Contents

Submission to the Consultative Forum for International Security Policy
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Dublin
June 2023

The Government's "Consultative Forum on International Security Policy" should provide a welcome opportunity to return to and reinvigorate Ireland's commitment to principled and active neutrality as a central pillar of Irish foreign policy. It should not be used as a basis for increasing and reinforcing the militarisation of our foreign policy through closer integration into EU and NATO military structures. Ireland's increased participation in militarisation undermines and contradicts our constructive commitment to disarmament, peacemaking and peacebuilding.

Successive Irish governments have implemented policies lacking in accountability and transparency that have increasingly aligned us with processes of militarisation and that have circumscribed and undermined positive and active neutrality as the basis of our engagement in international politics. In recent years, for example, the Irish government has actively promoted Ireland's involvement in military production and the arms trade. This includes the arms fair hosted by the Department of Defence at the Aviva stadium last October (2022) as well as the online conference promoting opportunities for Irish business through participating in military production and the arms trade in November 2021. There are already an estimated 550 Irish companies involved in manufacturing and exporting both "dual-use technology" (which can be used for military as well as civilian purposes) and military equipment.

Another instance of such militarisation is the on-going use of Shannon airport by the U.S. military as a transit point for soldiers and weapons on their way to wars and military interventions, in clear violation of the Republic's status as a neutral country. Since 2002 close to 3 million U.S. troops have gone through Shannon Airport on their way to and from wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere.

Such militarisation occurs in the context of the Ireland's involvement in EU military structures through the European Defence Agency and PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation) (since 2017) and NATO's Partnership for Peace (since 1999). EU security and defence policy is closely aligned with NATO military policy and strategy. so that Ireland's involvement in EU military programmes inevitably involves cooperation and collaboration with NATO even without formal NATO membership.
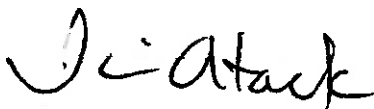
Ireland instead needs to use its position of neutrality to resist becoming further integrated into global processes of militarisation, war and armed conflict. Global military spending reached record levels of U.S. $2.2 trillion in 2022. This does not include the massive human, environmental and financial costs resulting from wars and armed conflicts in the form of loss of life, forced human migration, environmental damage, and the destruction of societies and communities. Military spending and the costs of war are a massive waste of resources that must instead be used to deal with genuine human and environmental needs such as responding to climate change and biodiversity loss and funding healthcare and education. The world needs less spending on destructive weapons and more spending for constructive purposes to meet the many challenges we face.

The Consultative Forum aims to examine "international security policy". To do this, however, we need to replace the policies of military and state security that are used to justify, prepare for and engage in war and armed conflict. The focus on military capacity to protect states, defend territory, and ensure regime survival is achieved at the expense of the security, welfare, and safety of people and the natural environment. Prioritising military security in this way requires continuous and ever-increasing expenditure on weapons, results in armed conflict and war, and reinforces and strengthens the military-industrial complex and the war-system. The war in Ukraine (like other wars) is a failure of an international system based on prioritising military approaches to security by rival and competing global and regional power blocs (including NATO).

We need to replace this destructive focus on military security with an emphasis on human and ecological security that aims to meet genuine human needs through fulfilling the full range of human rights, for example, while respecting and protecting the natural environment. Such human and ecological security aims to remove the causes of war through cooperative rather than competitive and confrontational approaches to shared human problems.

Irish foreign policy should also be based upon our experience with resolving violent conflict by exclusively peaceful means through our own peace process and the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement. The Irish peace process (and many others) show that sustained dialogue and negotiation are essential for ending protracted and apparently irresolvable conflicts, while persisting with militarised approaches to security will only prolong them and exacerbate the loss of life, damage and destructive consequences that are the direct results of such approaches.

The Good Friday/Belfast Agreement commits us to "exclusively democratic and peaceful means" for resolving conflict. Similarly, Article 29 of the Irish Constitution affirms Ireland's "adherence to...the pacific settlement of international disputes". These principles provide a solid foundation for an active and positive use of Irish neutrality and a foreign policy that promotes genuine human security through peace, human rights and sustainable development rather than a militarised approach to international security policy with its inevitable consequences in the form of war and armed conflict.

Iain Atack

(a member of Swords to Ploughshares (StoP))

A chara

Please find my submission to your consultative forum on international security policy.

I wish you well with your deliberations

Kind regards

Liz

The website states that Forum will focus on Ireland's efforts in many issues.

I will discuss the following:

➤ disarmament and non-proliferation

➤ conflict prevention and peacebuilding

➤ Ireland's policy of military neutrality.

➤ current international partnerships as a member of the UN and the EU, as well as with our engagement with NATO through the Partnership for Peace framework.

Disarmament and non-proliferation

The Department of Foreign Affairs website states that *"Promoting disarmament therefore, is one of five signature policies for Ireland and builds upon Ireland's historic legacy in this area"*. This is what the world needs; world military expenditure passed 2 trillion dollars for the first time in 2022[1]. The US has approximately 750 military bases in 80 countries[2], and Russia has 21[3] in 9 countries[4]. In the EU, the move to militarism is clear. The EU military/defence spending budget has increased every year from 2017 to the most recent year, 2022 when it had increased by 10% from 2021[5]. The European Union External Action department, the EU's diplomatic service[6], has ambitions *"Collectively, Europe is a very large military spender. But it is far from being a large military power. This is because of inefficiencies in spending and the so far largely untapped potential of working together on planning, procurement or research, to name but a few of the issues"*[7].

In addition, three statements issued previously illustrate the intention of the EU to militarize:

➤ In 2000, Romano Prodi (then president of the European Commission) stated: "When I was talking about the European army, I was not joking. If you don't want to call it a European army, don't call it a European army. You can call it "Margaret". You can call it "Mary Ann". You can call it any name"[18].

➤ In 2017, Jean Claude Juncker, EU Commission President proclaimed that: "By 2025 we need a fully-fledged European Defence Union. We need it. And NATO wants it.[19]"

➤ More recently, Ursula von der Leyen, the current President of the European Commission, is reported as saying: "The exit of Great Britain from the EU opens up new possibilities for intensifying military cooperation among the member states"[20].

And Ireland is already participating; Professor John Maguire of UCC writes: with Irish government acquiescence we have yielded an EU Common Defence Fund; a joint EU military HQ; EU Battle Groups (in which Ireland participates); a centralised EU military budget and research programme, and a European Defence Agency (on whose board Ireland sits) promoting 'a single market for defence".

The spending of money on arms in a world where homelessness and inadequate access to health care is evident in both 'developed' and in poorer countries is unacceptable. The world needs disarmament and instead money spent on increased provision for housing and healthcare. In this light, it is heartening to read on the Department of Foreign Affairs website that *"We recognize that the spread of weapons of all kinds fuels conflict, contributes to human rights abuses, and hinders development"*. Unfortunately the Irish government is not living up to these sentiments. The arms trade was promoted at an arms fair hosted by the Department of Defence at the Aviva stadium in October 2022. In addition, there are an estimated 550 Irish companies involved in manufacturing and exporting both "dual-use technology" (used for military as well as civilian purposes) and military equipment. Compounded by the fact that almost 3 million US troops have passed through Shannon airport since 2002.

Conflict prevention and peacebuilding

We should base our foreign policy on our constitutional obligation to be peacemakers. Article 29 of the Irish Constitution affirms Ireland's *"adherence to...the pacific settlement of international disputes"*. We are strengthened by this clear statement. In addition, we have learned much about resolving conflict through the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement. This commits us to *"exclusively democratic and peaceful means"* for resolving conflict. We must promote peace and justice instead of war and armed conflict. It is important that we develop a peace institute, from which trained peacemakers could intervene in conflicts globally. This would contribute greatly to global safety.

Ireland's policy of military neutrality.

Ireland, through Frank Aiken, played a leading role in disarmament by developing the nuclear non-proliferation treaty in 1968. This greatly contributed to global safety. more than any number of military alliances could do. And this peaceful ethic continues. as shown by the many polls which serve to show the support of Irish people for neutrality. An MRBI poll in June 2001 showed 72% of Irish people supported Irish neutrality[11]. More recently still, an Irish times/Ipsos poll 27 in April 2022 found *"overwhelming support"* in the Irish population to retain our current model of neutrality, with two thirds of voters not wanting to see any change[12]. This was recognized and respected by the Fine Fail Fine Gael/Green party government and evidenced by the insertion of the following in the Programme for government. *"The Government will ensure that all overseas operations will be carried out in line with our position of military neutrality and will be subject to a triple lock of UN, Government and Dáil Eireann approval"*. It would be a gross disrespect to the Irish people to undermine this pledge.

Current international partnerships as a member of the UN and the EU, as well as with our engagement with NATO through the Partnership for Peace framework.

Ireland joined PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation) in 2017. PESCO was established by the EU Commission and arose from the Lisbon Treaty. PESCO aims to establish an EU-wide arms industry. and the EUs European Defence Agency will tell PESCO members, including Ireland, what weapons to buy[13] . Lobbying by the arms industry has been shown to shape the

European Union's approach to security and defence[14]. The commitments made by countries under PESCO are legally binding in nature[15], and include commitments:

➤ To ensure that all projects "make the European defence industry more competitive via an appropriate industrial policy which avoids unnecessary overlap"

➤ To commit to "agree on common technical and operational standards of forces acknowledging that they need to ensure interoperability with NATO"

The EU and NATO signed the second joint declaration on EU-NATO cooperation in July 2018[16]. After this meeting NATO Secretary-General Stoltenberg stated: *"Over the past two years we have achieved unprecedented levels of cooperation and we have been working together in 74 concrete areas"*[17]. The summit characterised the EU as a *"unique and essential partner for NATO,"* and agreed that the capabilities developed under PESCO would be available to NATO and be *"complementary and interoperable"*[18]. These sentiments were echoed in the third joint declaration in Brussels in January 2023[19]. It is of concern that alongside conventional and missile defence forces, nuclear weapons are a core component of NATO's overall capabilities for deterrence and defence[20]. The law establishing PESCO does not mention the United Nations. or refer to peacekeeping. nor even "peace"[21]. The Lisbon Treaty does not ban weapons of mass destruction and it does not demand that military operations will only be in self-defence or when there is a UN mandate[22].

Recommendations

Security is what every country needs and wants, and there are five ways by which we can achieve this.

1. The Irish government must heed the advice of Dr Karen Devine, who outlines the characteristics of "active" neutrality ; they include the primacy of the UN, peace promotion and maintaining Ireland's independence, identity, and independent foreign policy[23]. Sovereignty is the ability of a country to make its own laws and to decide its relationship with other countries. This becomes even more critical when one considers that the former German Defence Minister and now President of the EU Commission. Ursula von der Leyen has called on a number of occasions for decisions under the EU's Common Security and Defence (CSDP) to be made by

qualified majority voting (QMV) rather than unanimously. "We are thinking about perhaps moving towards a majority vote in diplomacy and foreign affairs so that we can respond rapidly to crises and speak with one voice, one European voice," she said recently; 'and so you cannot be blocked by one country"[14]. We must stand up for what we believe in. As Dr. Devine states, *"Neutrality is not for the faint-hearted; rather, it is courageous non-aggressive stance in a world in which most small states simply "bandwagon" with an aggressor, as opposed to striking an independent path for peace"*[15]. We must believe in ourselves and our ability to make a real difference. If we join a military alliance we will merge with former colonial countries with whom we have no shared ideology

2. Security of food supply needs to be addressed. The flour which we use to make our bread is imported and we no longer produce sugar. Climate change will render our coastal areas insecure and adversely affect health and agricultural production. Being self sufficient in the basic necessities of life is real security. There is no security in military alliances such as NATO – true security lies in being peacemakers and establishing peaceful relations between countries.

3. On a national level, we can increase our security by stopping the use of Shannon airport by the US military. This practice makes us a military target.

4. We could work to strengthen the United Nations as a mean of addressing international conflict issues. The UN Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Ireland can participate in the UN's peace missions around the world. We can help to remove land mines in former war zones and we can stop the weapons trade to countries that constantly violate human rights[16].

5. We must call a halt to the creeping militarization of the EU, or at least Ireland's role in it. To promote this, we could obtain a defence opt-out to prevent us a being involved in the militarization of the EU. The Irish Government could simply *"notify its intention to the Council, which shall take note that the Member State in question has ceased to participate."*[17]. We could leave PESCO if the Dail agreed. Bring neutral does not mean being silent.

When we were voting on the various EU treaties, we were warned not to let Ireland be in the "slow lane" of Europe, and to vote in support of them. We were not told where the fast lane of Europe was leading to.

There is no shame in admitting a mistake. There is however, dishonour in knowingly and wilfully bringing Irish people down a path that they do not wish to be brought.

Elizabeth Cullen,

Member of World Beyond War and Swords to Ploughshares 6th June 2023

[i] World military expenditure passes $2 trillion for first time - SIPRI

[ii] Infographic: US military presence around the world | Infographic News | Al Jazeera

[iii] Russia's Military Compared to the US - Which Country Has More Military Bases Across the World? (newsweek.com)

[iv] The World's Five Military Empires - Big Think

[v] European Union Military Spending Defense Budget 1960-2023 | MacroTrends

[vi] https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_52/about-european-external-action-service-eeas_en Accessed 9 th Feb,2021

[vii] https://euronews.com/2019/11/articles/ESN7-eu-defence-cooperation-programmes-attachment-europe-s-seven-large-military-spenders Accessed 9 th Feb, 2021

[viii] Independent, 4 February 2000 quoted in &#39- https://www.independent.ie/news/irish-tories-2967/military-machein-26

[ix] " A vivid impression: The repressed potential of Irish neutrality" John Maguire in Clare Daly et al PESCO:Irish Neutrality and the Militarisation of the EU (Dublin 2019). Available from post@people.ie

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[xi] https://www.pana.ie/idn_neutral.html. Accessed 9 th Feb, 2021

[xii] https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/overwhelming-support-for-retention-of-ireland-s-military-

[xiii] "PESCO is not about peace, it is about preparing for EU wars". https://www.irishexaminer.com/opinion/commentanalysis/arid-30833488.html Accessed 9 th Feb.2021

[xiv] https://corporateeurope.org/en/power-lobbies/2017/12/arms-industry-lobbying-and-militarisation-eu Accessed 9.2.21

[xv] https://pesco.europa.eu/binding-commitments Accessed 9 th Feb.2021

[16] https://www.europarl.europa.eu/legislative-train/theme-europe-as-a-stronger-global-actor/file-european-defence-union Accessed 9 th Feb.2021

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[18] "A vivid impression: The repressed potential of Irish neutrality" John Maguire in Clare Daly et al, PESCO: Irish Neutrality and the Militarisation of the EU (Dublin 2019). Available from posta.people.ie

[19] EU-NATO cooperation - Consilium (europa.eu)

[ ] https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50068.htm Accessed 9 th Feb. 2021

[21] PESCO is not about peace, it is about preparing for EU wars (irishexaminer.com)

[ ] "Denmark has rejected participation in the militarisation of the EU. Hopefully Ireland will do the same!" Lave K. Broch, in Clare Daly et al, PESCO: Irish Neutrality and the Militarisation of the EU (Dublin 2019). Available from posta.people.ie

[23] https://www.pana.ie/idn/neutral.html. Accessed 9th Feb. 2021

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International Security Policy Section
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Dublin 2
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Re: The Consultative Forum on International Security

Dear Sir/Madam,

The attached document is a personal written submission to the consultative process indicated above. The views expressed are my own personal views entire. You are free to do with the document as you wish. If you propose to list the contributors of written submissions by name in the final report, feel free to list my name. If there is a policy decision to make written submissions publicly available, I give my consent to that also.

My background, in the context of the consultation is as follows:

First-class honours Master of Arts degree in Military History and Strategic Studies, Maynooth University.
Member of the Military History Society of Ireland
Lifelong interest, and widely read, in military history and defence studies.
Particular research interest in the use of Geographical Information Systems and spatial analysis in military operations.

Yours truly

Muiris S. de Buitléir MA MSc

Consultative Forum on International Security Policy

Dublin Castle

26th – 27th June 2023

Written submission

Muiris S. de Buitléir

Consultative Forum on International Security Policy

Dublin Castle

26th – 27th June 2023

Written submission

Muiris S. de Buitléir

The author's profile:

A chartered geomatics surveyor by profession.

