



House of Commons
Defence Committee

**Missile Misdemeanours:
Russia and the INF
Treaty: Government
response to the
Committee's Fifteenth
Report of Session
2017–19**

**Nineteenth Special Report of Session
2017–19**

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The Defence Committee

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Nineteenth Special Report

On 4 April 2019, the Defence Committee published its Fifteenth Report of Session 2017–19 [HC 1734] Missile Misdemeanours: Russia and the INF Treaty. The response from the Government was received on 4 June 2019. The response is appended to this report.

Appendix: Government response

Conclusions and Recommendations

INF Treaty

1. The Soviet decision to introduce a new generation of intermediate-range missiles into Europe in the mid-1970s disrupted the continental balance of power. The central aim was to create military advantage for the Warsaw Pact and to sow political division within NATO. The resulting Dual Track policy adopted by NATO was highly effective, cementing the unity of the Alliance and presenting a robust response to the Soviet challenge. The dual nature of the response was crucial: diplomatic attempts alone would not have brought resolution. Only by a demonstration of hard power alongside continual diplomatic overtures was NATO able to make it clear to the Soviet leadership that the USSR's own vital interests were being put at risk by NATO's response and that a level of competition had been introduced which the Soviet Union could not sustain. Today, although the situation in Europe is very different, the example of the past is instructive. NATO needs to formulate a united response to the challenge posed by the leadership of the Russian Federation. (Paragraph 13)

NATO's focus is that Russia returns to compliance. It has a final chance to do so before the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty formally ends on 2 August. There has been clear messaging both at the Foreign Ministers meeting last December and the Defence Ministers meeting in February calling out Russia, setting out our readiness to engage but, at the same time, preparing for a world without the Treaty. NATO continues to aspire to a constructive relationship with Russia, where Russia's actions make that possible, and firmly states that it is now up to Russia to preserve the INF Treaty.

Russia's violation of the INF Treaty, through the development and deployment of 9M729 intermediate-range ground launched missiles, not only represents a Russian capability enhancement, but is also further demonstration of its strategic intent. NATO is assessing the military implications for the Alliance in the event that Russia does not return to verifiable compliance, and is planning for a future without the INF Treaty and with more Russian missiles. NATO will provide a further update on its response at the Defence Ministers meeting in June and while the outcome of this work cannot be pre-empted, it will be united, measured and consider a wide range of options. The UK is fully engaged with NATO in this process and we remain completely confident in NATO's ability to deter and defend against Russia effectively.

2. The terms of the INF Treaty were far-reaching in that global prohibitions were placed on the parties in respect of an entire class of weapons. Thousands of missiles were destroyed and tight restrictions were placed on future development and deployment. A thorough system of monitoring and verification was also

created. One flaw in these verification provisions was their time-limited nature, allowing for the opportunity of non-compliance once on-site inspections ceased in 2001. The value of ongoing verification provisions in arms control agreements has been demonstrated by the fate of the INF Treaty. (Paragraph 17)

Monitoring and verification measures in arms control agreements can be valuable in supporting transparency for treaty states. The level of insight signatories get from these verification regimes can provide confirmatory information and act as a confidence-building mechanism that would otherwise be hard to replicate. We agree with the conclusions of the Committee that there is value in ongoing verification provisions in arms control agreements as a means to help build trust. Transparency, confidence-building and trust forms the basis for strong arms control and therefore provisions for verification should be fully considered during discussion of future arms control agreements.

Violation of the Treaty

3. It is clear that over the past 20 years Russia has been growing increasingly dissatisfied with its obligations under the INF Treaty. The current Russian leadership's view appears to be that it was a mistake for the Soviet Union to enter into the obligations that the Russian Federation has inherited. Russian officials have repeatedly sought ways to dilute or terminate Russia's obligations under the Treaty. The covert development and deployment of the 9M729 missile has proceeded from this, and Russian obfuscation and denial have followed once the system was discovered. (Paragraph 29)

Russia has not admitted that the 9M729 breaches the INF Treaty, but the decision to develop the system in secret fits with wider Russian behaviour. It is also consistent with the developments we see in its doctrine, which are designed to threaten Europe. Russia's increasingly aggressive rhetoric and malign activities are part of its wider effort to challenge the current international order. Russia continually strives to project the image of a great power through its ability to challenge international norms, disrupt regional security and intimidate other nations. Breaching the INF Treaty is a further example of this doctrine in practice.

