatives. This commission should produce bi-annual reports which assess developments in the risk environment and the effectiveness of responses. The areas of policy that are appropriate will evolve from this. As we have seen from UK Security Reviews, perceived risks are now far removed from the traditional military risks. The military forces and hardware which will be required by an independent Scotland must be subordinate to a broadly-based assessment of the existential risks we might face.

**Transition issue: A Secure Scotland Commission can be established now with existing Holyrood powers. The importance of advance contingency planning has been particularly highlighted during the COVID-19 emergency.**

## Scotland's Security Risks

Scotland is particularly fortunate in that it is in one of the geopolitically stable regions in the world. As indeed is the present UK. We are not surrounded by boundary disputes (although post-Brexit may see some related to fishing rights). Scottish borders are clearly legally defined. We are distant from the worst conflict areas in the world (some of which we have helped to create and sustain). Hostile state invasion would not be in the significant risk category (similar to the current UK risk assessments). And Scotland is unlikely to be engaged in future expeditionary warfare projects that have characterized much of UK policy. However, there are serious contemporary risks to which Scotland, similar to other states, might be exposed to. In addition, Scotland currently has one exceptional major risk factor as the site of the largest European concentration of nuclear fire-power.

## Cyber Security

This has become a top-tier risk in all states and the more developed the state, the greater the risk. Cyber dependency has

increased and is set to increase more. The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated this. Every aspect of our society could suffer serious collapse if the systems failed, but even if it only affected one sector like finance or energy the impact would be major. A non-nuclear Scotland would not be the most likely target for a deliberate attack by a state actor unless there were particular competitive economic interests involved. This also applies to cyber terrorism unless our foreign and military policy positions become interventionist. But any sector in any country is a potential target for organized crime, including Scotland with its substantial financial sector. However, the main risks by far are technical failures and this points to the importance of new IT systems which need to be introduced. The most appropriate base for the forensic technology expertise we may need is to build on Police Scotland's cybercrime expertise. However, it should be made quite clear that Scotland's interest is in developing cyber security expertise for defensive purposes not for offensive interventions.

**Transition issue: Establish a Scottish Security and Intelligence Agency. Expertise needs to be concentrated not dispersed in different agencies. Much is already devolved in Police Scotland but we need to transform this into a Scottish Security and Intelligence Agency (see below).**

## Climate Change

All of the evidence suggests the accelerating risk of major changes in weather patterns and related environmental change. While Scotland may be fortunate in not being among the most vulnerable countries, rising sea levels suggest extensive flooding, coastal erosion, high rainfall and temperature change leading to serious economic and social disruption. But the most significant problems may be the outcome of severe changes in other countries, which could result in large population movements, increasing conflicts over land and water resources and global economic disruption following COVID-19. Scotland's response needs effective border protection, economic resilience strategies, flood prevention programmes as well as support for international carbon-reduction initiatives. Flood prevention, some economic powers and political support for international action are already devolved to the Scottish Parliament.

**Transition issue: Some of the important powers required to increase resilience are devolved and action could be taken now to strengthen planning policies, building standards, reform land use and develop green energy. A Secure Scotland Commission could currently become operational to plan and promote change. Other factors requiring economic, trade and industry and foreign policy powers could be highlighted as reasons for independence.**

## Protection of Marine Resources

Protection of marine resources is a much higher priority for Scotland than the rest of the UK. North Sea oil extraction is declining and for environmental reasons there may not be much exploration for new reserves, although it will continue to be a significant asset for a number of years.

Scottish waters are a rich source of fish and, depending on the relationship with the European Union (EU), may be a source of future conflict. It will undoubtedly be a transition negotiation issue.

Off-shore wind-turbines, future tidal energy technology and the under-water grid connections will be key energy sources.

Scotland's islands and long coastline (11,602 miles/4,905 kilometres) require safe marine transport. There is an existing international legal maritime framework and Scottish waters are legally defined, but we do not know whether independence negotiations will take place in the context of a stable fishing access system or a contested one. We must assume that this will require protecting/policing (including ensuring Scottish vessels obey international rules). Oil companies (all private) have resources to protect their own assets but there are issues around their compliance and that of others with environmental regulations. Off-shore energy could be the target of sabotage/terrorism.