Long career experience in land surveying, cartography and digital mapping systems

MSc. degree in Geographical Information Systems, the University of Huddersfield, UK.

A lifelong interest, and widely read, in military history and defence issues.

Long-time member of the Military History Society of Ireland.

First class honours, MA degree in military history and strategic studies, Maynooth University

Research interest in the use of GIS and spatial analysis in military operations.

Caveat

This is not an academic paper and therefore, citation of sources and authorities for any apparently factual statements, is not included. The reader is free to disagree with, or accept, any such statements of generally held fact and, consequently, discount, or accept, the analysis or opinions, which flow from these statements.

Why does Ireland need defence forces?

What is the Defence Forces primary mission?

The report of the Commission on the Defences Forces, quotes the 2015 White Paper regarding the purpose of the Defence Forces. It states their function to be – *"To provide for the military defence of the State from armed aggression"*. This is at the top of the list, as the Defence Forces primary mission.

The Defence Forces own website, Military.ie, in the section headed "Defence Forces vision" give a similar statement – *"Our mission is to provide the military capability to defend Ireland and assigned interests, internationally"*. It qualifies this, however, in the section headed *"Defend the State"*, with an opt out, freeing it from defining what *"to defend Ireland"* actually means in concrete terms. It states – *"To defend the State against armed aggression; this being a contingency, preparation for its implementation will depend on ongoing Government assessment of the defence environment"*. In essence, the Defence Forces are saying that they have no idea of what their function is, or how they should be organised, trained or equipped to carry out that function, until, at some unspecified time in the future, the Government tells them what that function is. It is hard to see how any defence planning can be built on such a total lack of direction.

Key questions – Who? What? Where? Why? How?

Any defence definition must start with a number of all important questions–

- Against whom, or what, do we need to defend the Irish state militarily?
- Why would any foreign state want to attack Ireland?
- What is the nature of the threat and where, and in what form, would these threats be likely to materialise?
- Are the identified threats realistic?
- Can we describe, clearly and unambiguously, the nature of such threats, actual, potential, or merely contingent?
- If a foreign state had a cause or intention to attack Ireland, how would they be likely to carry out this threat?
- In the case of realistic threats to the Irish state, were such threats to materialise, have we the resources, as a state, to create and maintain the necessary defence posture to successfully deal with them?
- If we cannot create and maintain forces, that are clearly capable of dealing with the issues identified, are the very large sums of money, which might be spent on costly but inadequate forces, purely a waste of money? Acquiring an expensive tool that can't do the job it's intended to do, make no sense.
- If defence is possible, what form should the defences forces take, that would be required to deal with the threats?
- Do we need cooperation with others to achieve a realistic level of defence?

Non-military threats

Threats to sovereign states today take many forms, not all of them involving military force in the form of "boots on the ground" invasion. There are threats from cyber warfare, disinformation, fake news, malign manipulation of public perception, social media exploitation, information warfare, diplomatic

pressure, economic pressure, trade restrictions, sanctions, espionage, assassination, hybrid warfare, strategic threats to communications systems, particularly internet and associated technologies, etc. These attacks or disruptions can all take place without physical military intervention by an attacker. We also have potential physical threats to power generation infrastructure, particularly offshore facilities, power grids, undersea cables, transport hubs, such as airports, sea ports, gas and oil storage, data storage centres, digital processing centres, and many more vital facilities. These latter are vulnerable to missile attack, without the need for an attacker to put physical military forces on the ground. Should either of these types of attack occur against our vital interests, our societies would be grievously damaged, or even cease to function in many respects.

Balancing defence expenditure

Secondly, how a state, such as Ireland, or in the case of Europe, a union of states, balances defence expenditure between the non-military threats outlined above, on the one hand, and between these threats, taken as a whole, and the threat of direct, conventional military infringement of territorial integrity, on the other, is a matter for another analysis and another analyst. The following paper will deal strictly with military threats to territorial sovereignty, i.e., matters that are amenable to being dealt with by conventional military forces, army, navy and air force. Issues such as nuclear deterrence, terrorism, the matters outlined in the previous paragraph, together with strategic issues such as technological, industrial, food and energy self-sufficiency, economic security, and demographic threats, will not be touched on.

The nature of military technology innovation

Before engaging in any analysis, it might be useful, as an aside, to comment on the issue of time scale in introducing new military technologies, as this matter has a very considerable bearing on the organisation and equipment of military forces. Military technology, and the tactics for using such technology, changes over time, sometimes slowly and incrementally, sometimes with revolutionary speed. Nevertheless, no matter how sudden or revolutionary the change, the actual lead-in time for the manufacture and adoption of new weapons systems is anything but instantaneous. Weapons introduced today may have started as a design concept, perhaps thirty years ago, and have gone through a design, prototyping, testing, manufacturing setup, production, acceptance trials, delivery, and training cycle. If a defence force is caught at the wrong point in the development and re-equipment cycle, as major change takes place, it may end up being equipped with weapons systems that have become obsolete, almost as soon as they are introduced into service and a defence force, in this unhappy situation, then must face a service period, of perhaps the same duration, during which it would be using obsolete weapons, but would not be in a position to upgrade, given the massive investment already made. There is no easy solution to this dilemma. It has dogged military planners throughout history, but it does need to be given very serious consideration in any defence review, because of the enormous cost of modern military equipment.

Defence forces as insurance

Also, as a general principle, it should be noted that defence forces have a direct parallel with insurance in civilian affairs. Home insurance is a complete waste of money as long as nothing goes wrong.

However, if your house goes on fire, is flooded, or a truck crashes into your front living room, then you need adequate financial help immediately, and you won't get the necessary finance to deal with the emergency unless the insurance is already in place. Defence forces follow exactly the same logic. In this context, it should also be noted that crises, involving the need for defence forces, evolve with surprising suddenness and speed. Who foresaw the war in Ukraine or in Sudan, five years ago? As outlined in the previous paragraph, defence forces cannot be put together, from scratch, at the same speed as the crises they are intended to deal with, emerge. They must already exist, and be capable of effective action, at the point when the crisis occurs, or else the state is left, effectively, without defence. This is particularly relevant in the context of our Defence Forces, considering their mission is stated as *"being a contingency, preparation for its implementation will depend on ongoing Government assessment of the defence environment"* as referred to above. By the time any government makes an assessment of a defence environment, an environment which may emerge with great speed and suddenness, there is no time to make the necessary preparations, and more than likely the required equipment to prepare the Defence Forces to meet the threat, will not be available on the international market, as a direct result of the sudden crisis.

Military threats to Ireland

It is possible to examine the military threats to Ireland in two contexts:

- threats that originate from outside the state and effectively from outside the island.
- Threats that emanate from within the island.

External threats

Where, and how could external military threats to Ireland emerge? Are we threatened, militarily, in any realistic way by our immediate neighbours? For the most part the answer is no. The states of the European Union, of which Ireland is a member state, are closely integrated friends and allies. We form part of the same economic and political union and may, conceivably, in the future, be part of the same defence union designed to protect those economic and political systems and institutions. The EU, or its member states, pose no conceivable threat. The same can be said of those European states that are not EU members, but who are members of EFTA or of the NATO alliance.

Our immediate neighbour, the United Kingdom, is a friendly neighbouring state and, in terms of external relationship, poses no military threat. There may be threat possibilities, from this source, in the context of Northern Ireland but these will be discussed later when dealing with threats internal to the island.

The United States poses no military threat to Ireland, in the foreseeable future.

Threats to Ireland from Islamic extremism are not military threats in the conventional sense. There is no likelihood of states, with Moslem majorities, in the Maghreb or in the Middle East, mounting conventional military operations against Ireland.

A Russian threat to Ireland?

Finally, there is the Russian Federation. It is impossible to conceive of any threat from Russia, specific to Ireland only, as opposed to the wider European context, that could materialise.

Any seaborne assault on Ireland could only emanate from a very limited number of locations:

- From the Arctic Ocean ports of Murmansk and Arkhangelsk.
- From the Baltic ports of Kronshtadt near Leningrad or from the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad.
- From Russia's Black Sea ports, or from Latakia in Russia's vassal state, Syria, on the Mediterranean.
- From a Russian naval taskforce at sea in international Atlantic waters.

Without going into detail, geography clearly indicates that the first three are near impossibilities, particularly if there were heightened tensions, or conflict, between Russia and the EU or NATO. Even if by some strange magic an initial assault could succeed, it would wither due to the impossibility of logistical resupply. A marine taskforce-based attack would also suffer from unsustainability.

An airborne assault is even less conceivable. Any aircraft movement between Russia and Ireland would first need to transit over a considerable depth of NATO land territory or sea areas. In a war situation, its chances of survival and reaching Ireland would be poor to nil. Also, all medium lift air transport, are

only capable of transporting lightly armoured forces. To deal with heavier loads, like main battle tanks, requires heavy lift aircraft, such as the Russian Antonov AN124. These aircraft are much fewer in number than their medium lift counterparts, and much more vulnerable in flight. Heavy military lift really requires sea transport. It is hard to imagine how any such airborne attacks against Ireland could take place.

Point attacks on installations, such as ports, airports, military facilities, communications, power supply, fuel storage facilities etc. do not require the insertion of ground troops or even air assault involving manned aircraft. Ballistic and cruise missiles would be the effective weapons of choice against such targets and, from our own resources, there is no realistic defence that Ireland could possibly mount against such attacks, in the short term.

Otherwise, the only realistic way that Russia could threaten Ireland, specifically, with military invasion would be if Russia was already in control of European and British Atlantic ports. If such a situation were ever to arise, effective defence of the island of Ireland would be impossible from our own resources alone.

Internal threats

Internal threats, relating to the island of Ireland, that might be amenable to military interventions, fall into two categories:

- Subversion, or insurrection, from within the State.
- Instability and potential conflict in Northern Ireland.

Internal subversion or insurrection

The first can be discounted. It is essentially a police and security services responsibility, not a military one. Its avoidance is also a matter of good politics and sound democratic government. A well found and just state should never need major internal military intervention beyond minor aspects of aid to the civil power and dealing with natural disasters and similar emergencies. Should subversion ever reach a stage in a well- established, democratic state where it required direct, large-scale, military force to be applied, then that state would have effectively failed and would be in far greater difficulties than any military force could resolve.

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland is a different matter. In simple terms, the political instability there revolves around a question of territorial sovereignty. There are those in NI who passionately desire that the UK state and government should hold sovereign control over the territory of Northern Ireland and that the laws by which they are governed should be promulgated by the parliament of that state and enforced ultimately, by an administration, police and military under the control of that state. There is another group of people who desire that that same territorial sovereignty be exercised by an Irish government, an Irish parliament and Irish security forces. There is also a third group who have other priorities and don't seem to be primarily concerned about the sovereignty issue. At the moment the democratic balance favours those who desire UK sovereignty, together with those who are content to acquiesce in that choice. However, this balance is not static and may change. If it does, the potential for conflict and violence is all too apparent. What are the possible threats to the Irish state, specifically, and to the Irish people in general, in this context? The scenarios which might need to be taken into account are myriad and the range of questions, that can be posed, are equally extensive. Here is a small flavour:

Potential Northern Ireland defence issues

- What if a Nationalist viewpoint becomes politically dominant and a referendum is requested and granted?
- What if the referendum were to come down in favour NI joining the Republic?
- What would the likely unionist reaction be to either of these possibilities?
- What if the British government decided in the above circumstances to withdraw its administration and forces unilaterally from all of Northern Ireland, or part of Northern Ireland?
- What if increasing inter-community violence were to spring from such events? Perhaps even potential civil war?

- In the absence of British involvement should the Irish state attempt to administer and provide security throughout the whole territory of Northern Ireland?
- Should the state attempt to incorporate areas with a clear nationalist majority, for instance west of the river Bann plus south Down and south Armagh into the Irish state and leave the remaining unionist majority areas to their own devices?
- Should the State simply secure the current border and attempt to prevent violent overspill crossing into the Republic?
- How would the state cope with the refugees and resettlement needs resulting from any of the above scenarios?

All of these possibilities and many more, too numerous to mention, would require the availability of a wide range of military capabilities and extensive contingency planning. One key reality is paramount. The Irish Government must have at its disposal, at all times, military forces that are clearly capable of exercising military superiority over any militias, paramilitary forces, armed groups, or otherwise, that might emerge on the island of Ireland, should it ever happen that British administration and British forces were to be withdrawn from Northern Ireland.

European Defence

In a wider context, the defence of the European Union, of which we are a full and integral member state. prompts a further range of questions:

- Is the military defence of the EU a matter that we should consider part of our responsibility?
- If we do consider it to be a shared responsibility between the member states, how should we engage?
- Against whom, or what, does the European Union need to defend itself?
- What is the nature of the threats and where, and in what form, would such threats be likely to occur?
- Are the identified threats realistic?
- If the threats are realistic, are they such, that effective defence against them can be planned for and mounted?
- If effective defence is possible, what form should the defences forces take, that would be adequate to deal with the threats?
- If a European defence is both realistic and affordable, what resources should the Irish state be required to contribute, or offer to contribute, that would be equitable and that would realistically add to European defence capability?

Here again, this paper is specifically dealing with military threats against which military forces would be effective in containing or nullifying the threats. This analysis is not about hybrid warfare, cyber warfare, economic warfare, or nuclear threats, where defensive strategies, other than conventional military forces are appropriate.

Non-Russian defence threats

At the moment, because of Ukraine, the potential Russian military threat to the EU could not be clearer, but before dealing with this clear and present danger, it would be useful to dispose of some other, less immanent and less direct threats from other sources:

- The demographic pressure of refugee streams from north Africa, the Middle East, eastern Europe and further afield and the security of the external EU border. This is not so much a threat but an actuality. However, it is a policing and border security matter and not a matter for military defence.
- The ongoing frictions in the eastern Mediterranean between Greece and Turkey, regarding the sovereignty of Cypriot territory and of Greek and Cypriot territorial waters in the context of oil and gas exploration.
- Spanish defence of the integrity and border security of the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in north Africa.
- Disputes in the Balkans, particularly those involving Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo.
- Overspills from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- Islamic insurgency in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Overspill from unresolved conflicts in the Middle-East involving Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Yemen.
- Iranian nuclear weapons ambitions.

Although many of the threats listed could impact on Europe's security, well-being and interests, none of them constitute a direct threat to the territorial integrity of the European Union.

UN peacekeeping

It should be noted, in passing, that Ireland's military contribution to UN peace-keeping, considered by many to be the primary activity of the defence forces, is not a direct defence issue at all. It concerns a humanitarian response, usually in places remote from Ireland and Europe. Though admittedly, there can be circumstances where the breakdown of peace and stability in relatively distance places can impinge on Irish and European security and consequently peace-keeping could be seen as a relevant defence issue for both Ireland and Europe. It is still, nonetheless, a very secondary defence issue.

The Russian threat to Europe

A detailed analysis of the Russian military threat to Europe is contained in appendix 1. However, for the purpose of this discussion, based on that analysis, it is accepted that the primary threat is the possibility of a Russian incursion into the Baltic States, with a secondary threat to Poland, Romania, or Moldova. Further, based on that same analysis, the likely scenario would involve, primarily, the use of massive land forces. The potential Russian war aim, in as far as it can be guessed at from current statements and behaviour, would likely be the annexation, occupation and integration of particular territories, into the Russian state, which Russia, for historical and nationalistic reasons, considers an integral part of the Russian nation and motherland. Stopping such an annexation would require Europe, or NATO, to achieve rapid air superiority, so that it could interdict Russian logistics and resupply and destroy combat units, but equally massive European ground forces would be required to physically stop any Russian advance on the ground. Coping with the threat that military engagement with Russia might pose to vital infrastructure in international waters would also create a huge problem. This latter issue will be touched on briefly, but the further, and perhaps core, issue of the part that nuclear deterrence might play in European defence, or the prevention of aggression, will not be discussed here.

Ireland's part

Given this strategic landscape in terms of European defence, how, realistically and usefully, could Ireland contribute, if it was minded to do so? Firstly, it should be borne in mind that Irish defence preparedness and military interoperability with other European forces does not necessarily mean treaty obligations, or automatic commitments. It does, however, mean that forces, meeting common standards of doctrine, training, equipment and readiness, would be required, so that if a decision had to be made at speed, in an emergency, that decision could be backed with prompt action.