4. Although the US has engaged with allies throughout the development of its concerns on Russian violation, the sudden announcement that the US was intending to withdraw was unexpected and the choreography of the announcement should have been more carefully managed. Consultation and co-ordination with European allies is vital on a matter so central to European security and this should be continually emphasised to the United States by the UK Government. Nonetheless, the US was able subsequently to create consensus within NATO on a robust position in support of its analysis and its actions. *Consultation and co-ordination with European allies is vital on a matter so central to European security and this should be continually emphasised to the United States by the UK Government.* Nonetheless, the US was able subsequently to create consensus within NATO on a robust position in support of its analysis and its actions. (Paragraph 30)

The US first alerted NATO Allies to its concerns in 2014. Since then the US, as well as NATO partners, have continued to engage Russia in bilateral discussions and have raised

concerns of Russian non-compliance in 30 meetings over five years. In the last two years, the US has unquestionably stepped up its efforts to bring Russia back into compliance. The UK, with other Allies, have supported that process through a coordinated programme of activity by NATO Allies to try and convince Russia to do the right thing. That is underlined by the increasing strength of the statements issued by NATO in November 2017, July 2018, December 2018 and, most recently, in February 2019. This complementary approach taken by NATO demonstrates the level of consultation and coordination with the US as well as a unified commitment by the Alliance to support the US in its approach. However, the process cannot continue indefinitely, and it is clear, both from what we have heard from the US and from our own engagements, that Russia continues to show no signs of willingness to return to compliance with its Treaty obligations. The production and deployment of 9M729 underlined this. It is not a surprise therefore that the US and NATO have taken steps to try and resolve this issue while planning for a future without the INF Treaty.

5. The latest Russian responses continue to try to obfuscate and confuse. President Putin has stated that Russia will not be first to deploy intermediate-range missile systems “into Europe”; but the problem of the 9M729 missiles is their ability to threaten targets in Europe once deployed—as may well already be the case—in Western Russia. Russia’s announcement of a ‘symmetrical’ initiation of research and development into a new ground-based system is in reality an adaptation of an existing system which has been operational for some time. (Paragraph 31)

NATO has been clear that it does not want a new arms race. Russia’s decision to develop and deploy Treaty-breaching missiles is an indication that Russia sees benefits to its doctrine from the reintroduction of intermediate-range ground-launched capabilities. While both the US and Russia now have capabilities (air and sea) that offer a similar offensive option, a ground-launched missile system is more mobile, cheaper to produce and less vulnerable. This could arguably plug a perceived capability gap and assist in an escalating conflict. In addition, this dual capability will further enhance Russia’s ability to hold Western Europe at risk in a crisis. This reinforces the assessment that the missile system 9M729 poses a risk to the strategic stability of the Euro-Atlantic area.

After years of denials and obfuscation, and despite Allies repeatedly raising their concerns, the Russian Federation only recently acknowledged the existence of the missile system without providing the necessary transparency or explanation. The UK monitors Russian missile programmes very carefully and we have made an extensive assessment of the intelligence, that includes the development, testing and now deployment of that capability. Despite Russia’s attempts at misinformation and to manipulate the narrative, we are confident in our assessment that Russia is in violation of the INF Treaty, and has been for nearly five years. That assessment is consistent with other NATO members, not just the US.

6. Russian motivations in pursuing the violation are diverse and overlapping. Its behaviour is consistent with the aggressive and revisionist policies that it has been actively pursuing in recent years—the use of multiple military, diplomatic, economic and political tools to challenge the rules-based international system and to seek a range of complementary effects which strengthen Russia’s own position. As we have seen elsewhere, these moves are accompanied by attempts to orchestrate the narrative of events in Russia’s favour and manipulate gullible

and complicit elements in the West. When the violation was discovered in the case of the INF Treaty, outright denial was accompanied by an attempt to place the blame on the United States for undermining the continuation of the Treaty. This manipulation of the narrative must not be allowed to succeed. Russia will be solely responsible for failure of the INF Treaty because of Russian development of missile systems in clear violation of its provisions. The US should not be expected to subject itself to unilateral restraint to sustain a Treaty that has been rendered inoperative by another party. (Paragraph 45)