**Transition issue: It is a high priority for Scotland to develop a substantial and well-equipped coastguard service, which we currently do not have. The increase in customs and excise income generated by this will make a significant contribution to cover the cost of this service.**

## Health Pandemics

Although the likelihood of health pandemics is mentioned in the 2015 UK Security Review and both the rUK and Scottish governments have had planning exercises for responding to pandemics, it has become clear during the COVID-19 crisis that these exercises were not taken seriously and we were quite unprepared. Even though vaccinations are now being rolled out, this lack of preparedness should be a salutary lesson on our serious vulnerability to new infectious diseases. Changes arising from climate change and environmental degradation may increase the risks of new and even more serious infections as a result of new environmental conditions and mass migrations of humans and animals.

**Transition issue: Most of the relevant powers are already devolved but independence would clarify border control powers. The Scottish Government must engage in serious disaster preparedness and pandemic exercises and this should be done through the new Secure Scotland Commission.**

## Terrorist Attacks

Terrorist attacks in the UK over the past two decades have mainly been related to conflicts in the Middle East, although the attackers have mostly been British. More recently, there have been attacks from far-right white supremacists (major examples in Norway and New Zealand are a salutary warning). The preferred targets in the UK in recent years have been individual killings rather than infrastructure attacks, but terrorist fashions can change. Scotland has been fortunate so far in having few incidents. Even during the 1970s/80s peak of the Irish "troubles" when, for historical and cultural reasons attacks in Scotland might have been expected, major ones did not occur. We may not always be so fortunate.

**Transition issue:** Relevant powers are already devolved – policing, education and community services. Education should play a significant role in countering terrorist recruitment. The development of the Scottish Security and Intelligence Agency will enhance existing powers. But cooperative relationships with other police forces may have to be redeveloped depending on post-Brexit outcomes.

## Serious Organized Crime

The security aspects of organized crime are mainly focused on the very substantial economic cost in terms of lost revenues and the social cost of illegal drugs, weapons and people smuggling/trafficking. There are also international implications in the policing of arms trade exports. Scotland is especially vulnerable with 11,602 miles of coastline, which requires a strong borders protection service, especially a coastguard. There can also be a narrow line between the legal and illegal in financial services, VAT, excise duties and tax avoidance, which could have significant implications for the Scottish Government.

**Transition issue:** Combatting organized crime is Police Scotland's responsibility and therefore the structures and much of the resourcing is already in place. However, it also involves Customs and Excise and the taxation system.

## Territorial Attack

Scotland's geographic position, surrounded by largely benign democratic states, is a core strategic asset with substantial distance from more unstable areas of the world. We face no military threat from another state. Once the legal status of Scotland as an independent state is recognised there might be economic issues with rUK, but our boundaries are legally defined as will be our rights as a United Nations member state. Our substantial social ties with England, Wales and Northern Ireland will be the basis for a close non-violent relationship.

**Transition issue:** The threat environment of a territorial attack is low but this can change. There should be flexibility in new systems enabling the scaling up or scaling down of capabilities in a new Scottish Defence Force – a small core capability which can be expanded in changed circumstances.

## Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Power

The exceptional risk factor for Scotland is having the largest concentration of nuclear fire-power in Europe and having it based close to our largest population centres in the central belt. The UK's four Vanguard Trident submarines are based there, around 200 nuclear warheads and the Astute class submarines, which are not nuclear-armed but are nuclear-powered. This makes Scotland a top target in any situation of heightened tension or, since targeting will be programmed, in the event of an accidental launch. After Freedom of Information pressure, the Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator published its reports on Faslane from 2005 to 2015, identifying 86 regulatory problems. Publication then ceased on "national security" grounds.<sup>8</sup> Concern has also been expressed over the planned increase in radio-active waste being discharged from Faslane/Coulport.<sup>9</sup> There is also regular transportation of warheads for maintenance through residential areas from Burghfield in the south of England to the Royal Naval Armaments Depot (RNAD) at Coulport on Loch Long. These nuclear convoys have been deliberately down-played as a terrorist risk but they can be readily traced and their route predicted. Nukewatch, a group of volunteer anti-nuclear activists, has been tracking these for years but has chosen not to announce the routes publicly in advance. A serious attack or accident could cause a major radiation leak. A review of safety arrangements for these convoys in Scotland identified serious failures in safety responses in the event of an accident or an attack.<sup>10</sup>