The Triple-lock

One aspect of current Irish government policy, which does involve military or strategic issues relating directly to the deployment of troops outside Ireland, demands rectification as a matter of urgency. The triple-lock, which give the United Nations a veto over Irish military actions, is irrational, all the more so as it is self-imposed. As the assessment in this paper indicates, the Russian Federation poses the most serious threat to European security. Russia is a permanent member of the UN Security Council and exercises a veto. Giving Europe's primary adversary this control, by veto, over Irish military deployment, beggars belief. Control by the Irish government and Dáil Éireann provides sufficient safeguards, without putting our freedom of action in the hands of unfriendly states, in circumstances where they might not only be unfriendly, but actual military adversaries.

Irish naval capabilities and deployments

Naval threats remote from Ireland

Naval conflict between Europe and Russia could conceivably occur in the Black Sea, the Mediterranean, the Baltic Sea, or the North Atlantic.

Operating Irish naval forces in the Black Sea or the Mediterranean would be problematical and it is not clear what contribution Irish naval forces could make in that context. EU and/or NATO countries like Spain, France, Italy, Greece and Turkey have bases and considerable naval assets in the region and if an increase in naval capability in this area was considered desirable, then investment in the naval forces of these countries would be far more cost effective than creating a new, small, Irish naval force and requiring it to operate so far from its home base. The same objection would apply to attempting to deploy Irish naval assets to the Baltic. As outlined above any military confrontation with Russia, in the eastern European theatre, is likely to be land based, predominantly requiring land and air combat resources, not naval, though there is a context, in the Baltic theatre, where the cutting of the Suwalki Gap between Poland and the Baltic States could create a heavy reliance on naval capabilities.

Naval threats in the Irish EEZ

In the North Atlantic the main Russian threat would be from submarine or missile activity. The two major naval powers operating in the North Atlantic, are the US and the UK. To a still major, although lesser, extent, there are French, Spanish and Portuguese resources to the south and Norwegian resources to the north. The same arguments, as set out above in the case of the Mediterranean, the Black Sea and the Baltic, would apply. If increased naval capacity is required, money would be better spent on augmenting the naval forces of the UK, US, or France, where integrated command of naval and air forces already exist, rather than creating a new, small and independent Irish naval force.

Cooperation with an EU partner

An argument could be made, in an EU context, however, for Irish cooperation with a European Union partner. Naval cooperation with France, for instance, particularly for protecting the vital cyber cable links in Irish waters and generally patrolling and defending Europe's western approaches would be well worth investigating. It would allow the sharing of high cost, sophisticated, war fighting, elements, such as submarine and anti-submarine warfare components with France, with Ireland infilling more conventional surface capabilities.

A constabulary versus a combat navy

A constabulary navy, such as Ireland currently maintains, requires vessels that are economical to man and require a minimum of armament. War-fighting vessels, on the other hand, such as anti-submarine, or air-defence frigates, require large arrays of electronics and sophisticated weapons systems to deal with combat situations, together with large crews to operate these weapons systems. War fighting vessels are not suitable for constabulary functions, they are far too expensive, and constabulary patrol

vessels are not suited to war fighting. The two roles are broadly mutually exclusive. If Ireland were to develop a war-fighting naval force, it would still have to maintain the current style of constabulary navy in parallel. All in all, it would seem sensible to leave war fighting naval operations to the major naval powers, except perhaps in the context of French-Irish cooperation suggested above.

Naval bases

The provision of naval bases to European or NATO naval forces, might be a matter that Ireland would have to consider. To a certain extent, it could be argued that this issue was resolved during the Second World War, when the UK decided that developments in the technology of naval warfare meant that it could manage without Irish naval bases. This situation might need to be reassessed in the light of current circumstances and technology, but it is assumed that this reality still pertains.

Irish Air Capability and Deployment

Air defence in a European Context

In terms of air defence, the same reasoning, that applies to naval matters, applies with equal force. Modern combat aircraft are tied by a virtual umbilical cord to their air bases, for the purposes of refuelling, rearming, maintenance, repair and crew respite, inflight refuelling notwithstanding. Building an air defence capability on the island of Ireland, when the likely need for such a force, would be on the European mainland, at the eastern border of the EU, makes little sense. At a purchase cost of many millions of Euro (a number of internet sources quote a price of €77 million) for the cheapest effective fighter aircraft (the Swedish Grippen has been suggested by a number of commentators), a squadron of twelve aircraft would cost close to a billion Euro, to which would have to be added the probably greater cost of ground support, armament, maintenance and flight crews.

If increased air power is required by the EU or NATO and Ireland is expected to make a contribution, then a financial contribution would be more effective, if it allowed the air forces to be put in place, where appropriate to the strategic situation, and not on an island in the Atlantic, remote from their likely area of operations. However, the provision of air bases might still be a matter requiring consideration, for operations in Europe's western approaches.

Air defence in an Irish context

Cooperation with an EU partner

If air defence in the Atlantic region was considered vital, then the suggestion of closer, bi-lateral, cooperation with a fellow, militarily powerful, EU state, such as France, applies with equal validity in the case of air defence, as it did for suggested naval cooperation, set out above. A possible scenario, with regard to high-speed air interception, could involve French interceptor aircraft, whose logistics, maintenance and support would be carried out in home bases in France, operating on rotation from an Irish base, such as Shannon, which would extend their operating range far into the Atlantic. The possibility of such aircraft, operating during their secondment periods with Irish crews, Irish markings, and under Irish government control during peacetime should not pose an insuperable problem.

Air interception capability

If Ireland was to consider the possibility of maintaining peacetime interception capability on a unilateral basis the difficulties would be great and the cost prohibitive. This function would require the acquisition of aircraft that had the speed needed to carry out interceptions of suspicious air activity in, or near, Irish air space and sufficient armament to, at least, deal with sub-combat roles, but not necessarily the speed, manoeuvrability, electronics, or armament that would allow them to engage in peer-to-peer combat with front-line Russian combat aircraft.

Given the speed requirement necessary to carry out interceptions, the likely aircraft most suitable to the task would still be the Swedish Grippen or something very similar. Cheaper, and slower, aircraft, simply would not have the capability required to achieve timely interception. Even for this simple task, a minimum of six aircraft would be necessary – two on immediate standby, two on training and reserve standby, in the event of a second incident occurring when the first two aircraft were engaged, and

two undergoing routine maintenance, refits or repairs. An investment of hundreds of millions of Euro, so that two Irish aircraft could fly for a half an hour or so, beside a Russian reconnaissance plane, on the irregular occasions that they approach our airspace, would be a ludicrous waste of resources. Again, the value of cooperation with a neighbouring EU state, such as France, as suggested above, makes compelling sense.

The question must be asked – What intelligence of value could Russian aircraft gather about the Irish state or its military preparedness (or lack of it), that could not be gained through the analysis of aerial photography, satellite imagery, largescale mapping and Irish military websites, all freely available on the internet? Even if these rich sources needed to be supplemented, the use of manned surveillance aircraft would seem an odd option.

Cooperation with other states

The current arrangement that allows the British Royal Air Force to operate in Irish sovereign air space for the purpose of intercepting, observing and escorting Russian reconnaissance aircraft, seems to be acceptable, both to the public and the Government, although, who knows? In recent Dáil exchanges, the government seems very reluctant to provide any detail on such arrangements, or even to confirm clearly that such arrangements exist. In carrying out these flights, Russia, it could be argued, has little interest in Ireland per se. Their purpose is to test NATO, and particularly British responses and, given the geographic location, it is wholly appropriate that the Britain should deal with this matter and that we, as a friendly neighbouring state, should facilitate them. They argument is straightforward, the British are not defending our air space and security, they are defending their own, and we are simply accommodating them in this matter. Of course, in an EU defence context, an alternative arrangement, such as that suggested with France, might be more appropriate. The UK is no longer an EU member state and it could be argued that security arrangements in an EU context might be more politically acceptable than with a non-EU state.

Army air support

On the question of military readiness against eventualities on the island of Ireland, the use of air power would be very much that of an army air corps rather than an air force. The types of aircraft suitable to army support are very different to the aircraft used for air interception and air combat. Adequate light and medium lift helicopters are a given, but for ground attack, small, agile, relatively slow-moving aircraft capable of carrying and deploying large amounts of ordnance and, most of all, cheap aircraft, are required. Aircraft in a ground attack role are vulnerable to machinegun and cannon fire from ground forces and they are particularly vulnerable to shoulder launched missiles. Risking high-performance, sophisticated, interceptor jets in this context would be foolish and wasteful. Ground attack capability, would mean a requirement for small, propeller driven, aircraft for this task, similar to the Pilatus aircraft currently in service with the Air Corps, but preferably less sophisticated, more rugged, and above all, cheaper to purchase and maintain, so that larger numbers could be deployed. The use of even cheaper unmanned drones in the context of reconnaissance and ground attack, may be even more relevant.

Other air capabilities

There would, of course, be a requirement for addition aircraft types to cater for functions which are not directly combat related, such as air-ambulance, ministerial transport and general utility and transport functions. Maritime surveillance, both in terms of land-based sensors and improved air patrol capabilities could also be reasonably expected as part of Ireland's contribution to European security.

The question of providing air bases for transatlantic transport of US and Canadian forces to the European mainland must also be addressed. This is already a reality in the case of Shannon Airport and its use by US forces. In a war situation the use of other airports, particularly Knock might also be requested. Interdiction by Russian missile attack on these sites would be a given in the event of widespread conflict.

There is one final issue to be discussed under air resources and that is the matter of tactical air lift capability for land forces. As it is an integral part of land force deployment capabilities, rather than air defence, it will be dealt with under that heading.

Irish Land Forces

The argument, so far, has been that there is little that Ireland can offer Europe in terms of relevant naval and air defence, other than moral and financial contributions, together with the possible provision of bases and constabulary type air and naval functions and air and sea approach monitoring and surveillance. Bilateral defence cooperation with a suitable EU power, such as France has also been suggested. One question remains; what about ground forces?

Russian and Western strategic considerations

Russia has a population of around 150 million. Much more, if you include the populations of its vasal states. In the event of war, it operates the recruitment of its forces on the basis of conscription, which means the all its manpower, of military age, is available for combat and have some degree of military training. Its ruling regime has a profound disregard for human life, not alone of the people it attacks, but of its own people as well. In terms of equipment, its military doctrine concentrates on cheap, relatively crude, quantity, rather than expensive quality.

Western doctrine is diametrically opposite. Western governments, being democracies, are beholden to their peoples to remain in power. Western countries also enjoy a free press and freedom of expression. The people of Europe would have a deep aversion to seeing their young men returning in large numbers, from war zones, in body bags. This was the Achilles Heel of the United States during the Vietnam War. Most European armies (there are some notable exceptions, like Finland) also operate on the basis of professional and voluntary recruitment, which means that their militaries are a thin veneer relative to their populations, with no substantial reserves of trained manpower, capable of quick mobilisation. NATO armies depend on highly sophisticated weaponry, one of the key purposes of which is to minimise their human casualties. In war, the West would prefer to expend treasure rather than human life.

This would leave NATO forces at a great disadvantage on the case of protracted conflict. Despite their professional capabilities and high-quality equipment, NATO forces would inevitably suffer attrition over a relatively short period of intense warfare. They would have no means of quickly replacing these losses in men and equipment. Russia, on the other hand, would have fewer problems. Britain had to face this issue at the beginning of the First World War, where its small, highly professional army, could out-perform, battalion for battalion, any other force in the field, but that small army was ground down in the first months of the war, by conscript forces that were vastly superior in numbers, leaving Britain with the problem of building a large, but relatively poorly trained conscript army of her own from scratch, whose inability to perform at a high level, contributed to the war stretching over four terrible years, with massive casualties being endured by all sides. France, Germany, Italy, Austria and Russia, operated with conscripts from the start.

Because of Europe's weakness in land forces, this is one area where Ireland could realistically contribute, but before looking at contributions to European defence it would be useful to look at how the Irish Army is organised now, and how it was organised in the past.

Irish Army organisation, past, present and future

WWII to the present

Since the end of the Second World War, the army has gone through a number of evolutions. First it was organised on the basis of three territorial commands, each command supporting an infantry brigade of three battalions each. There was a nominally large local defence force, again in theory comprising some 20,000 troops, which because of its part-time nature, lack of effective weapons, equipment, training and organisation, was of little military value. In the late nineteen fifties, it was decided to create an integrated core force, of six brigades in total; two brigades in each territorial command area, with each brigade consisting of a mixture of permanent and reserve defence force battalions. This arrangement was a failure. The reserve units could not be brought up to any acceptable level of military competence, due to inadequate numbers, lack of suitable weapons, equipment and training. Additionally, the full-time units were forced to operate at less than three-quarters of their established numbers, due to the miserliness of state resourcing and, worse still, had to commit a portion of those meagre resources to maintaining a largely ineffective reserve. Pay and conditions also did not encourage recruitment. After the abandonment of the integrated structure, the army returned to a three-brigade structure and then, in more recent times, that establishment was reduced to two brigades with a part-time reserve that numbers not much more than 1,000.

Administrative as opposed to combat units

The problem with all of these structures, including the current one, is that they are primarily administrative structures and not operational ones. If the government of the day ordered a full and immediate mobilisation of the army, there is absolutely no likelihood whatsoever, that two fully-equipped, fully-manned, combat ready, brigades could be produced. This reality is epitomised by the fact that on every UN mission, since the sixties of the last century, the units despatched were ad hoc, scratch units, cobbled together from across the Defence Forces. No operationally ready, unit of the army, whether full battalion, or two-company infantry group, has ever been sent abroad, for the very good reason that no such unit existed or exists.

The issue of operational inadequacy

When you consider that the army, as whole, is below establishment due to inadequate recruitment response, that in any unit there will be gaps, due to illness, recruits in training, officers and NCOs on courses, leave, not to mention the fact that there may be soldiers on the establishment who because of age, or general lack of fitness are unsuitable for active service, the lack of operational units is understandable, but not acceptable. Add to this the reality that the equipment levels in terms of armoured personal carriers, reconnaissance vehicles, logistics and integral air support, such as helicopters and ground strike aircraft, are inadequate for the equipping of two operational brigades, even at a peace-keeping level of equipment, never mind at combat level. This latter circumstance is mainly due to budget restrictions. For an army, required to contribute to a European defence posture, this situation could not persist.

Command structure

What could Ireland be realistically expected to contribute to European defence and what form would the army take that would enable it to make such a contribution? Coupled with this would be the need to deal with the on-island requirements of maintaining military superiority over any para-military force that might emerge and dealing with any security problems that might emanate from, or within, Northern Ireland's due to any malign future evolution?

Firstly, it has to be said that the territorial command structure of three commands, each maintaining an administrative brigade, would seem to be sound in concept, given geography and given the size and distribution of population within the country. The two-brigade structure was a cost saving concept and has little, militarily. or geographical, to recommend it. A three command/brigade territorial arrangement dovetails conveniently with Ireland's regional administrative structure and the distribution of major centres of urban population. The brigade structure would not involve anything novel. As outlined above, it was a structure that existed in the past and it would be a structure that almost naturally falls into place, based on geography and the distribution of army barracks, currently in use, together with population distribution. Its validity, or usefulness, is not affected by its lack of novelty. It would look something like the following:

Eastern Command: 1 Brigade – Brigade HQ - Dublin

1st Battalion Aiken Barracks, Dundalk

Recruiting area and area of territorial responsibility, counties Louth, Monaghan, East Cavan, Meath North.

2nd Battalion McKee Barracks, Dublin

Recruiting area and area of territorial responsibility, North Dublin City, Fingal, Meath South.

3rd Battalion Cathal Brugha Barracks, Dublin

Recruiting area and area of territorial responsibility, South Dublin City, South Dublin, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Kildare and Wicklow.

Southern Command: 2 Brigade – Brigade HQ – Cork

4st Battalion Collins Barracks, Cork

Recruiting area and area of territorial responsibility, Cork and Kerry South.

5nd Battalion, Sarsfield Barracks, Limerick

Recruiting area and area of territorial responsibility: Limerick, Tipperary North, Kerry North, Clare.

6rd Battalion, Stephen's Barracks, Kilkenny

Recruiting area and area of territorial responsibility: Kilkenny, Carlow, Waterford, Tipperary South, Wexford.

Western Command: 3 Brigade – Brigade HQ – Galway

7st Battalion, Dún Uí Mhaoilíosa - Renmore Barracks, Galway.

Recruiting area and area of territorial responsibility: Galway, Mayo.