The Russian government persistently uses disinformation as a tool to destabilise perceived enemies. This was evident in the sustained Russian disinformation campaigns which followed the attack in Salisbury, Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, and Russia's destabilisation of east Ukraine. Disinformation has also been evident in Russia's defence of its violation of the INF Treaty. Despite Russian claims to the contrary, all Allies agree that the 9M729 missile system, developed and deployed in secret by Russia, violated the INF Treaty and poses significant risks to our security. These missiles are mobile, hard to detect and can reach European infrastructure with little or no warning, carrying conventional or nuclear warheads. It was Russia's decision to develop and deploy these missiles that led us to this moment. Although the INF Treaty plays an important role in supporting Euro-Atlantic security, a treaty that is only being respected by one side is not credible. Should Russia fail to return to verifiable compliance with its Treaty obligations, it will bear sole responsibility for the end of the Treaty.

7. Although it is recognised that the changing strategic situation in Asia is a factor in Russia's violation of the Treaty and the US response to it, we reject the argument that the US is content to see the Treaty collapse, or has deliberately engineered its collapse, because it wishes to deploy ground-based cruise missiles in Asia against a growing threat from China. The US has at every stage shown willingness to continue its obligations under the Treaty if Russia returns to compliance and has said that it will halt the military and economic steps of its Integrated Strategy if this happens. This has been accompanied by a sustained US diplomatic effort to save the Treaty. Responsibility for the failure of the Treaty will lie with Russia alone. (Paragraph 46)

In February 2019, the North Atlantic Council stated that Allies strongly supported the finding of the United States that Russia is in material breach of its obligations under the INF Treaty and called upon Russia to urgently return to full and verifiable compliance. Since 2014, the US, UK and NATO partners have engaged Russia in bilateral discussions in order to follow due process in seeking a resolution to their concerns and to give Russia plenty of time to return to compliance. Regrettably, *Russia, as part of its broader pattern of behaviour, continues to deny its INF Treaty violation, has refused to provide any credible response, and has taken no demonstrable steps toward returning to full and verifiable compliance.* No arms control arrangement can be effective if it is only respected by one side and Russia's violation of the INF Treaty erodes the foundations of effective arms control and undermines strategic stability in the Euro-Atlantic zone. Simultaneously Russia has continued to demonstrate unacceptable behaviour that risks European Security.

Russia has had enough time to address NATO's concerns and, as a result, the US has understandably run out of patience. Unless Russia honours its INF Treaty obligations

through the verifiable destruction of all of its 9M729 systems, thereby returning to full and verifiable compliance, the US withdrawal will take effect on 2 August and Russia will bear sole responsibility for the end of the Treaty.

8. The Russian counter-allegations that the United States has violated the Treaty are spurious. If Russia had genuine concerns over US compliance, it also had ample opportunity to seek reassurance from the US through the mechanisms which exist within the Treaty. In raising questions over US compliance at this late stage, Russia is seeking to draw attention away from its own violations and to make it appear as if the US is to blame for the failure of the Treaty. We endorse the collective view of NATO, as established in the joint statement of 4 December 2018, that the US has remained in full compliance with its obligations under the Treaty since it entered into force. (Paragraph 53)

Russia continues to pursue a strategy of misinformation and has made three claims of US non-compliance: unmanned aerial vehicles, missile defence interceptors and targets for missile defence tests. The US has consistently addressed these at the expert and technical level and demonstrated none of these can constitute to a violation.

NATO members have unequivocally stated that the US, with the support of NATO Allies, are not in violation of the INF Treaty and remain in full compliance with its obligations. Unlike Russia, the US has provided substantial transparency on its programmes. Conversely after years of denial, Russia only recently acknowledged the existence of the missile system, but without the necessary transparency or explanation. Arms control arrangements cannot work if there is not trust and transparency on both sides.