Scotland also has two ageing nuclear power plants – Hunterston B (North Ayrshire) and Torness (East Lothian) – in the central belt. Hunterston has had periods of closure because of risk from cracks. It has recently been announced that it will not re-open and it is predicted that the risk of cracks will happen in Torness by 2022.<sup>11</sup> Torness had had other problems, including a faulty valve in June 2020. There are also three other civil nuclear sites being decommissioned (Dounreay, Chapelcross Power Station and Hunterston A Power Station). All of these are potential risk factors.

**Transition issue:** Nuclear weapons will be one of the two biggest issues in negotiations (the other being the share of the UK's national debt). This is an issue in which Scotland could play a genuinely important international role (discussed below).

## Faslane/Coulport

How Scotland deals with the presence of nuclear weapons on its territory at Faslane/Coulport will be a defining issue in its

international standing and in its confidence as a new state. It is an issue with very significant international implications as well as a factor of serious domestic risk. If the issue is handled strongly and responsibly it will establish Scotland's reputation as a serious player. If Scotland bends under pressure from the UK Government this will be an invitation for increased pressure on all fronts. The likely tactic of the UK Government in the negotiation period will be to seek a long-term rental agreement to continue using the sites. Even if the rental period was five years, this would still be seen as a victory because the assumption would be that they have established a precedent and could continue to exert pressure to continuously renew the rental agreement. They will in all likelihood be supported in this by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

What is required is a very clear pathway for the removal of nuclear weapons from Scotland and a formal public notification of this after a Yes vote. The SNP has supported such a pathway,<sup>12</sup> as have the Greens and detailed technical work has been done on this process.<sup>13</sup> Within the first year of independence there should be a prohibition on Trident submarines being deployed with nuclear weapons from Scottish land or sea territory. RNAD Coulport has the expert personnel and facilities to remove the components to disable the missiles and the 200 warheads and by the end of year two these should all be removed from Scotland. Assuming a two to three-year transition period, from a Yes vote to formal independence, the rUK will have a period of four to five years to prepare and complete the removal, depending on a clear, detailed, red-line commitment at the start of the negotiation period. There is potential storage for warheads if rUK does not choose to decommission them at, for example, RAF Honington in England. Since the Trident missiles are rented from the US and return there for servicing, their future is a matter for rUK-US negotiations once removed from Scotland. The time-scale for the removal of the hulks and of the Astute nuclear-powered (but not nuclear armed) submarines could be left open for negotiation.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)<sup>14</sup> gives Scotland a structure, with United Nations backing and within international law, to become a non-nuclear state with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) supervision. The process of formal ratification of the TPNW has been completed and it will formally come into force in January 2021. Support for Scottish ratification has come from the SNP, the Greens and some Labour parliamentarians.

Article 4 of the Treaty states:

“Each state party that has any nuclear weapons or other nuclear devices on its territory or in any place under its jurisdiction or control that are owned, possessed or controlled by another state shall ensure the prompt removal of such weapons as soon as possible but not later than a deadline to be determined by the first Meeting of State Parties. Upon the removal of such weapons or other explosive devices, that State Party shall submit to the Secretary General of the United Nations a declaration that it has fulfilled its obligations under the Article.”