8nd Battalion, Custume Barracks, Athlone

Recruiting area and area of territorial responsibility: Westmeath, Longford, Laois, Offaly, Roscommon South

9rd Battalion, Finner, Donegal

Recruiting area and area of territorial responsibility: Sligo, Donegal, Leitrim, Roscommon North, Cavan West.

Such a structure, on its own, would almost certainly, as in the past, facilitate the existence of paper units with little operational capability, so the main problem that remains to be addressed is the dichotomy between an administrative unit and an operational unit. It may be unfashionable to talk in any constructive way about the Russian army in present times, but it had the same problem of nominally brigade-sized units being incapable of fielding operational units of the same size. The Russians solved this problem by establishing Battalion Tactical Units (BTU) within each Brigade. The BTU is a fully combat ready all-arms unit, consisting of a number of infantry companies, with integrated reconnaissance, artillery, combat engineers, electronic warfare, armour and logistics capabilities. The parent brigade serves as a support unit to provide recruitment, training, administration, supplies, maintenance, reserves, and replacements to the BTU, ensuring that the BTU is always at full establishment and combat readiness, or can be brought to combat readiness quickly. The administrative brigade would also provide routine aid to the civil power, garrison duties, local reserve training, possible peace-keeping duties, and emergency or disaster support in its local area or responsibility, thus ensuring that the BTU's effectiveness as a combat unit was not diluted by having to deal with these, non-combat requirements, or indeed that the state should face the danger involved in carrying out peacekeeping and ACP functions with troops, specifically trained and equipped for aggressive combat operations.

Advantages of BTUs within administrative brigades

It is a concept that has much to recommend it in an Irish context. It would go a long way towards eliminating bogus units that were operational in name only. It would concentrate on a unit size where the Irish Army has considerable experience, i.e., operating battalion-sized units, where, in contrast, the army has much less experience of operating at higher levels. It would fit nicely with the EU concept of Battle Groups which are basically augmented infantry battalions. Most importantly, it would allow the army to deploy cohesive units that had long-term experience of operating as military units, with established identity and esprit de corps. Given an operational force of three battalions, one from each command/brigade, it could provide the potential capability for the army to field an operational combat unit at brigade level, by the addition of the necessary heavy weapons, logistics and command structure. It would provide the state with a force that would be capable of providing readiness in dealing with issues internal to the island, should such a contingency occur, while also maintaining stand-by readiness for European deployment (It would be hoped that both contingencies would not occur at the same time!).

Location and training

Maintaining one mechanised infantry company at each of the nine barracks/battalion HQ locations, would provide the three companies required by each combat battalion, with support in the form of logistics, artillery and armour, being maintained at a suitable facility within each administrative brigade area. Constant training and exercising would be a necessary requirement for each combat unit, to ensure operational readiness, and the ability to carry out this training at battalion level and, from time to time, also at brigade level, would be vital. The eastern brigade area is well catered for in terms of exercise grounds (The Curragh, Glen of Imaal, Kilbride). Southern Brigade also has Kilworth Camp. The western brigade area has no suitable exercise area in DoD ownership and this is a matter that would need to be rectified if three combat battalions were to be maintained and kept in operational readiness.

A combat battalion located within an administrative brigade, does however, present one major problem – the difference in training, equipment and attitude required by combat soldiers as oppose to the requirements of soldiers, whose primary functions would be garrison duty, recruitment, basic training, aid to the civil power, emergency response and peacekeeping operations. This problem will be discussed later in the sections on human resources, recruitment, the nature of military service, age profile and women in the military.

European territorial defence structure

Looked at from an overall European perspective, a one brigade contribution for each population level of five million or so people (NUTS level 1, between 3 and 7 million population), would seem a fair and reasonable basis on which to apportion the commitment of providing military resources. Ireland constitutes one such region of five million population. The apportionment of a brigade from each NUTS 1 region in Europe would give the EU access to a force of some 92 infantry brigades, or almost 31 divisions. Armoured units and air assets could be provided by the larger, wealthier, more industrialised and centrally located states, with long established arms industries. Less developed or peripheral regions could provide mechanised infantry. This would be a European defence force of considerable power and capabilities. It would provide a European core force, but not necessarily Europe's total military capability. Larger, wealthier states and those in the immediate path of potential Russian aggression could, and would, maintain considerably higher levels of force on their own initiative.

Strategic sea and air lift

Getting an Irish combat brigade to the European mainland in times of crisis would require pre-determined and well-practised drills, both sea and air. Sea transport could be by commercial ro-ro and lo-lo shipping to continental ports normally served by that shipping – Cherbourg and Dunkirk. This should work fine, as long as the process was practiced regularly, to ensure no hitches and so that the relevant Irish units could fit seamless into whatever order of battle existed at the time and arrangements were in place to identify and ensure the availability, and smooth requisitioning, of the necessary ferries and container ships as ships taken up from trade (STUFT).

It would make little sense for Ireland to maintain medium or heavy lift air transport. Were we to do so, such aircraft would languish unused, over years, and become obsolete on the tarmac at Baldonnell. It would be far more cost effective to come to arrangements with neighbouring EU air forces to avail of a pre-planned share of their air lift resources, for use during exercises and in time of emergency. A bi-lateral defence agreement with France again suggests itself. This does not prevent the acquisition of light lift aircraft, such as the Airbus C295s currently on order, for general utility use and emergency air transport operations.

In the case of sea transfer, air cover and naval escort for this traffic, in time of crisis, would need to be considered.

Recruitment and Human Resources

Recently, the Minister for Defence (the previous minister, as is now the case) referred to his aspiration that the Defence Forces should be a "modern workplace". Other commentators have equated a career in the Defence Forces to an employment, or a job, as though it was the same as working in industry or the professions. Military service is no such thing and politicians, or indeed soldiers, who do not recognise this fact, will never achieve the creation of an effective defence force because they are starting from a totally false premise. In the final analysis, the primary function of an army is war fighting. A quote sometimes attributed to Winston Churchill, sometimes to George Orwell, or others, sums up pithily, what a defence force is and how it relates to the rest of society – "*We sleep safely in our beds, because rough men stand ready in the night to visit violence on those who would do us harm*". This encapsulates in one sentence what a defence force is for, and takes precedence over any other secondary responsibilities which may be assigned to defence forces. This reality goes straight to nub of the issue already alluded to, namely, the difference between combat forces, i.e., war fighting units, and those organised for relatively peaceful purposes, such as aid to the civil power and UN peacekeeping operations.

The nature of military service

Real soldiering is dangerous. There is always a likelihood of high casualty rates in the case of the commitment of land forces to combat and consequently, it is a key issue in the minds of many Irish people and forms a large part of their sentiment regarding neutrality. For this reason, it might be as well to dispose of the "body bag" issue now, before looking further at the question of an effective military contribution to European defence.

The soldier's contract

In Ireland, the defence forces are professional and voluntary. Nobody is forced to enlist. However, once enlisted, the soldier's commitment is open-ended. It involves the possibility of death and, unfortunately in many circumstances, the necessity of death, if the mission demands. Soldiering is an unlimited contract where, in the case of combat, there are no trade union rights, no health and safety regulations and no right-to-life safeguards. If any young man, or indeed woman, is unwilling to accept these conditions, then they should stay well clear of military service involving combat. This caveat also applies to the parents, loved ones and partners of soldiers and indeed this also applies to the population at large. There should be no complaint, or protest, if soldiers die, or are maimed, in combat. Those are the condition they accepted when they signed up. They are part of the job specification. The business of soldiers is war. The business of war is death, killing and destruction. An army is designed to inflict violence and death on an opponent and accept violence and death being inflicted upon it in return; it is not a troop of Boy Scouts.

National attitudes to casualties

If the Irish people, or the Irish state, do not want to face the possibility that units of the Defence Forces might be destroyed in combat, then the state should not commit them to combat missions, but once it does, there are no guarantees.

The further logic of this reality is also that, If the state does not see any circumstances where it would be willing to make such commitments then, why should it go to the trouble and cost of maintaining military forces in the first instance? War is horrific. There is no way of sweetening the pill. There is no sense in maintaining pretend armies. The logic can be taken a step further in the area of European policy – if the Irish Government does not consider the European Union worthy of military defence, in the event of the invasion of its territory by a foreign power, then it could be argued that the only honourable option open to Ireland would be to withdraw from the EU in its entirety, economically, politically and militarily.

Age profile in the Defence Forces

A closely related issue to combat readiness, is the age profile of our defence forces. Throughout the history of the state the question of elderly soldiers has been a problem.

Officers

In armies that have seen combat, or were likely to face combat at short notice, such as the Israeli army in the past, brigadiers in their late twenties, or early thirties were not uncommon. In the Irish Army the average age of a brigadier or lieutenant-colonel (average age, mark you, not minimum age) was given as 58 in an answer to a Dáil question in 1992. Even in the case of a company commander, a commandant, a rank that is sufficiently low down in the command structure, for the holder to see lethal and direct action in a war situation, the average age was 43. These ages for soldiers, likely to face combat, are far too high. It is not suggested that men of this age should be confined to armchairs and slippers, but, most certainly, they are not of an age where they should be expected to face violent military action effectively.

NCOs and other ranks

This problem of age also affects other ranks. In recent press reports, comment has been made that the heavy leakage of personnel from the Defence Forces, was a direct result of the inability soldiers to maintain a home, a spouse and a family on the level of payment provided. The best soldiers are, however, very young soldiers. Youth gives them recklessness and a sense of indestructibility, vital to someone who is required to engage in combat. Once men move into their twenties and thirties, the blood cools. They begin to assess risks more realistically and, worse still, from a soldiering point of view, they acquire responsibilities like partners, children and homes which, quite sensibly, makes them increasingly averse to the likelihood of death or maiming, which are an integral risk of military operations. Ideally, there should be no place in combat units for private soldiers, or junior NCOs, above the age of 25 and preferably they should be much younger. Equally, there should be no place for men with partners or children at this level service.

A policy of confining combat, or potential combat, service to soldiers under the age of 25, who are also single, would not only ensure more effective soldiers, but would also remove the arguments that wages were insufficient to support families and households. There would be no families to support. Single soldiers, in these circumstances, could also be expected to live in barracks. Not alone would this be good for unit cohesion, but pay would be effectively pocket money, or potential savings to provide a start outside the military when service was completed. A system of education, or apprenticeship for

soldiers retiring at 25, to equip them for careers in civilian life, would be an initiative well worth considering and would be an added attraction to the military life for any young man.

Women in the Defence Forces

This brings us to a third issue; the position of women in the Defence Forces, though, as will be explained later, this is not so much a question of the suitability of women for military service in general, but the different requirements for service within garrison, or administrative, brigades, on the one hand, and the battalion combat units that each brigade would field, on the other. The question of women in the Defence Forces is a particularly live issue at the moment, in the context of the *Women of Honour* and the exposure of the horrific treatment of women, up to and including allegations of rape and violence.

The exercise of violence

In the first instance, an army, by its very nature and function, is not an equal opportunities organisation. Its primary purpose is to exercise extreme violence, when called upon to do so, on behalf of the State. This violence may involve killing people on a large scale and in a most horrible way. It may require the use of individual brute physical force and aggression. In less lethal circumstances a soldier may still need the ability to exert great physical strength and also endure severe physical hardship. Those who are strong will survive and succeed, the weak will fail, or die. Should we consider this a suitable environment for women? I am not stating an opinion, I am simply asking the question. Or more relevantly, would the presence of women within combat units, enhance or detract from their ability to carry out successful combat missions?

Esprit de corps and morale in combat

Secondly, there is a view that active military operations involve a particular male bonding, a camaraderie, the construction of a warrior caste, a so-called "band of brothers" effect, that cannot survive the inclusion of women, without suffering a collapse of esprit or morale. Again, I would neither subscribe to, or deny, this concept, but the proof of the pudding must be in the eating. If the inclusion of women in combat units brings about combat inefficiency and the degradation of performance, then there should be no place for them. If not, then their inclusion must be on the basis of strict equality and the absence of special arrangements. There should only be soldiers, not male soldiers or female soldiers. This does not mean an endorsement of the vile behaviour meted out to women soldiers in the past. All soldiers are entitled to respect and freedom from sexual harassment, whether male or female.

The conflict between operational combat and other military activities

Closely related to this issue, is the conflict between a military's primary and secondary functions. As stated, an army's primary function is war fighting. However, it secondary functions can include matters such as peace keeping, aid to the civil power and disaster relief. The primary and secondary aims are often mutually exclusive. The British Parachute Regiment provided an excellent illustration of this issue. On the battlefields of the Falkland Islands in 1982 they were superb, highly professional and heroic soldiers, on the other hand, on the streets of Derry in 1972 they were effectively murderous

thugs. Same soldiers, different circumstances. It might be worth noting that two of the world's finest elite fighting forces, the British Parachute Regiment, just mentioned, and the French Foreign Legion, have no women serving in their ranks.

This issue would play out in the context of the two-tier structure suggested for the army. That of administrative brigades fielding battalion sized fully operational combat units. The administrative brigade troops, from whom it is suggested, peace keepers, aiders of the civil power and emergency response troops might be drawn, have no need for their personnel to be trained to the levels of combat readiness, toughness and aggression, required of combat troops. In fact, as alluded to above, in the case of the British Paras, such training in aggression, would more than likely render them unsuitable for peace-keeping and similar service. The issue of women serving in the administrative brigade units would therefore, also not be problematical. However, the transfer of troops between support brigade and combat battalion could pose problems and would undoubtedly require intense psychological adjustment and training, as the transition, in either direction is made.

Sustainability

The discussion to this point, indicates a possible defence posture that would be realistic for Ireland, in terms of population, affordability and effectiveness in providing for Ireland's defence needs and responsibilities and its potential commitments to the European Union. What has emerged from this analysis is a predominantly land defence force structure that, within the limitations of its size and armament, could be combat ready within a very short time scale for mobilisation. International best practice would seem to suggest a 72-hour period from warning order to a force being in the field, ready for action. The force suggested could also be considered a force capable of carrying out modern warfare operations, either as an independent brigade battle group, in an Irish context, or as a brigade component of a larger deployment in a European context.

The degrading of unit capability through combat

However, for armies in general, this capability to operate as a well-equipped and organised military force exists at the point of initiating combat only. It will rapidly degrade during combat, if issues of sustainability are not addressed. Helmuth von Moltke the Elder wrote *"No plan of operations extends with any certainty beyond the first encounter with the main enemy forces"*. While a force might be considered fit for operational purpose at the point of first encounter, the effects of combat will very quickly degrade this operational capability through casualties, destruction of equipment and materiel and the general disorganisation and chaos which are an integral aspect of war. Unless strategic arrangements are available, in terms of the manufacture of military equipment and munitions, from within the resources of the state, or else through guaranteed supply from external sources, the ability to continue military operations will quickly collapse. Equally, if there are no reserves of trained, or semi-trained manpower available, which can be brought to combat readiness within an appropriate timescale, to compensate for combat losses, then the affected military units will cease to exist, or become ineffective.

This is a critical aspect of any defence planning. It is a matter that is complex enough to require analysis in its own right. The issues of reserves and sustainability is vital.

Reserves

Reserve defence forces have been, since the foundation of the State, the Cinderella of Irish defence policy. It is important to give due prominence to the question of reserves in any defence review.

Reserves fall into three categories:

1. Trained, full-time soldiers, who are discharged on completion of their agreed contract of service, but still are subject to a commitment to return to service if called upon to do so.
2. Part-time volunteers, who engage in limited military training at evenings and weekends.
3. Fit civilians of military age who could be liable for call-up in emergency.

Reserves based on discharged full-time soldiers

If the recommendations, made earlier in this paper, of ensuring that soldiers of private or corporal rank, in combat ready units, were kept below the age of 25, the constant throughput of personnel that such a policy would bring about, would ensure that an increasing pool of trained reservists would form over time. Such reservists could, in times of emergency, be absorbed quickly into the administrative brigades for refresher training and deployment onwards to the existing active service battalions, to fill vacancies, or go towards the construction of new active service units.