9. The British Government acknowledges the contribution that the INF Treaty has made to European security and that a determined effort should be made to preserve the Treaty if Russia can be brought back into compliance. It is right for the Government to recognise that there is still time for diplomacy and that efforts to find a diplomatic solution should continue. (Paragraph 56)

We, along with the US and other NATO Allies, have been clear and consistent on this issue. While Russia has violated the Treaty by developing and deploying Treaty-violating missiles in secret, the door is still open for Russia to return to compliance. Russia should take demonstrable steps toward returning to full and verifiable compliance. If it does not do so by 2 August, it will bear sole responsibility for the Treaty's end.

10. It is also right, however, to recognise both that the Treaty should not be allowed to continue at any cost and that diplomatic solutions alone cannot be indefinitely pursued. Permitting a dysfunctional INF Treaty to continue in spite of Russia's violation would be a weak response which would do nothing to improve European security. On the contrary, it would reward Russian bad faith, alienate the United States from European allies and undermine arms control more generally. Accordingly, the Government is to be commended for lending its strong support to the United States, individually and within NATO, and to the approach the US has taken since evidence of the Russian violation first arose. (Paragraph 57)

We thank the Committee for their commendation on the Government's approach. The UK is not party to the Treaty, but we are committed to supporting efforts to build security

in Europe. We will continue to encourage Russia to return to full, verified compliance and continue to consult with the US and NATO Allies regularly with a view to ensuring our collective security. The 9M729 missile system poses a risk to the strategic stability of the Euro-Atlantic area, and we have a collective responsibility to address that concern. We believe the onus is now on Russia to demonstrate urgently that it will return to full compliance. We will continue to consult regularly with Allies to ensure our defence and deterrence posture remains resilient and to keep the fielding of Russian intermediate range missiles under close review.

Further action

11. Since it first approached the Russian Government about its concerns on compliance, the US has sought and actively pursued a diplomatic solution to the impasse over the INF Treaty. Russia's refusal to acknowledge its violations is the central obstacle to any diplomatic progress. In spite of this, the US Government has continued to engage with Russia and has shown willingness to put relations onto a better footing if Russia changes its stance, even at this late stage. (Paragraph 64)

Both the current and previous US Administration have repeatedly raised their concerns about Russian violations, including through the 'Special Verification Commission' established by the Treaty. NATO Allies have also expressed their concerns most recently at the NATO Summit in July 2018, the NATO-Russia Council in October 2018, at the meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers in December 2018 and the NATO Defence Ministers in February. Many Allies, including the UK, have also raised this issue directly with Russia. The US, UK and NATO have raised concerns of Russian non-compliance in 30 meetings over a period of five years.

Russia has only recently admitted that the 9M729 system exists and continues to deny it violates the INF Treaty. We do not believe that Russia has engaged in a serious and meaningful effort to address the problem, leaving the US with no reasonable choice but to withdraw from the INF Treaty on 2 August. If Russia does not return to verifiable compliance, it is Russia's choice to allow the Treaty to cease.

12. Proposals for reciprocal inspections of the 9M729 and the Mark 41 VLS systems carry some risk of giving credence to Russian allegations of US violation which have been described to us as spurious. Reciprocal inspections may also require the permission of those third states hosting the Mark 41 launchers, which may not be forthcoming. Nevertheless, the willingness of the parties to engage in confidence building measures based on reciprocal inspections should be explored as a basis for further diplomatic efforts. (Paragraph 65)

At the NATO Foreign Ministers meeting in December 2018, Allies agreed that the US has remained in full compliance with its obligations under the INF Treaty since it entered into force. In contrast to Russia's refusal to answer substantive key US questions about the 9M729, the US has provided Russia with detailed information explaining why it is in compliance with the INF Treaty. While we would support arms control measures that improve confidence-building measures, reciprocal inspections of the 9M729 and the Mark 41 Vertical Launching System (VLS) would be tantamount to a concession to Russia noting that it is in material breach and the US is not. An essential foundation for

effective arms control is trust and therefore we judge that Russia would need to address its violations of the existing Treaty and honour its INF Treaty obligations through the verifiable destruction of all of its 9M729 systems before the signatories would have the confidence in Russia's intentions to contemplate a renegotiation. Russia has only recently admitted that the 9M729 system exists and continues to deny it violates the INF Treaty. As yet, we do not believe Russia has engaged in a serious and meaningful effort to address the problem.