## Constitutional Issues

There are defence issues which should be included in a Scottish Constitution. The deployment of armed forces should include a "triple lock".<sup>15</sup> The first lock means that Scottish forces could only be used out of territory if there is a clear mandate under international law (for example in United Nations peacekeeping operations). The next lock means that even when a mandate exists, the Scottish Government must be able to articulate a strategy for how the use of military forces can resolve the problem(s). And the third lock is that any deployment should require majority support in the Scottish Parliament.

There is also support from the SNP, the Greens and civic groups for a constitutional clause prohibiting the presence of weapons of indiscriminate mass destruction on Scottish territory, including biological, chemical and nuclear weapons. Austria, for example, has a Constitutional Act stating that “nuclear weapons must not be manufactured, stored, transported, tested or used in Austria”.

**Transition issue:** Considerable work is already being done on a Scottish Constitution (for example, Constitution for Scotland: [www.constitutionforscotland.scot](http://www.constitutionforscotland.scot))

## Scottish Security and Intelligence Agency

It is clear from the UK's security risk assessment that what has been identified as serious issues for Scotland – cyber-attack/crime, serious organized crime, protection of marine resources and possible malicious state or commercial action – we need a good intelligence service designed for Scotland's needs. It makes no sense to divide the tasks among different services.

Scotland should create a single integrated all-source national intelligence agency responsible for collecting, analysing and utilising information in support of law enforcement, national security and foreign policy objectives.<sup>16</sup> The Scottish Security and Intelligence Agency (SSIA) could be largely modelled on the Danish Politiets Efterretningstjeneste (PET) in that it would form part of the national police service but would be responsible for both domestic and foreign intelligence operations. The SSIA should be based at the Scottish Crime Campus at Gartcosh in Lanarkshire. It would have extensive capabilities but with strong political and judicial safeguards for lawful and proportionate use.

**Transition issue:** One of the great advantages of basing an SSIA at Gartcosh is that a core part of the needed structure is

already in place and is devolved. Planning for the expansion of Gartcosh's capacity can take place at any time.

## Scottish Defence Force

Scotland will have a special opportunity to develop a Scottish Defence Force (SDF) appropriate to the risk environment we face, but with some capacity to adapt under changed circumstances. The approach should start from a fundamentally different perspective from the UK. As Crawford and Marsh have said in their revised Scottish Defence strategy, we will not need "aircraft carriers, submarines, tanks, army attack helicopters, heavy artillery and fast jet aircraft".<sup>17</sup> UK hardware is geared to a global interventionist role which is not relevant for Scotland. The establishment of the SDF will also provide an opportunity to improve conditions for Scottish armed forces personnel with some recommendations on this already included in the SNP MPs' submission to the UK Government Integrated Review.<sup>18</sup>

Within the policy parameters different configurations are possible for the organization of an SDF and the following are illustrations, not rigid prescriptions, and drawn from three sources:<sup>19</sup>

**Navy:** Maritime defence forces should be the main priority for Scotland given our geographical position with a long coastline, major marine resources and close proximity to Europe and Ireland. Resource defence is required for the growing marine renewable energy infrastructure, the declining, but still significant, oil extraction and fishing industries, as well as commercial marine transport that Scotland needs to expand – particularly in the post-Brexit context where new disputes may arise. Smuggling is a substantial issue with big revenue losses and the associated growth of serious organized crime. All of this requires close cooperation between a new navy, Customs, Police Scotland and Marine Scotland. Physical resources and personnel should be shared where appropriate. Liaison with defence and customs bodies of neighbouring maritime states will need to be developed, including through the mutual embedding of some personnel and compatible equipment.

A significant increase in offshore patrol vessels/cutters will be required as well as two frigates and maritime aircraft capability, and at least 2,500 personnel, including a marine commando unit (a third of these should be in reserves). The main bases would be at Faslane and Rosyth.

**Army:** The army should be built around a number of light infantry battalions with supporting artillery, signals, medical, engineering and logistics capabilities and a small contingent of Special Forces. The Army should be geographically dispersed throughout Scotland with the advantage of enabling most army personnel to have permanent homes in the community. A Scottish army should follow the Irish example and contribute regularly to United Nations peacekeeping operations and humanitarian disaster assistance. The number should be around 6,000 personnel with one third in reserves.