Part-time voluntary reserves

In the case of the second group, the maintenance of a part-time volunteer reserve, this has been a continuous problem for the Defence Forces throughout its history. The main issue here was that attempts were made to form these reservists into some semblance of an organised military force, in its own right. The problems were many:

1. Because of the voluntary nature of service, some recruits would join with a certain degree of enthusiasm, quickly become bored, fail to attend training sessions and ultimately drift away without having achieved any worthwhile training. This constant process of comings and goings made it impossible for the training cadre to carry out its functions. It would be difficult to bring about any improvement in this situation, as no legal basis currently exists to compel part-time reservists to attend training on an ongoing basis.
2. Because these part-time reservists were organised into the standard hierarchical system of military units (sections, platoons, companies and battalions), mimicking an organised military force and it was considered that they should function as such, the result turned out to be a third-rate (some would say a tenth rate!) force, with little or no military capability.

The issues that contributed to this outcome were well known:

1. The rapid turnover of recruits, already alluded to, meant that training was never completed, and units never held onto personnel long enough for effective units to gel, to be fully manned, or to develop any form of operational coherence.
2. Given recognition of the above reality, by the State and indeed by the military authorities themselves, these reservists were normally poorly equipped and, in

terms of weapons, they were provided with the obsolete cast-offs of the permanent defence forces.

3. Despite such a reserve force having little operational capability, it was still costly to maintain, as it drew down permanent defence force personnel to provide training NCOs, senior officers, administrators and other personnel, to the detriment of the activities of the PDF, already weakened due to budgetary constraints.

A realistic reserve

The policy of attempting to construct a functioning set of military units, capable of operating as a coherent military force, using part-time reservists, was, and is, flawed. Given the issue surrounding the part-time, voluntary nature of the force and its poor levels of training, equipment and armament, such a policy could never succeed. This is not to say that a part-time reserve could serve no function in defence policy. If the limitations of such a reserve were recognised, and the attempts to make it into a functioning military force were abandoned, it could serve very useful purposes at moderate cost. Two benefits immediately spring to mind:

1. The pre-registration of suitable and willing volunteers would be very useful. In an emergency, it would be most beneficial to have an effective register of already enlisted and sworn personnel, even if they had little formal group military training, rather than having to set up recruiting campaigns aimed at the general civilian population and attempt to register, organise and assemble such recruits, a ready pool of organised and committed manpower would already be in place. The cost would not be great. The main requirements would be to keep such lists up to date and provide refresher training from time to time.

2. The development of military skills, as opposed to military training, among an enlisted reserve would offer a second benefit. The use of potential military skills, already existing in the civilian world, would also fall into this beneficial category. It would shorten the time required for training, should these reservists need to be called up. In this context, it is suggested that the development of tactical, or unit skills should not be attempted, i.e., accepting the idea, that reservists could conceivably operate as pre-formed combat units, should be avoided. Instead promoting useful military skills on a personal and individual basis for each reservist, according to their interests and capabilities, or availing of skills, which they might already possess and which could have future military application, in the event of situations arising where these skills would be needed, could be very beneficial. Many civilian occupations and activities involve relevant military skills, sometimes at levels of expertise superior to those of regular military personnel. For instance, off-road and heavy transport vehicle handling and maintenance, logistics and supply chain management, engineering, computer and data management skills, cybersecurity, UAV (drone) operation, medical, paramedic and first aid skills, the academic study of military strategy and military history and, maybe at a more hobby-based level, shooting, orienteering, hill walking skills. Fostering strategic links between reserve defence forces and these relevant civilian activities could be very valuable, at little cost to the state.

Conclusion

Decisions need to be made regarding the distribution of investment between non-military defence and military defence proper. The two areas require very different responses in terms of the type of resources required. This analysis has dealt exclusively with military defence.

The triple-lock is illogical and dangerous and should be abandoned as soon as possible.

Ireland faces only two major military threats, Potential Russian aggression against the European Union and the potential danger of civil unrest and possible civil conflict in Northern Ireland, should circumstances there deteriorate and the British government find itself unwilling, or unable to control the situation. All other threats are minor and of limited serious import, to a greater or lesser degree.

There is a decision to be made as to whether Ireland should contribute to European Union military defence capability, or not. If the decision was to be in favour of such a capability, then our contribution would be most effectively made in terms of land forces. Air and naval forces, besides being enormously complex and expensive and requiring extensive support infrastructure, would be best provided by the augmentation of the air and sea capabilities of other European states, who are geographically nearer to the like theatre of deployment and who already have established experience and resources in these areas, or by bi-lateral defence cooperation with one of these states, particularly France, rather than creating new, small, and unintegrated air and naval forces in Ireland, far distant from potentially threatened areas. Financial contribution, together with the provision of bases, if required, would also be an effective contribution.

As suggested in the previous paragraph, a bi-lateral defence agreement with another EU state, such as France, allowing cooperation on vital defences issues, which would be beyond the capabilities of Ireland on its own, would be an initiative worth pursuing. This could form an effective alternative to full NATO membership. NATO membership, with its mutual defence obligations, could have negative connotations for those in Ireland committed to military neutrality, whereas cooperation on defence arrangements with an EU partner, rather than in the context of NATO membership, and without automatic mutual military commitment, could be a palatable alternative.

It might also be suggested, that a unified EU defence capability, under European control, which made the connection with NATO, at an EU-NATO level of command, rather than between individual EU states and NATO, could be more acceptable to Ireland. However, this is far beyond the scope of this paper.

The most serious military threat to the European Union comes from the Russian Federation and specifically to the European Union states bordering that state. To be in a position to provide land combat unit reinforcement in that context, though not necessarily on that front, would be the most effective contribution that Ireland could make to EU defence.

The Irish Army, and indeed probably most peace-time armies, suffer from nominal units being operational in name only. An excellent means of providing an effective operational force would be by forming administrative brigades that could support smaller operationally ready Battalion Tactical Units from within their strength, while letting the larger unit provide administrative, garrison and support functions. A three-brigade structure, with each brigade supporting one, battalion-sized, all-arms, combat unit, would be an appropriate way of achieving this and would fit comfortably with Irish geography, demographics, resources and traditions. With three, combat ready, battalions, each being capable of being organised into an effective combat brigade and with functioning sea and air transport arrangements in place, this would provide an appropriate and useful addition to European defence.

The existence of such a combat-ready force would also be Ireland's insurance policy in the context of unforeseeable events in Northern Ireland.

The acceptance of the risks and commitments involved in military activity, both by the State and the individual is critical. Avoidance of this reality can only lead to ineffective and "pretend" defence forces. In this context, the age profile is also critical and must be addressed and managed in a structured way. The place of women in the Defences Forces, particularly in the proposed combat battalions, would need careful consideration. The differing requirements of combat soldiers as opposed to garrison, ACP, or peace-keeping soldiers, is a difficult issue that must be addressed.

Finally, sitting on the neutrality fence and providing no contribution to the protection of Europe, *our* Europe, against current international threats cannot be seen to be in our vital interest. Besides, such a policy would be morally, politically and economically unjustifiable in the context of our deep and integrated membership of the European Union. Any damage done to Europe is not something set apart from our well-being and safety. Any damage to Europe, or any state within the European Union, would affect us grievously.

The cost of defence forces of the type set out in this paper would not come cheap. Even though the suggested defence force is very modest, in both world and European terms, paying for it would not be trivial and many other state priorities would suffer because of the diversion of funds. There must be severe doubt that there would be the political will to shoulder the burden. From a national point of view, based on past experience, it is likely that the general preference would be to muddle along with broadly ineffective and inadequate defence forces and hope that nothing bad would happen that might leave us dangerously exposed. We would also depend on our European partners continuing to be tolerant of our free-riding at their expense. If circumstances on Europe's borders continue to deteriorate, this forum, the Irish government, or the general staff of the defence forces, may not be the ultimate decision makers. The European Union may politely, but firmly, suggest that we make an acceptable contribution to the Union's defence and may also suggest the detailed form that this contribution should take. It would be better if we jumped, before being pushed!

A flippant aside to end

As a final aside, however, with regard to Northern Ireland, and from, perhaps, a cynical, and jocose, point of view, it might be interesting to note that, in contradiction to the view, expressed above, that effective and combat-ready defence forces contribute to a state's security, the absence of an effective army in 1969-70, saved the State from becoming embroiled in a disastrous military incursion into Northern Ireland. This was a course of action which, at that time, certain government ministers were intent on and were only prevented from acting out, by the shambles which occurred when the understrength, ill-equipped and poorly trained army of that time, attempted to mobilise. This is a somewhat tongue-in-cheek comment and it is not seriously suggested that poor quality and incapable defence forces provide the state's best form of security!

Appendix 1 – The Russian threat

This analysis forms the basis on which the preceding study of Irish military requirements is based. Note that throughout the following analysis, reference to the European Union and NATO are used interchangeably. This is not to indicate that the two entities can be considered the same from a political or military point of view. The current reality, however, is that the EU has little of no integrated defensive capability. The current defence of Europe can only be made effective through NATO. The has serious repercussions that need to be addressed in the near term. Firstly, unless all of the armed forces of the EU member states are financially resourced to an adequate level, unless centralisation of equipment procurement is achieved to give economies of scale and standardisation of design and manufacture and unless there is a centralised and efficient command structure, it is unlikely that the EU could provide for its own defence. Allowing European defence to be addressed through NATO, brings about the involvement of three specific major states (the United States, Canada and Turkey), in that defence, whose geographic location, national interests, or history and cultural identity, do not sit well with those of Europe. A crisis, requiring military intervention, where EU interests diverged substantially from any of these three players, could leave the EU dangerously exposed. The key solution to this problem is the construction of a powerful and integrated EU defence capability, where the relationship with NATO would be through a single link point, the European Union, as a military entity, and not between the individual member states and NATO.

The Russian Threat

As stated, the primary military threat, to the European Union, comes from the Russian Federation. The existing full-scale war in Ukraine is now a reality. Ukraine is not an EU, nor a NATO, member state. Motives, both explicit and implicit, on the part of Russia, in the context of Ukraine, do however, provide and insight into where further Russian ambitions of this nature, might lie. The drivers of Russian policy are both geo-strategic and historical. They are also profoundly non-democratic. Russia has no concern for the views of the people who live in the territories it covets. In its view, people can be eliminated or forced to move. Its interest is in acquiring territory, which it is more than capable of re-populating with Russians in the long term. If, through this process, massive refugee streams unbalance and strain the resources of the European Union, so much the better.

In terms of history, Russia perceives certain territories on its current borders to be part of the lands of the historical Russian nation. This Russia considers immutable. No matter what political changes take place, no matter what democratic elections or plebiscites are carried out, this land will always, in the minds of certain Russians, remain Russian. It is a view that is almost akin to religious belief. This is an attitude that may find echoes among Irish readers. There are some on this island (thankfully a very small minority) who hold the irredentist view that the whole island is part of the territory of the historical Irish nation and to them, democracy is merely a temporary expedient and can never override the national imperative. This is very much the world view of the current Russian leadership hold, with regard to the Russian motherland.

If we look at Russia's immediate neighbours, the Ukraine was certainly within the category of this dubious historical reasoning. For other bordering states the matter is not so clear. Romania was never part of any Russian Empire, throughout its history it either enjoyed considerable autonomy or was controlled by the Ottoman empire or, in part, by the Habsburg Empire. Hungary and Slovakia were an integral part of Habsburg lands and had little Russian connection, except during the short period of the Cold War. Poland, as a state, endured constant flux, involving expansion, union with Lithuania, three separated partitions, the obliteration of Poland as a state, its rebirth after World War 1,

occupation by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union and finally, after World War 2, the territory of Poland moved substantially westward, ceding territory in the east to Russia and gaining territory in the west from Germany, but remaining, until the fall of the Soviet Union, a Russian vassal state. Throughout this chequered history, Russian involvement has always been great. Whether the current regime in Moscow would consider Poland a legitimate state, by its own convoluted historical reasoning, or somehow part of the Russian Empire's tradition lands, to be interfered with and controlled, as Russia thinks fit, is hard to say. In all circumstances, the military threat to its territorial integrity is real and substantial and would need to be defended against. Moldova is probably the state most at risk, in the immediate term. Moldova is not a member of the EU or NATO.

The Baltic States

The territory of the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania is where the real threat of Russian expansion lies. This area, like Poland, suffered ever-changing occupations by neighbouring powers throughout its history. However, by the early 18th century the area of the Baltic states came within the control of the Russian Empire. They enjoyed a short period of independence in the inter-war period, only to be subsumed into the Soviet Union at the end of the Second World War. In current Russian historical thinking, it is highly likely, that the Baltic states would be considered, like Ukraine, as traditional Russian territories that should be restored to the motherland. Their annexation would provide Russia with a long coastline alone the eastern side of the Baltic Sea, instead of the miserable access which it currently enjoys, through the Gulf of Finland to Kronhstadt and St. Petersburg and the isolated enclave of Kaliningrad.

The population of the Baltic states totals some six million people of whom one million are ethnic Russians. The combined land area of the Baltic states come to around 175,200km^2. For comparison with Ukraine, where a Russian force of approximately 150,000 troops was considered by Russia to be adequate to the task of annexation (though this estimate seems very far from realistic given the progress of that war to date. That particular scenario remains to be fully played out) The Ukraine has around three and half times the land area of the Baltic states and has around seven and one third time the population. A much smaller Russian force might appear adequate to annex Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. This, of course, takes no account of NATO intervention.

As already mentioned, although this is a review of European Union defence, that defence must be looked at from a NATO viewpoint, as the EU, as of yet, does not have any substantial integrated military capacity. The issues surrounding the military defence of the Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are both complex and difficult. There is no strategic depth to allow strategic withdrawal or freedom of military manoeuvre. Considering what Russian forces have done in Ukraine, tactical withdrawal is hardly an option, as even temporary invasion by Russia means a landscape laid bare and cities and towns levelled to the ground. At no point is the territory of Russia, or its ally Belarus, more than 360km from the Baltic coast. At its narrowest point, between Daugavpils and Riga, the distance is only 200km. The capital of Lithuania, Vilnius, is a mere 50km from the Belarus border: In the case of the other two capitals, Riga and Tallinn, the distance is around 200km. The only land connection between the Baltic states and any other EU state, is the connection between Lithuania and Poland, through the Suwalki gap, where the Polish-Lithuanian border is a mere 100km long (considerably less if you take the straight-line distance), sandwiched between Belarus and the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad. If access through this gap was closed, reinforcement and resupply of NATO forces in the Baltic states could only be carried out by sea, with seaborne forces being especially vulnerable to air and missile attack, particularly in the constricted and relatively shallow Baltic Sea. This issue would be critical, given the Russian military assets located in the Kaliningrad enclave, which would allow Russia to project military

force over the Baltic Sea and beyond. Realistically any attempt at seaborne resupply would require the neutralisation of the Russian weapons systems in Kaliningrad.

The impossibility of tactical or strategic surprise

From a Russian point of view, the best chances of successfully annexing the Baltic states would have been offered by achieving surprise and speed. After what has happened in Ukraine, strategic surprise should now be impossible. NATO has had a clear demonstration of what Russia is capable of and what it is willing to do and if NATO doesn't prepare to meet an attempted repeat performance in the Baltic, then NATO could be accused of negligence on a vast scale.

Tactical surprise would also be problematical for Russia. To carry out a successful attack, Russian forces would need air superiority or preferably air supremacy. It is a moot point, which won't be discussed here, whether Russian air power has the capacity to destroy NATO air forces in aerial combat alone. Conventional military strategy dictates neutralising the airbases or other facilities from which enemy aircraft or shipping operate, as the Israelis did in the Six Day's War and as the Japanese attempted to do at Pearl Harbor. However, NATO airbases, from which NATO aircraft would operate over the Baltic states, are not located in those states. They are located in Germany, Poland and Norway and also, potentially, on US, British or French carrier taskforces in the North Atlantic. If Russia were to carry out pre-emptive strikes on those targets, as a prelude to invasion, it would effectively be the beginning of a Europe-wide war, with every possibility of escalating to nuclear exchanges. Certainly, the conflict could not be contained within the Baltic states.

EU – NATO defence issues

Of course, NATO would also face the limitation of not striking into Russian territory to interdict Russian airbases, in the first instance. NATO is a purely defensive alliance and could not take the first step. Extreme vigilance, to ensure that its aircraft were not caught on the ground, would be NATO's only defence against pre-emptive strike coupled with the ability to operate its aircraft off unprepared and unidentifiable airstrips, in the event of primary air bases being rendered unusable.

The unavoidable military reality is that facilities to the rear of both forces in contact, form an integral part of any force's effective functioning. These would include fuel, food and ammunition stockpiles, logistics vehicle parks, repair and maintenance workshops, tactical support air bases and railheads, far inside both Russian territory and NATO territory, outside the Baltic States. These would, of necessity, become the object, in each case, of both Russian and NATO attack.