13. A number of options have been suggested which involve amending the Treaty. Changing the geographical ambit of the Treaty or reducing restrictions on certain categories of weaponry will weaken arms control and might create new security risks. For example, restricting the Treaty to Europe might well have a destabilising influence in Asia. Similarly, removing certain categories of previously prohibited weapons from its scope might well result in further proliferation. Making such changes would also reward Russian bad faith. Russia should not be able to gain a more advantageous settlement through violating the Treaty. (Paragraph 66)

Any amendments to the Treaty would be a matter for the signatory parties to the Treaty. We would support new arms control measures that improve security and stability and agree with the Committee that concessions should not be made that would appear advantageous for Russia considering its violation of the INF Treaty. But an essential foundation for effective arms control is that all parties must have confidence that the agreements will be respected. To date, Russia has not acknowledged that the 9M729 breaches the INF Treaty or indicated an interest in returning to compliance or negotiating a replacement Treaty. We judge that Russia would need to address its violations of the existing Treaty before other countries would have the confidence in Russia's intentions to contemplate a renegotiation.

14. The current state of relations between Russia and the West makes prospects for negotiating new nuclear treaties extremely challenging. Should such prospects improve, one vital lesson to apply from the fate of the INF Treaty is clearly that permanent verification procedures must be built into any future agreement. (Paragraph 67)

Ongoing verification procedures are likely to be important for maintaining confidence and ensuring sustained compliance by all parties in future arms control agreements. However, verification provisions are intrinsically linked to the objectives of a given treaty and so their scope will depend on the shared aims of the parties. Such provisions should be considered during discussions of future arms control agreements.

15. Bringing into the INF Treaty further countries, which currently have no restrictions on intermediate-range missile development, is a theoretical possibility. But there is little appetite for this option amongst the states concerned and little to incentivise them to participate. (Paragraph 68)

In order to multilateralise the Treaty, Russia would have to publicly acknowledge that it is currently in violation and willing to return to compliance. Even if Russia were to do

so, other nations who already have ground-launched intermediate-range missiles, such as China and Iran, would then need to be persuaded of the benefits of eliminating their missiles. There has been little indication that this is achievable.

This was demonstrated when Russia first raised the concept of including China within the INF Treaty 10 years ago, highlighting the concern of a growing Chinese capability. However, there was no traction from any of the parties concerned to pursue this negotiation.

16. **The intelligence proving Russian violation of the INF Treaty is owned by the United States and only the US can decide how much material can be placed in the public domain. The precedents of the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 and the publication of the 9M729 designator in 2017 show that making intelligence public is effective in strengthening a case internationally. If it is possible to do so without compromising intelligence sources and methods, exposure of Russia's flouting of the INF Treaty in an international forum like the United Nations could significantly influence world opinion and lay the guilt where it rightly belongs, so long as it is accompanied by a full-spectrum communications strategy. *The British Government should give the US Government full encouragement and support in exposing and demonstrating how Russia has broken the Treaty provisions. (Paragraph 69)***

Along with NATO Allies, we strongly support the US findings that Russia's development and deployment of its 9M729 cruise missile system amounts to a material breach of the INF Treaty. We are confident in our assessment that Russia is in violation of the INF Treaty, and has been for nearly five years. That assessment is consistent with other NATO members, not just the US.

The US has shared intelligence with Allies including the UK; from analysis of this intelligence, the UK and others have come to the independent conclusion that Russia is in material breach of the INF Treaty. While we will continue to ensure that the public and international audience are fully aware of the Treaty-violating nature of the 9M729 system, we are constrained by the need to protect sources and collection techniques. As a result, we currently have no plans to declassify intelligence material on this subject or present it to an international forum such as the UN.

17. ***The UK should continue to emphasise to the US the central role the INF Treaty plays in European security, as long as both Russia and the US comply with its provisions, and therefore the importance of consultation with allies and maintaining NATO unity. (Paragraph 70)***

We have a close dialogue with the US at all levels on foreign and security policy questions, including the INF Treaty. Although INF is a bilateral Treaty between the US and Russia, both the UK and US had a clear understanding of each other's view on this issue including the central role the Treaty plays in Euro-Atlantic security. The US had been signalling for some time that it wanted to tackle this and therefore the US decision to take further steps was not a surprise. The UK supports the US in its assessment that Russia is in material breach and its desire to address this malign Russian behaviour and will continue to consult very closely with the US and NATO Allies.