**Air Force:** An air force would include a fleet of transport aircraft, maritime patrol aircraft, a helicopter fleet, unarmed drones and around 2,000 personnel. Drone technology is moving fast and this may alter the balance of choices even in the near future.

The above suggests that 11,000 SDF personnel would be needed on a 70/30 ratio of regular to reserve forces. All existing members of the UK armed forces at the point of independence who have a Scottish background (broadly defined) and who want to transfer to the SDF will have the right to do so. There will be transitional issues in relation to personnel planning and re-training. We are likely to find that we have too many or too few transferring and are unlikely to immediately have the desired balance of skills and experience. However, given the high turnover of military employees, this is a short-term issue.

The estimated annual cost suggested by Crawford and Marsh is between £1.1 and £1.3 billion. This is substantially lower than the share of UK Defence expenditure allocated to Scotland under the GERS accounts, which is £3.4 billion. Negotiations on Scotland's share of UK Defence resources will require decisions on whether there should be any physical transfer or only a transfer of asset value or a combination of both. Macdonald suggests that the initial negotiating position should be that zero assets should be physically transferred and instead we should receive asset values, an approximate value of which would be around £10 billion. Negotiations can proceed from that base position. Scotland would clearly wish to avoid being left with equipment which is dated or inappropriate for our security priorities.

## National Defence Academy

A Scottish National Defence Academy should provide an integrated education, training and research facility for the armed forces, but should also include some shared educational work with police, customs, paramedics, coastguards and other relevant services. This could be a stand-alone institution or attached as a faculty to one or more of our universities.

## Alliances

The decision on whether to apply for full NATO membership should await the removal of nuclear weapons from Scotland. The reason for this is that NATO, as a strategic nuclear alliance (although some member states do not have nuclear capability on their territory), will be hostile to Scotland's requirement for the removal of rUK nuclear weapons. NATO has

put considerable pressure not just on member states but also on, for example, Sweden not to ratify the TPNW. This is likely to have an impact on any negotiations. Once the removal of nuclear weapons from Scotland has been implemented and in that sense is off the table, negotiations on NATO membership can take place in a different context. But one factor that should also be made clear is that Scotland's security needs can be met at a cost far below the current NATO expenditure target of two percent of GDP. This NATO figure has been adopted under US pressure and may change by the time negotiations start.

Scotland would, of course, seek full membership of the United Nations, Council of Europe, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and membership or observer status in the Arctic Council.

## Summary

A traditional narrow focus on “defence” issues is not appropriate for Scotland, nor indeed for any country given 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges. The armed forces have to be placed in the context of new security challenges and the responses required, including the value of investing in soft power as in the case of Ireland. There are some initiatives that can be taken now by the Scottish Government that are both useful in themselves and create a bridge to the institutions of an independent state. Creating a Secure Scotland Commission and upgrading the status of the intelligence centre at the Scottish Crime Campus at Gartcosh to a “provisional” or “pre-natal” Scottish Security and Intelligence Agency would be viable initiatives within the current devolved powers. In summary:

- Cyber security issues are clearly emerging as a priority and we have in the proposed SSIA a practical plan for that.
- Coastal protection is a higher priority for Scotland than the rUK and is likely to increase in significance. It has been neglected and requires a substantial increase in off-shore patrol vessels and personnel.
- The proposed SDF should be designed for flexibility with a modest core capability that can be adapted to changed circumstances. We do not need the current UK's major hardware designed for a global interventionist role. The SDF's cost will be substantially less than that assigned to Scotland currently by the UK Government.
- Nuclear weapons and Faslane/Coulport are dominant risk issues and will be a major challenge in transition negotiations. Statements of opposition to nuclear weapons are worthy but meaningless unless accompanied by a very clear plan with a tight timetable for their removal. Work has already been done on this and Scotland's position will be greatly strengthened by the TPNW.

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Scotland, December 2020

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