Pre-emptive strikes, or subsequent strikes outside the immediate land area of the Baltic States together with the Kaliningrad threat to seaborne operations and the likelihood of the Suwalki gap closure cutting off land-based resupply, would ensure that conflict could not be contained within the Baltic region and would escalate, almost immediately on a Russian incursion, to a widespread European conflict involving multiple European states.

If the Russian air force failed to achieve air supremacy, their ground forces would be subjected to overwhelming air attack and would be unlikely to survive as operational units for very long. Would Russia be willing to allow such a situation to develop? Probably not.

As stated, surprise would be difficult for the Russians to achieve. The border between Russia and the Baltic States, stretches some 600 kms from the Gulf of Finland to the border with Poland. Part of this border consist of 130 km of Lake Peipsi, covering a large extent of the border with Estonia, across which armour or vehicle movement is not possible. This is an extremely short front along which to attempt to achieve surprise and local military superiority. There are only eight major road crossing along this front capable of supporting large scale armour and logistics movement. Given the preponderance of highly sophisticated anti-armour weapons in NATO land forces, a Russian advance would likely be a slow and costly affair. Meanwhile the failure to gain air superiority would take its inevitable toll.

Mobilisation and deployment for such an attack, on Russia's part, would also be difficult to hide. Although the force likely to be deployed would not, in theory, need to be as large as those that Russia deployed in Ukraine, carrying out any form of mobilisation on the borders of the Baltic States without NATO knowledge would be impossible, given the sophistication of NATO satellite, air, radar, electronic and communications surveillance capabilities. Russia would be attacking a prepared enemy with little possibility of surprise and no guarantee of air superiority. It is likely that there could be only one outcome and that outcome for Russia would be bleak, with the only possibility of achieving success in conventional operations being to risk all-out war.

Would anyone, even someone as evil as Putin, be likely to take such a risk. Who knows? This scenario, of all-out war, is so horrific and imponderable that rational military or strategic analysis is difficult in the extreme. This is uncharted territory and, from an analysis point of view, probably best left alone.

Eastern Europe and the Balkans

This same type of scenarios could be rehearsed on Russia's other fronts with the European Union; in the west against Poland, Slovakia and Hungary, or in the south against Romania. The same difficulties, of restricting combat to the region, would also apply, as it did in the Baltic. In the case of these countries the strategic depth to allow for tactical manoeuvre is far greater than in the Baltic but the possibility of Russia achieving surprise and presenting NATO with a fait accompli would not exist on this front either. Unfortunately, because NATO is a strictly defensive alliance, military operations would take place on NATO territory. The benefits of fighting one's wars on the enemy's territory is not an option. However, the hope in these cases is that it is unlikely that Russia's leadership would feel the same atavistic historical urge to incorporate these territories into the Russian motherland, as they might in the case of the Baltic states and as they did, in the case of Ukraine.

In terms of naval power, there are possibilities for Russia to conduct aggressive operations in the Black Sea, in the Mediterranean and in the North Atlantic which could affect the outcomes of land war in the Baltic States, but these would be secondary to the land-air battle.

Nuclear deterrence

This then is the scenario against which Europe needs to defend itself. Nuclear deterrence is probably the primary form of defence against physical military incursion. However, Europe has no nuclear defence capability in its own right. The USA is not a European state and, it cannot always be relied on, that European and American interests will align. The United Kingdom has left the EU. This leaves France as the only nuclear power in the European Union and it must be borne in mind that this

capability, consisting of both submarine and air launch nuclear weapons, is under French sovereign control and not EU control. The question must be asked – Would France risk nuclear conflagration in defence of Estonia? Even more pertinent, would the US take on the same risk in the same cause? The need for powerful European conventional forces therefore remains strong.

EU defence weakness and the necessity of NATO

Much as it might grate on European self-esteem, it must be accepted that currently, Europe (effectively the EU) is incapable of providing for its own defence and that NATO is the only conduit through which a realistic European defence can be achieved. Reference was made, at the beginning of this analysis, to the dangers of depending on an alliance, all of whose members may not share the same perception of risk and solidarity. The inefficiencies and waste of separate weapons development and procurement for the individual member states was also alluded to. The lack of any formal coordinated command and control for European defence forces is another serious issue, the key coordination taking place at a NATO, rather than an EU level. The lack of any consolidate European nuclear deterrent, is yet another issue. These issues need to be addressed urgently by the European Union. The argument is not that links with NATO should be broken, but that such a link should happen at an EU level and not at the level of the individual member states, thus enabling Europe to operate militarily, in its own right, in circumstances that fall short of full military confrontation and existential European defence, where the full power of the NATO alliance would be considered necessary.

Submission by Dónal Denham, Ambassador of Ireland retd. (*Lithuania, Belarus & Finland)*

Riddle me this: a shared island perspective.

The Irish Conundrum:
One island, two jurisdictions: a border that is not a border between them. One jurisdiction is a member of the European Union of 27 states; the other jurisdiction is not. One jurisdiction is a part of NATO; the other jurisdiction is not. The island in question is **IRELAND**, one jurisdiction being a Republic by governance, the other a constitutional Monarchy.

Yet we know that a significant number of people in both jurisdictions favour and aspire to a unified one-jurisdiction island, while a significant number of people in one part of the island wish to remain within NATO as a European mutual defence alliance. How would NATO Art. 5 apply?

So, how are we ever going to be able to have an Ireland which is both a member of the EU and a member of NATO and unified? The eventual resolution of Ireland's great "national question", the unification of the island, would be difficult to imagine in circumstances where one community favoured neutrality (of whatever hue) while another community stood with NATO.

I recall, during my diplomatic career, that the notion of a "European Army" was envisaged by the constitutional discussions as far back as the idea of a united Europe itself. As recently as the Treaty of Lisbon (aka the Reform Treaty) of 2009, important European Parliamentarians such as Elmar Brok have voiced their public support for the concept and establishment of a European Army.

But such a notion has no place in the Irish tradition – reiterated by all Irish political parties – of military neutrality. Any fundamental changes to that tradition, even if incremental in step, risk destabilising our internal democratic structures and raise the prospect of renewed violent disagreements.

NATO, Neutrality, Conflict Resolution: Choices
My own experience, born of five years' service in Lithuania from 2005 to 2010, is that the central and Eastern member States of the European Union, especially those who joined in 2004, attach much more importance to their NATO membership than to their EU membership and would always choose to put the former before the latter if required to do so.

I also firmly believe that Uachtarán Michael D. Higgins, was perfectly correct to flag the gradual but inevitable slide towards NATO membership that has been in progress since before the Treaty of Lisbon (2009) and which has accelerated in tandem with our active military participation in the Partnership for Peace and PESCO initiatives.

It has resulted in a dilution of the international image of Ireland as a non-aligned voice for world peace, with an empathy for the newer, developing nations across the globe. We are now clearly identified with the policies and actions of the European Union, with its defence and security initiatives, and most recently with the alliance supporting Ukraine. In the latter context, we should remember that hard cases make bad law.

There was a brief moment in the late 1980s, a moment now referred to as an "inflection point", when the West could have used its resources to support fundamental change and the embedding in of democracy in Russian society. Instead, we collectively chose to focus our international efforts on shredding apart the Soviet Union by supporting its constituent parts, the Baltics, Poland, Hungary, Czechia, Slovakia etc., and even Ukraine against the centre, Moscow and its autocracies. We are, therefore, in a sense to blame for this latest conflict, ignoring the emerging warning signs and continuing to push out NATO's boundaries of influence despite the deterioration of power checks and balances within the Russian Federation

No one wins in war (except ideologies); war is a human weakness, a disgrace and a tragedy.

Ireland should, therefore, use what remains of its traditional, impartial international influence as a peace builder to promote a peace process, sooner rather than later. With respect to this forum, fiddling about with changes to triple lock mechanisms or coming up with wordy, worthy declarations is not the way to do so.

Dónal Denham
(Ambassador of Ireland, retd. & Founder, [University of the 3rd Age Dun Laoghaire])

Dear Dame Richardson,

The need to articulate Strategic Threat to facilitate an Irish Security Strategy

Overview: The Consultative Forums on International Security Policy were subject to unfounded claims, many of which could be attributable to a lack of understanding of security issues, and a lack of awareness of the very real threats to Irish State Security. Unlike the majority of western countries, Irish politicians, and as a consequence the Irish public, do not receive Intelligence Analysis or Intelligence briefings on a given issue that should be pressing to them. The people who lead Irish national security policy, namely the head of the National Security Analysis Centre (NSAC), the head of Military Intelligence (J2) and the head of Garda National Crime and Security Intelligence Service, among others, do not share their analysis with the Oireachtas Committees on Justice, Defence or Foreign Affairs. None of these bodies release annual reports or declassify their analysis, meaning their analysis occurs in a silo, contributing to a void whereby even the most basic of security provisions can be misrepresented or mislabeled. Enhanced understanding of threat and security, would nullify such a void. This can be easily overcome so that the Oireachtas and public receive consistent insight and analysis, so the tangible work conducted by NSAC, Military Intelligence and the Gardaí, is tangible to those that can affect security at large. An ideal outcome would be that the heads of NSAC, Military Intelligence or Garda Intelligence regularly brief the Oireachtas, publically and privately, before the Oireachtas make critical decisions on both national and international security. The Irish National Security Strategy is still not written, despite the establishment of NSAC in Jul 2019. This strategy needs to take an all of government approach, and be written in terms of Threat mitigation, falling from evidence based Intelligence Analysis.

Background

1. Respected historians like Prof Eunan Ó Halpín[1] have long argued that Irish Defence policy is essentially made 'ad hoc', and that Defence should be viewed in terms of the wider security situation as well as Irish foreign policy commitments and interests. Wider analysis does take place within the walls of Military Intelligence and the Garda National Crime and Security Intelligence Service. Though NSAC, the organisation where Military Intelligence, the Gardaí, DFA, Revenue, the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) should all share their analysis, does not sit in any meaningful way; 4 years after its establishment it does not even own a premises. Reportedly the National Security Strategy that then Taoiseach (now Tánaiste) Míchael Martin stated NSAC were

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[1] P 217 2016 DF Review '*Rethinking Irish Civil Military Relations in the 21st Century*' by Prof Eunan Ó Halipín

drafting on 06 Dec 22[2], has already been relegated to a National Security Statement. It does not, nor has it ever released any of its analysis.

2. In a pre-internet era, it was sufficient to many members of the public that Military and Garda Intelligence simply existed, and were quietly working on the State's behalf. Recent publications[3] on the 50th Anniversary of the 1970 Arms Trial (for all its faults probably one of the few times Military Intelligence was in the public spotlight), portrayed Military Intelligence as a busy unit that drives defence and security policy. One of the primary issues raised at the Arms Trial, was how much direct access Military Intelligence members had to the elected officials, and this was likely when this practice ended.

3. On 15 Nov 2011, Junior Minister of State Willie Penrose resigned his portfolio over the closure of Columb Barracks[4] Mullingar, but for the most part, elected officials did not call into question Government austerity plans when it came to DF budgets, moratoriums on DF recruitment or the closure of barracks. That other elected officials resigned over the closure of hospitals, or that electoral candidates were successful on anti-austerity campaigns, highlighted that the general public and elected officials valued health and finance, over the military and policing. This is understandable in that health and finance are every day concerns, but the environments for both cannot exist without societal safety. The HSE Cyber Attack undertaken by a Russian criminal gang acting with the tacit consent of the Russian State, during COVID 19, is a very recent example if one were needed at all, to make this fairly obvious point.

4. The Feb 22 Commission on Defence recommended that the DF be re-structured to revert the damage caused by the 2012 Re-Organisation, and move away from geographical Brigades, in favour of a more functional establishment that would see Navy and Air Assets deployed on the West and East Coasts, rather than the current heavy urban concentration. The closure of Barracks in Cavan, Monaghan, Lifford and Letterkenny, mean that the entire border region is now only covered by two Army units, one in Dundalk and one outside Ballyshannon, despite the very plausible threat of a resurgence of violence north of the border due to the political impasse in Stormont, a revitalisation of

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[2] Oireachtas debates: Taoiseach Míchael Martin responding to a question from Sinn Féin TD Louise O'Reilly, 06 Dec 22: https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2022-12-06/76/
[3] Heney, Michael 'the Arms Crisis: the plot that never was' (2020) and Burke, David 'Deception and Lies' (2020) both highlight that Capt James Kelly was in fact given direction to attain weapons for Northern Citizens Defence committees, this was known by the Taoiseach and Ministers and were not linked to the IRA. The IRA allegation, reportedly emerged from the Sec Gen at the Department of Justice, who had not been consulted about the operation.
[4] Labour TD Willie Penrose stated at the time '*I am not prepared to stand over a decision that is not backed up by facts or figures*'. 170 members of the 4th Field Artillery Regiment were moved to Custume Bks Athlone, though barracks also closed in Castlebar, Cavan and Clonmel with little or no public or political reaction.

the Loyalist and dissident Republic groups post BREXIT, especially among younger people born after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement.

5. The Commission also recommended massive investment in the Irish Special Forces (SOF) unit the Army Ranger Wing (ARW), and de-confliction between the ARW and the Garda Emergency Response Unit. Due to a lack of political direction, Ireland now has two highly skilled emergency response units, one policing, one military: both under-utilised. The Commission recommended investment in Cyber defence, but since its publication there have been major ransomware attacks against Munster Technical University (Feb 23) and Evide (Apr 23) that affected data on charities including organisations that deal with the victims of sexual abuse. There have been no concrete steps taken by the DF to achieve any of the aforementioned recommendations, which is worrying given many featured previously in the 2015 White Paper on Defence.

Identification of threats/ Political oversight

6. Security threats and security matters are not taken seriously in Ireland, and some of that is as a result of failures by the DF to adequately communicate threats, or indeed dumb down an event when it occurs. Likewise, successive Irish Governments have failed to articulate exactly what it is they expect their military and state security infrastructure to do. There are a litany of events that happened to DF personnel while deployed abroad that never made it to public attention but certainly merited it. On-island is no different. A recent domestic example was the Russian hybrid operation in early 2022 whereby the Russian Armed Forces (RuAF) organised a military exercise off the South West coast, placing naval vessels within striking distance of Dublin, London and Paris, while RuAF soldiers were forming up on the Ukrainian border. The threat to Ireland, the EU and NATO was very clear, but the public reacted with apathy and in some instances derision. The Russian Ambassador deliberately misled the Irish public through Oireachtas hearings and media appearances and furthermore undermined the Irish State giving credit to fishermen. When Russian diplomatic staff were removed from Ireland based on Military Intelligence advice for contravening the Vienna Convention, the Gardaí got credit for it[5], and no one corrected the error. The DF Press Office could not overtly comment, because of decades or engrained practice to keep Military Intelligence away from media attention.

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[5] 30 Mar 22 Irish Independent article '*Four Russian diplomats expelled from State were suspected of being undercover military officers*' by Philip Ryan and Senan Molony stated '*Gardaí believe the four diplomats were members of a Russian military agency called the GRU....the individuals who have been expelled have been on the Garda radar for some tim*e'. This statement was repeated in numerous other articles at the time.

7. The Afghanistan and Sudan evacuations (ECATs), Military Intelligence advice to DFA regarding insertion into Embassies, the repatriation of DF personnel from the Democratic Republic of Congo, the transportation of former DF member Lisa Smith to Ireland and numerous Naval Service (NS) drug interdictions occurred with Military Intelligence direct involvement or analysis, yet neither the public, nor elected officials are aware of this, and therefore Military Intelligence were never attributed credit where credit was due.

8. The May 2021 HSE cyber-attack, deliberate disinformation on Irish social media regarding referenda, the rise of an Irish alt-right/ vaccine scepticism, Russian jets entering Irish controlled airspace, evidence of foreign submarines operating in Irish waters in the form of deaths of mammals attributable to sonar, evidence of foreign espionage vessels monitoring under-sea cables, growing tensions in Northern Ireland as a consequence of BREXIT and a potential border poll, the growth of corporate espionage in Dublin targeting international tech companies, Chinese insertion into Irish academia etc all occurred in recent memory, or continue to occur, yet the public are left largely unaware.