Based on US intelligence and its proactive briefings, NATO Allies have expressed their concerns, most recently by statements following the meetings of NATO Foreign Ministers

in December 2018 and NATO Defence Ministers in February 2019; the latter of which supported the US in suspending its obligations under the INF Treaty. These statements have been an overt demonstration of NATO unity and commitment to US decisions taken in response to Russia's material breach. This was further underlined by the Secretary General's comments at the Defence Ministers meeting in February that NATO has been "very united on the INF issue over many, many years, dating back to the Seventies" and that it will continue to maintain unity as it plans for a future without the INF Treaty and with more Russian missiles.

18. NATO is currently reviewing the security implications of new Russian missile deployments in Europe and the steps which may be necessary to maintain the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture. This detailed evaluation must proceed through NATO on a collective and consultative basis and we do not seek to pre-empt the process by prescribing steps that should be taken. The result must, however, be robust and clearly a response to Russian actions. Russia must not be able to gain military advantage through its Treaty violation. (Paragraph 78)

The UK and NATO continue to adapt to ensure our deterrence and defence posture remains credible to a changing security environment. We remain confident of NATO's ability to deter and defend against all threats including Russian attempts to undermine Euro-Atlantic security. NATO took significant decisions to adapt its defence and deterrence posture at the Wales and Warsaw Summits, and did so again at the Brussels Summit last July.

At the Defence Ministers meeting in February, all Allies agreed that Russia's violation of the INF Treaty poses a significant threat to transatlantic security and that NATO would closely review the security implications of Russian intermediate-range missiles and will take steps necessary to ensure the credibility and effectiveness of the Alliance's overall deterrence and defence posture. The Secretary General called again on Russia to take this last opportunity to come back into compliance and stated that "all Allies stand ready to engage further with Russia. But we are also preparing for a world without the INF Treaty".

At the Defence Ministers meeting in June, NATO will provide a further update and the outcome of this work cannot be pre-empted. Allies are committed to ensuring that the Alliance's mix of nuclear, conventional and missile defence capabilities are appropriate to the security environment. These will be united, measured and consider a wide range of options. As part of this work, NATO will also continue to keep its nuclear posture under close review. We will continue to support NATO in this process.

19. The United States is already taking certain military steps in direct response to the Treaty violation, with the proviso that they will be discontinued if Russia returns to compliance. Others, many of which were initiated under previous US administrations, are part of a broader strategy of nuclear modernisation to sustain a credible posture of deterrence. Just as the deployment track was a vital part of NATO's Dual Track policy in the past, a strong response is needed today and this may entail further military options. This does not mean that the same solutions based, as in the 1980s, on like-for-like ground-launched missile deployments are the right ones for NATO today. The Alliance should seek to enhance its existing strengths in military posture. This can be done while continuing to hold the possibility of diplomatic options open. *We expect the UK*

Government to play a full role in NATO's evaluation of the military implications arising from the Russian violation of the INF Treaty and to update the Committee with the outcome of this process once it is complete. (Paragraph 79)

The US announced in its Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), published in February 2018, that it would modernise its nuclear arsenal. This NPR is a continuation of existing US nuclear policy and represents a measured and proportionate approach to nuclear deterrence. Decisions on US nuclear weapons policy are a matter for the US Government.

NATO is considering the political and military consequences of Russia's development and deployment of new missiles, as well as any opportunities to uphold and support arms control. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg announced in February that Allies will act together to coordinate a response that will be measured and defensive. NATO has assessed the implications of the Russian development and deployment of the 9M729 and developed a plan for the short and long term. The UK is engaged with NATO's assessment of the military implications and will continue to play a full role in that process.

NATO has been clear that Russia has the opportunity to return to compliance before August. Should Russia fail to return to verifiable compliance, Allies will agree steps to ensure Russia does not gain a military advantage from deployment of the 9M729. The UK has and will continue to participate in and influence NATO decision-making in developing and implementing an appropriate response. NATO will provide an update of its assessment at the meeting of NATO Defence Ministers in June this year. We will update the Committee on NATO's position following the 2 August deadline regarding NATO's agreed next steps.