9. In Jun 22, a Russian spy called Sergey Vladimirovich Cherkasov, tried to infiltrate the International Criminal Court under an assumed Brazilian identity, augmented by his time studying in Trinity College, Dublin. The Dutch Intelligence agency the AIVD, released a limited amount of their analysis on the individual[6]; not to create 'Reds under the bed' type hysteria, but to reassure the public that 'yes, your taxes contribute to work that makes society safer'. Despite Mr Cherkasov's time in Ireland, no Irish analysis was released.

10. In Oct 22, a Chinese Police station, was found operating in plain sight on Capel Street in Dublin without permission from the Irish DFA.[7] The 'Fuzhou Police Service Overseas Station' was believed to be a front for State espionage not just on Irish officials, but also on Chinese nationals living in Ireland. It was one of several that opened across Europe in recent years.

11. In Mar 23, the Australian Security and Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) announced their intention to deport Marina Sologub, a Kazakh born Irish citizen, who worked briefly as an intern in the Oireachtas, back to Cork on account of perception she is a threat to Australian national security.[8] She was working with an Australian council at the time of AISO's intervention.

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[6]AIVD disrupts activities of Russian intelligence officer targeting the International Criminal Court publishd 16 Jun 23: https://english.aivd.nl/latest/news/2022/06/16/aivd-disrupts-activities-of-russian-intelligence-officer-targeting-the-international-criminal-court

[7]Chinese 'police station' in Dublin ordered to shut, BBC News, 27 Oct 22: https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/crgndy37n16o

[8] Person associated with Irish-Russian 'security risk' working in Irish parliamentary system, Irish Examiner, 28 Feb 23: https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-41081564.html

12. Also in Mar 23, Judge Martin Nolan sentenced a far right sympathiser, Mark Wolf, to 10 years imprisonment[9] for trying to purchase explosives to carry out an attack in Ireland. When Gardaí searched Mr Wolf's accommodation, he was also in possession of a 3D printer for the creation of weapon parts, and video guides on the Mar 19 Christchurch Mosque attack. It is also worth noting that Mr Wolf was in possession of imagery showing the rape and abuse of children and it is not clear, what it was that brought Mr Wolf to the attention of Gardaí; the sexually abusive images, or the inchoate attack. Irrespective, Mr Wolf's case highlights the very worrying trend of far right mobilisation in Ireland that has seen individuals such as Gemma O'Doherty, John Waters, Hermann Kelly, Dr Dolores Cahill and Rowan Croft, create insecurity through social media, which in turn was linked to various bizarre incidents including an arson attack on Sinn Féin TD Martin Kenny's property, the burning of an electricity pylon in the belief COVID 19 and 5G mobile signals would lead to deaths and general disinformation around reception centres for refugees.

13. There is a myriad of Military Intelligence and Garda National Crime and Security Intelligence Service analysis on all of the aforementioned, but it exists in a silo and will be of little consequence unless brought to key decision makers and elected official's attention, by NSAC, Military Intelligence or the Gardaí, who may implement measures to mitigate against threats identified.

14. The Commission on the DF was stark in its identification of problems affecting the DF, most notably that it no longer possesses the capacity to defend the state. That was obvious to members of the DF who could see first-hand labour turnover attributed to poor pay and conditions, malaise in terms of commitment and an over reliance on Overseas deployments set against domestic security roles. There is an old saying that '*everywhere a General goes he smells fresh paint'*. It carries a serious point: we as a State cannot address our security problems, until we are honest about what they are.

15. There is an abundance of evolving threats both on and off island, that need to be highlighted to the public, without causing panic. Threats that are very real and very present, are the logical retort to those that query the existence of the DF, national security infrastructure or cooperation with international security partners. The DF and Garda National Crime and Security Intelligence Service are aware of those threats, but articulate it to nobody of strategic worth, least of all the elected officials or citizens of the Irish Republic.

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[9]Far-right sympathiser was buying explosives for terror attack in Ireland, gardaí believe, Irish Times, 17 Apr 23: https://www.irishtimes.com/crime-law/2023/04/17/far-right-terror-suspect-was-planning-to-purchase-explosives-in-ireland-gardai-believe/

16. On the rare occasions it is articulated to the Ministers for Defence or Justice, or the Taoiseach, under the aegis of the National Security Committee, it likewise goes no further than the Committee. This means broader political understanding is not there and this contributes to a lack of wider understanding of State Security. In a Republic, where Separation of Powers, and oversight of Intelligence is a given, this is a massive failing in Irish political and security governance. Looking at other western countries:

   a. New Zealand, of similar size to Ireland with similar maritime challenges, has an Intelligence and Security Act 2017 covering its two intelligence and security agencies, and their oversight bodies. New Zealand Intelligence agencies are overseen by a parliamentary committee, which scrutinises their policies, administration and expenditure, and an independent Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security who ensures the agencies operate lawfully and effectively. Intelligence warrants may be issued by a responsible Minister either solely, or jointly with a Commissioner of Intelligence Warrants.[10]

   b. In the UK, the Intelligence and Security Committee oversees the expenditure, administration, policies and operations of the three key Intelligence agencies. The Investigatory Powers Commissioner and The Investigatory Powers Tribunal oversees the administration of warrants and investigates complaints about public bodies' use of investigatory powers[11].

17. Ireland needs to massively overhaul the 1954 Defence Act[12] which does not reflect the modern security challenges, furthermore, the Triple Lock needs to be overhauled to a Double Lock, that will not give a foreign power veto rights on Irish deployments, or restrict Irish deployment numbers to only 12 people. Section 7 of the 2009 Surveillance Act allows for approval for surveillance in cases of urgent necessity to be issued by a Superintendent of An Garda Síochána, a Colonel of the Defence Forces (in reality DJ2), or a Principal Officer of the Revenue Commissioners.[13] A Judge has oversight under the Act, though there is no direct political oversight or accountability similar to other States. There are no real Irish instances to cite whereby the Judicial oversight was not deemed sufficient, but an extra layer of political oversight would mean that the three pillars of the Republic, the Executive, Judiciary and Legislature, would be involved and better informed on State security.

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[10] 2017 Australian Parliamentary Report on Intelligence Oversight:
https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1718/OversightIntelligenceAgencies
[11] Ibid.
[12] Irish Statute Book, 1954 Defence Act: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1954/act/18/enacted/en/html
[13] Irish Statute Book, 2009 Surveillance Act: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2009/act/19/enacted/en/html

18. The Commission on Defence recommends an expanded Military Intelligence and an Intelligence school. Increased civilianisation is recommended throughout the Commission report with analysts, linguists, programmers, cartographers and skilled personnel to identify, analyse and make recommendations to mitigate against threat. A more robust Military Intelligence could conceivably have prevented a number of security incidents before they occurred. Military Intelligence expansion should be completed in tandem with friendly agencies so that an all of government approach is achieved and the practice of siloing Intelligence ends: NSAC, the Gardái, the NCSC, DFA etc. A more visible Military Intelligence is needed not just to improve infrastructure, but wider DF and Governmental infrastructure, as the DF will not evolve operationally, while there is widespread ignorance of the threat that necessitates military infrastructure.

19. Given both the Gardaí and DF are struggling to both maintain their numbers, or to recruit new members, the direct recruitment of Intelligence specialists into both organisations would be enticing for many people for whom the physical sides of the military or policing, holds little appeal. Furthermore, given both organisations badly need to diversify their workforce in terms of gender and New Irish; the recruitment of Intelligence analysts and specialists would be an efficient means to address the shortfall.

20. The following are six (6) easily implementable measures, that could act as a foundation for future consistent, credible Threat Analysis being released to the Oireachtas and wider public, in ascending order from easy to implement to the more difficult:

1. **The identification or personification of State Intelligence**

21. The head of NSAC is Dermot Woods and has been publically identified as such on numerous occasions. On the Department of An Taoiseach website it states that Dermot Woods is the Assistant Secretary General of the 'Government Secretariat and Parliamentary Liaison Unit'[14]. No mention is made of his NSAC role. Dermot Woods rarely speaks in public and to reiterate no Intelligence analysis is relayed to either the Oireachtas or the public in any meaningful way, and this falls far below best practice in most countries. Assistant Commissioner Michael McElgunn is the head of the Garda Crime and Security Intelligence Service.[15] The head of Irish Military Intelligence, the Director of J2 ("DJ2") a Colonel is never identified publically, but will brief the Minister for Defence, the DF Chief of Staff and occasionally elected officials or other government departments.

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[14]Dermot Woods biography, Department of An Taoiseach website: https://www.gov.ie/en/biography/0b0d0-dermot-woods/ last updated 07 Mar 23, last viewed 06 Jul 23.
[15] Assistant Commissioner Mcelgunn biography: https://www.garda.ie/en/about-us/senior-leadership-team/assistant-commissioner-crime-security-intelligence-service.html

22. Whether DJ2 is identified (ie 'Name given') or is personified (ie 'Appointment linked to an anonymous person, but name withheld') to the public is not something I could recommend for or against, and the decision would rest solely with the Defence Forces Chief of Staff and DJ2 themselves. There are pros and cons to both.

23. An obvious 'con' is that should the Director be identified, their family could be subjected to scrutiny and indeed threat, not just from obvious groups such as criminals or paramilitaries, but also lone paranoid types who could vent anger against state surveillance at a person who will inextricably be linked to it.

24. A 'pro' is that most Intelligence Agencies internationally have an identifiable chief, who oversees analysis but also relays it to the public and key decision makers. They are both managers/leaders and spokespeople. In some instances they will even have social media accounts linked to the appointment.

25. In Ireland, aside from Garda National Surveillance Unit testimony to the Special Criminal Court, Specialist Gardaí are usually identified, they will use their own names and their names will be published after giving testimony in Court. Consideration would likely need to be given to enhanced security measures for DJ2 if they were identified, though it is easily addressed.

26. The recent Consultative Forums on International Security Policy only had one serving member of the Defence Forces during 18 panels (Assistant Chief of Staff Rossa Mulcahy, with another, Commander Roberta O'Brien on a career break), who spoke about capability development, but only fleetingly referred to the need for Strategy to be informed by Threat Analysis. As it is in all security landscapes. On 15 May 2015, then DJ2 Col (later Brig Gen) Joe Mulligan spoke at the White Paper Symposium on Defence in Farmleigh. To the best of my knowledge this was the first time in recent memory that DJ2 was publicly identified. Journalists were briefed that Col Mulligan's speech could be covered verbatim, that his name could be attributed to it, his image could be shared. As the symposium sought input from various interest groups, the full gambit of ill-informed and well-informed were present on the day. When Col Mulligan spoke, in uniform, it was a retort to the previous ill-informed commentary. He spoke about threats on-island and off-island; the message being, that you should not under value a given nation's military. Col Mulligan spoke publicly again at an academic event in Waterford a few weeks later, and after those two appearances, the DJ2 appointment reverted to be being neither identifiable nor personified. In many ways, the fact the Consultative Forums relied heavily on academia and international experts was a good thing to move

away from very entrenched Irish views on security. But the failure to have someone working in Irish State Security Intelligence, be it Dermot Woods, Assistant Commissioner Elgunn or DJ2, brief the Forums on the very real threats facing the Irish State, created the void for the disinformation that was widely spread about the Consultative Forums.

27. In Nov 2018, former COS V/Adm Mark Mellett DSM was called before the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Trade and Defence, where he was questioned, and was able to articulate the key message that DF personnel are not paid enough.[16] His pronouncements were effective, but also quite conservative when one considers all he could comment on: severe under-investment, lack of resources. He stuck to key messages of pay, retention and recruitment, all in a measured tone, and any appearances by Chiefs of Staff since followed the same timbre: polite, dealing in language of budget and human resources, as one would expect more from the CEO of a company or a Secretary General of a Civil Service Department. Never addressing Threat, on island, or off island. Given the Commission on Defence paper advanced three LOA's in terms of spending, published the week before the war in Ukraine, yet the Government opted for the conservative middle ground (LOA 2) despite the threats evident, it is integral that Threat Analysis be more readily available to the wider body politic, and the wider public, so people are aware that money spent on mitigating threat, is money well spent. A senior spokesperson in one hue or another to articulate NSAC, DF or Garda Threat Analysis is badly needed.

2. __The Annual Report as foundation for publication of analysis in the future__

28. The Garda Annual Report 2021[17] does dedicate pages 29 to 36 to National Security and Intelligence, but this is really an overview of activity and does not go into any great detail of what the pervading threats to the State are. No declassified or redacted analysis is included.

29. NSAC does not issue a report whatsoever. Despite falling under the remit of the Department of An Taoiseach, State Security does not feature in the six priorities listed in the Dept of An Taoiseach Annual Report, and NSAC only gets a fleeting mention under Dept of Taoiseach coordination functions, alongside 11 other functions.[18]

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[16] The Committee sat 14 Nov 2018
[17] Garda 2021 Annual Report: https://www.garda.ie/en/about-us/our-departments/office-of-corporate-communications/news-media/ags-annual-report-2021-english.pdf
[18] Department of an Taoiseach 2021 Annual Report: https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/230986/83b49f0c-7bdc-4bd9-aa11-b4fc4c9920e7.pdf#page=null

30. The 2020 Department of Defence/ Defence Forces Annual Report contained 120 pages. The first Strategic Goal outlined is the '*Provision of timely and relevant policy and military advice*'[19]. Numerous offices are mentioned as providing this advice, namely DOD, Office of Emergency Planning, DFA, Ministerial meetings, Defence Policy Directors, GOCs, the High Level Planning and Procurement Group. At the very last paragraph of this section it is stated '*during 2020, military intelligence provided 151 briefings, of which 94 were verbal briefings and 57 were written briefings, including monthly intelligence and security briefings, pre-deployment and post-deployment briefings for personnel on Peace Support Operations, and Ministerial briefings. Military Intelligence also conducted multiple internal awareness and security briefings for military career courses and staffs of the Defence Forces*'.

31. For the Strategic Goal '*Contribute to national and international security and defence policy*', perhaps the heading most fitting to Military Intelligence, Military Intelligence is not mentioned at all. The first paragraph mentions the inter-departmental 'National Security Committee' and three (3) paragraphs are dedicated to NSAC. It does not even state that the DF contribution to NSAC is from Military Intelligence. Apart from those two (2) fleeting mentions, there are no further references to J2. There is no analysis of on-island or off-island threats. Overseas deployments[20] are covered in a banal fashion with overarching descriptions of the Missions, but no real mention of the threats DF personnel face when deployed.

32. It is common practice among European and Anglophone intelligence agencies to publish a summary of their work or analysis. A section could be dedicated to this in an NSAC Annual Report, or the Annual Reports of the DF and GS respectively. It need not be exhaustive, indeed it could be quite generic: a bland, heavily edited few pages that covers NSAC, Military Intelligence or the Gardaí's foreign and domestic work compiled from existing reports e.g only reflecting events that have already happened. Likely events, very simple forecasts could be used such as '*it is assessed that the forthcoming elections could raise tensions in the deployment area*'. Forecasts that are so generic they will not encumber the work of personnel deployed, but will let the public know that there is a State employee analysing and assessing threat.

33. Military Intelligence is currently under staffed and under resourced but this should change should the Commission recommendations be delivered upon. An expanded report chapter dedicated to Military Intelligence analysis in the DF Annual Report could be a conservative entry into further publication of Military Intelligence analysis as is normal in other agencies. It is perhaps better that this takes

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[19] Page 9 of 2020 Annual Report.
[20] Page 79 of the Annual Report

place after Military Intelligence receive more staff, including linguists, civilian analysts, economists, IMINT, software engineers, graphic designers etc etc, so that periodic thematic DF reports could be released to provide timely information on a given subject and they will match and surpass product that is frequently released by other foreign intelligence agencies.

34. Other Intelligence Agencies unambiguously court academics and publicise their support to a given academic paper. It will enhance some academics careers if they make it known they are working with an Intelligence agency. As such, NSAC, Military Intelligence or the Gardaí could also co-author papers, or sponsor papers, which in turn be presented to key decision makers or indeed released to the wider public. To reiterate, this is not uncommon in other countries.

3. Intelligence outreach/ robust public interest media

35. On 04 and 05 Apr 22, the 'Stories of our Times' podcast, which is linked to The Times and Sunday Times (UK editions), ran two (2) podcasts over two (2) consecutive days called 'Inside GCHQ'. The first podcast was an interview with GCHQ Director Sir Jeremy Fleming, openly identified, in their HQ in Cheltenham, also openly identified, talking about his career to date, the evolution of GCHQ, disinformation and the need for diversity within GCHQ, so that the analysis is not stale and reflects the diverse make up of Britain. He also spoke about the 'Online Harms Bill' which sought to counter disinformation and was perhaps the key message GCHQ were leveraging.