20. An evaluation of capability should be accompanied by a re-examination of underlying policy. NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept and 2012 Deterrence and Defence Posture Review may need updating to reflect a worsening strategic environment. *The UK should play a full part in any review of key NATO doctrine. (Paragraph 80)*

NATO continuously reviews its deterrence and defence posture and is considering the political and military consequences of Russia's development and deployment of new missiles, as well as any opportunities to uphold and support arms control. The UK will continue to fully support these efforts and remains completely confident in NATO's ability to deter and defend against Russia effectively, including Russian attempts to undermine Euro-Atlantic security. The Nuclear Planning Group plays a key role in considering responses to this dual capability system both from a conventional and where appropriate nuclear perspective. The UK continues to support the work of the Nuclear Planning Group as it delivers timely decisions to maintain a credible NATO nuclear deterrence posture in light of a challenging security environment.

21. NATO governments must do better at explaining to their populations why the Alliance is essential to European security. Russia's behaviour in respect of the INF Treaty gives the clearest indication of the continuing relevance of NATO and governments will need public support to take robust steps in response to Russia's violation. *We ask the Government to provide further details of the steps it is taking alongside NATO allies, to make the positive case for NATO and its response to Russian violation of the INF Treaty. (Paragraph 81)*

It is important that we effectively communicate the value and importance of the Alliance to European Security to the public. The UK Government already engages in a variety of public messaging activities around high-profile NATO activities; for example, our enhanced Forward Presence battlegroup in Estonia, last year's NATO Exercise TRIDENT JUNCTURE, as well as around the regular rhythm of NATO Ministerial meetings and Summits. The UK-hosted Leaders' Meeting in December offers us a key opportunity to publicise the importance of NATO across Allied nations. We will look to achieve this through a variety of means, including through an ambitious strategic communications campaign.

In relation to Russia's breach of the INF Treaty specifically, the UK has and continues to advocate for NATO to deliver public statements on this issue. NATO has already released two public statements on this: in December 2018 and in February this year. The UK Government has produced an INF Fact Sheet in response to Russia's fact sheet that was circulated to Parliament earlier this year. The UK's Fact Sheet sets out the Government's position on the INF Treaty and the US announcement, as well as the steps we expect the Russian Government to take in order to rectify this situation

22. Nuclear arms control is in a precarious place. The failure of the INF Treaty would be a serious setback and the prospects for other arms control agreements such as New START remain uncertain. Arms control can survive only through the good faith of nations and the belief that other parties will hold to their obligations. The Russian Federation's poor record of compliance, over decades, across a range of treaties and agreements is indicative of its cavalier and cynical attitude to arms control and other agreements which it considers no longer to serve its interests. Unless this attitude changes, it is difficult to see how other nations can have trust and confidence in Russian undertakings. This does not mean that the UK and its allies should give up in despair: efforts to promote arms control should continue. However, if the past is any guide, Russian compliance should never be relied upon without stringent verification systems permanently in place. (Paragraph 88)

Russia's ongoing selective implementation of the Vienna Document and Open Skies Treaty, and its long-standing non-implementation of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty, combined with its aggressive military posture, is part of a broader pattern by Russia to undermine Euro-Atlantic security. NATO highlighted these concerns at the Brussels Summit in July 2018 and called on Russia to return to full implementation and compliance with the letter and spirit of all its commitments. This is essential to rebuild military transparency and increase predictability in the Euro-Atlantic region. This puts into stark contrast Russian commitments under New START where we acknowledge that they, and the US, have achieved reductions in strategic nuclear weapons and are technically compliant with their obligations under the Treaty. It will be important to learn lessons from this for future agreements.

Arms control remains an important component in supporting strategic stability. The UK, along with NATO Allies, remain open to the idea of new arms control measures that could improve security and stability in Europe and support any mechanism that could facilitate negotiations. Transparency, confidence-building and trust forms the basis for strong arms control and therefore provisions for verification should be fully considered during

discussion of future arms control agreements. Russia's return to compliance through the verifiable destruction of all of its 9M729 systems would be a major step forward in building trust and confidence in Russian motivations and activities.