36. The second podcast interviewed the GCHQ Historian, openly identified, the GCHQ Cyber Security Chief, openly identified, a female analyst, unidentified, who suffered from dyslexia, but because of her dyslexia was good at spotting patterns. She explained a test to the interviewer Mathew Syed, and then completed one she had not seen and explained her logic. The interviewer could not complete the test. The three (3) interviewees spoke of GCHQ's diverse make up, the female analyst spoke of her passion for maths and finding an outlet for it despite her dyslexia. The key message from this podcast was likely GCHQ recruitment.

37. There are other international podcasts such as Intelligence Matters hosted by former CIA Director Michael Morrell, which will openly identify and interview intelligence analysts, many of whom are still in service, operating at the Strategic level. These podcasts garner international audiences and given they are external media outlets e.g not outreach linked to a state agency, have extra credibility. Undoubtedly ground rules are decided pre interview that permits analysts engage without compromising their own, or national security.

38. The point being is that most western Intelligence agencies, will engage media, release their analysis, comment on their analysis and will have an outward face, even though much of their work will demand discretion. <u>If NSAC, Military and Garda Intelligence are to evolve for the better, they need to become outward facing.</u> Their analysis needs to unambiguously reach, in order of priority:

     a. elected Irish officials

     b. partner international agencies

     c. Irish Government departments

     d. academia

     e. the NSAC, Military and Garda Intelligence potential recruitment pool

     f. the general public

     g. last, but not least the DF and Garda internal audience.

39. It is worth highlighting that this outreach is unlikely to work if purely in the academic realm. There is no shortage of academic analysis published by former Intelligence agency staff. The output needs to be accessible e.g mainstream media. Media would need to be given reporting guidance for source protection of NSAC, Military Intelligence and Garda analysts but this already exists and could easily be built upon.

4. <u>Academic outreach as a means of recruitment/ enhancing expert Intelligence analysis</u>

40. There are numerous third level courses in Ireland, that cover political analysis, international relations, cyber warfare, tech, even military history, all of whom would hugely appreciate an annual address from an NSAC, Military Intelligence or Garda subject matter expert. The benefit from this outreach would be felt in terms of civilian recruitment and networking. The analyst may identify emerging talent, and may even establish trust with a given lecturer or student e.g someone who observes something, or writes something of note, subsequently sends it onto a given desk analyst in light of a well delivered brief.

41. This outreach would require some caveats before an analyst appears in public. DF personnel working in S2/G2 appointments in UNDOF and UNTSO have been refused entry to Syria on account of Intelligence or CIS backgrounds. Nonetheless, third level institutions regularly operate lectures and addresses according to the Chatham House Rules. Placing caveats before a member of NSAC/J2/ the Gardaí makes an appearance, should in fact be relatively straight forward. How the student body may interpret the lecture cannot necessarily be controlled, though if State Intelligence were to target certain academic courses, such as cyber security, military history or international relations, it would be safe to say the majority students will more than likely already appreciate the needs for State Security and this appreciation could only be enhanced by positive engagement. The networking and reputational opportunities are apparent on several levels.

5. NSAC, J2 and Garda assistance to elected Irish officials

42. As previously stated, Irish politicians, who ultimately should provide direction to Irish State Security agencies, have very little knowledge of State Security, and worst still, have antiquated views when it comes to international peace and security and Ireland's role in it. Compared to other countries, they are also extremely vulnerable in terms of personal safety.

43. University of Toronto think tank the Citizen Lab, found that Israeli company NSO, which is linked to the Israeli state, was responsible for hacking phones and computers of numerous NGOs, human rights activists, and perhaps most shockingly, elected officials of foreign countries including French President Macron.[21] NSO's Pegasus software was sold to numerous governments and even corporate agencies.

44. As Ireland was one of the first countries to recognise the PLO under the 1981 Bahrain Declaration, and given Irish politicians are among the first in the world to recommend goods from Israeli Settlements be made illegal, is it conceivable that Irish politicians could be targeted by the same software? One of the achievements of the Russian support to the Trump election, was highlighting that Presidential candidate Hilary Clinton had used a private email account when she was Secretary of State. Does anyone advise Irish elected officials on best practice and how to ensure their devices are not compromised? Most likely no. But given that actors most likely to commit such an offence may come from outside the State, and may be military, Intelligence, or acting with tantamount State acceptance, could NSAC, Military Intelligence or the Gardaí advise Irish elected officials on how to mitigate becoming an international headline?

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[21] See citizenlab.ca

45. The advice needn't be exhaustive. The State should be able to pay for VPNs on devices of elected officials, advise them on State and Corporate espionage in Ireland, impart useful advice on when they travel abroad. It would protect Irish officials from foreign interference, and enhance awareness of State security overall.

6. <u>State Security Infrastructure against Disinformation</u>

46. On Fri 10 Jun 22, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage published proposed amendments to the Electoral Reform Bill '*to protect the integrity of our electoral and democratic processes and against the spread of disinformation and misinformation in the online sphere during electoral periods'*.[22] The proposals assigned ambitious powers to the Electoral Commission to issue take down notices, correction notices, labelling orders, access blocking orders or a notice requiring any operator to publish a statement informing end users of manipulative or inauthentic behaviour. But the Electoral Commissions remit against Disinformation, only lasts for the term of an election; e.g its announcement until polling day. There is no State apparatus countering Disinformation in a wider sense outside an electoral window; deliberate misinformation about vaccines, refugee centres etc.

47. Neither NSAC, Military Intelligence or the Gardaí are involved with the Electoral Commission, nor is there provision for their involvement, yet disinformation is most certainly a hybrid tactic, and is most certainly deployed by State actors, frequently undercover military actors.

48. Currently 'disinformation' falls under no particular Irish Government remit. The DF CIS Corps have expertise in cyber security and provided personnel to assist the HSE after the 2021 cyber-attack, but really CIS are only tasked with providing and protecting DF communications. The Data Protection Commission is concerned with Data Regulation and has a high profile given Dublin is the European HQ for most international tech firms. The National Cyber Security Centre, as well as the Gardaí, are primarily dealing with cyber-crime and criminal activity online. There is a volunteer academic run group called Media Literacy Ireland[23] who receive some state funding (Arts Council, BAI, various third level institutions) but their output is relatively small. There is also an international organisation called Digital Action that is run out of Dublin, by Irish woman Liz Carolan[24], she came to prominence initially working in the UK for the think-tanks the Open Data Institute and the Institute

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[22] 10 Jun 22, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage press release 'Proposals to enhance and protect the integrity of elections published'.
[23] Medialiteracyireland.ie/about
[24] See digitalaction.co and Twitter accounts @LizCarolan and @TransparentRef

for Government, then with an Irish group called the Transparent Referendum Initiative, who scrutinised targeted paid political ads on social media mostly around the 8th Amendment. They published regular analysis on overseas trends and social media company's accountability, but now the Referendum is decided, their analysis is only of historic record.

49. 'Disinformation' has been used to great affect, mostly by Russia to use principles of free speech and free expression to subvert democratic norms in a given country e.g the BREXIT referendum, the elections of President Trump, Benjamin Netanyahu, Jair Bolsanaro, Alexsander Vucic etc, and it is highly likely hostile state actors will continue to deploy disinformation in forthcoming elections, possibly the next Irish general election scheduled for Thu 20 Feb 2025, should the Government run to full term. Should a border poll be agreed upon, it will most certainly offer an opportunity for a hostile actor to cause disruption in both Ireland and Britain.

50. With the recruitment of software analysts and social media analysts, NSAC or Military Intelligence could easily move into this space, though it is a difficult space to occupy frequently having to deduce between free expression, creativity, the nuance for satire and an outright lie intended to cause disruption. Though free expression is not guaranteed without responsibility, as the US judiciary even state '*freedom of speech does not mean you can shout fire in a packed cinema*.' It can be of national security importance.

51. In Jun 2019, social media analyst Ben Nimmo for the Atlantic Council (now working for Meta) spotted a trend whereby Russian bot farms were spreading disinformation on Reddit, Facebook and Twitter that the Real IRA were recruiting Islamic Fundamentalist fighters and the DUP were becoming more open to Irish reunification[25]. Another fake news story was that then UK Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson stated the Real IRA were responsible for the attempted assassination of Sergei Skripal. While both claims are laughable, their intention: dissent, disruption, deliberate manipulation were all present at a time when relations between Ireland and Britain were known to be in a poor state. That they did not achieve their intent is a testament to the Irish public, but in an age where people scroll rather than digest news, it very easily could have reached a vulnerable member of society who may have acted out on it.

52. Informed sources working in social media suggest the Heads of Bill are unenforceable in their current form in that many social media companies already have analysts targeting disinformation and

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[25]Russia tried to stir up Irish troubles, US think tank says, 24 Jun 2019: https://euobserver.com/world/145248

misinformation but it is very difficult to interfere with any given citizens right to free speech, and indeed, the real crux of disinformation lies in paid, targeted advertising.[26]

53. Military Intelligence could (post civilian recruitment) easily assign a team to monitor patterns of social media messaging or behaviour that are in direct contradiction of Irish security and the maintenance of law and order, including attempts to subvert Irish democratic norms. They would never have the ability to take down a post or an account, only the ability to inform the social media hosts and raise awareness of disinformation as an issue. They could work with the civilian analysts that currently exist in Dublin, who would be all too happy to cooperate with the Irish government in this highly unregulated evolving world. Military Intelligence could release periodic data when trends are spotted or by simply encouraging digital literacy among the Irish public. This awareness could be kept generic so as not to be seen as biased to any one side in a democratic debate: done effectively it would contribute to the maintenance of democracy, against those that seek to subvert it.

Concluding Remarks

54. The Consultative Forums demonstrated that neutrality is ill-defined, and that supporters of neutrality, are not willing to discuss neutrality even when it only amounts to 2 of 18 panels on a forum on International Security. Furthermore, their own proposals are a lot more akin to pacifism rather than neutrality, which á la Swiss or Austrian neutrality would require a massive investment in an Irish defence industry and even conscription.

55. Ireland, with UN membership, EU membership, a security MoU with Britain since Sep 2013[27], a secret deal with the RAF since the 1950s to intercept hostile aircraft that was utilised a number of times recently, having a small military that purchases all its equipment from foreign militaries, meets absolutely no definition of neutrality.

56. While I do not propose engaging in a debate on neutrality, which is ultimately a Government policy decision, I do feel that the wider articulation of Intelligence and Threat Analysis will contribute to a better understanding of security and indeed, what political and financial cost the country is willing to

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[26] 31 Jan 22 Dark State podcast interviewed Nina Jankowicz who worked mitigating against Russian disinformation in Ukraine, prior to the war. She also wrote 'How to lose the information war: Russia, Fake News and the Future of Conflict'. In the podcast, she acknowledged the role security services should play, but also warned against over securitising the issue: education is key.
[27] Oireachtas Library: MOU BETWEEN THE UK AND IRELAND ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF BILATERAL ENGAGEMENT ON CERTAIN ASPECTS OF DEFENCE AND SECURITY CO-OPERATION
http://opac.oireachtas.ie/AWData/Library3/DEFMemorandum_of_Understanding_between_the_UK_and_Ireland_on_the_enhanc ement_of_bilateral_engagement_on_certain_aspects_of_defence_and_security_co-operation19012015_174233.pdf

pay if we are to maintain a version of neutrality, or seek security solidarity with like-minded partners.

57. While this may seem like an obvious point, but one that is not stated enough; if Irish Republicans and the Irish State as a whole are in any way serious about Uniting Ireland, on a consensus basis under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement, then preparations should be under way for what the Security Infrastructure of that United Ireland will look like. Currently Northern Ireland, falls under the very robust security architecture of the UK, while Ireland's security architecture is shambolically under invested and misunderstood. A 2021 paper by Jennifer Todd identified four consistent concerns expressed by the Unionist community against a United Ireland, one of which is 'the likelihood of violence and disorder, and the prospects of humiliation of and retribution for the Protestant and unionist population should Ireland be united'[28]. The 2022 Department of An Taoiseach Shared Island report[29] makes literally no mention of security, policing or the military, despite the fact the future security architecture of a United Ireland will be one of the more contentious issues to resolve.

58. At the forums, Palestine was raised several times, mostly from the floor. "*Why isnt Ireland doing more for Palestine?*" The DFA provide scholarships to 30 Palestinians every year to study in Ireland, furthermore Irish State donations to UNRWA, the UN agency acting as a de-facto Palestinian State infrastructure, are consistently high. The DF currently commits personnel to UNIFIL (Lebanon), UNDOF (Syria) and UNTSO (Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria); this is literally every UN peacekeeping mission dealing with the Israeli-Arab conflicts as they exist today, meaning this is the limit of what Ireland can provide under the Triple Lock. There are two Missions directly assisting Palestine, there is a US-Canadian-British training mission to the Palestinian Authority called the USSC, and there is a Peacekeeping Mission in the Sinai called MFO, that includes the Egyptian border with Gaza. Neither of these missions have a UN mandate, and Irish personnel cannot serve on either because of the Triple Lock. If Ireland were to abolish the Triple Lock and amend it to a Double Lock, Irish personnel could serve in both USSC and MFO, and truly announce that Ireland is contributing to the security assistance of Palestinians, more than Ireland is currently.

59. On 20 Sep 21, the Israeli and Swedish Foreign Ministers had their first phone call in 7 years: this was the length of time Sweden were frozen out of any access to Israeli officials in light of Sweden recognising Palestine. Ireland likely could have a prominent role to play with advancing Palestinian

[28] Tod, J. 'Unionism, Identity and Irish Unity: Paradigms, Problems and Paradoxes' 2021, https://muse.jhu.edu/article/810184/pdf
[29] Dept of An Taoiseach Shared Island Report, Dec 2022: https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c3417-shared-island/

issues, but it would need to be strategized and analysed so that it would be effective. This requires robust Intelligence Analysis.

60. Regarding the lack of an Irish National Security Strategy: over the past year most western countries have revised theirs in light of Russian aggression against Ukraine, energy insecurity, the risk of hybrid attacks etc etc. Germany labelled their National Security Strategy[30], only published last month, a Zeitenwende or turning point. Ireland is currently vulnerable from a security perspective and there is no excuse given the high volume of tax revenue currently coming into the country. Ireland has been very lucky that the poorly resourced intelligence services it has, have done such a good job in preventing recent security incidents. An overall Security Strategy and more prominent roles for NSAC, Military and Garda Intelligence will ensure we rely on ability and not luck going forward.

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Dónal Gallagher
First Secretary, EU Division, DFA
(Formerly Defence Forces Commandant 2002 - 2022, writing in a personal capacity)

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[30] German National Security Strategy: https://www.bmvg.de/en/national-security-policy

Consultative Forum on International Security Policy

Submission by David Geary

7th July 2023

Introduction

I wish to thank the Consultative Forum on International Security Policy (the "Forum") for opportunity to submit comments. The Forum was a very welcome initiative and contribution to the debate on matters regarding security and defence policy in Ireland.

Neutrality and EU membership

The Forum gave rise to useful and important discussions of key issues and it is clear that some of the concepts and terminology we use when discussing our neutrality stem from the past and need to be reconsidered.

There appears to be a general consensus that Ireland should remain neutral and should not join NATO. I support this position and believe that Ireland has much to contribute to the world outside of the formal structures of NATO.

However, there is also a consensus that, as a neutral State, we have a right to defend ourselves.

What we might today consider to be "ourselves", in other words the extent of the State's sovereignty, and what is external to this, are no longer the same as in previous times. The concept of neutrality is linked to the territory of a State while self-defence is associated with the defence of a neutral State's territory. The Hague Convention respecting the rights and duties of neutral powers dates from 1907, while Ireland's policy of neutrality developed around the Second World War. It is also over 35 years since the Crotty Judgement regarding foreign policy and external relations in an EU context.

Since then, we, with our EU partners, have created a European currency that is integral to our State, EU citizenship and joint infrastructure such as the Single Market, the Area of Freedom, Security & Justice and electricity interconnectors with our neighbours that are essential to the functioning of our society and economy.

An attack against any of these would have profound implications for the wellbeing of everyone living on the island of Ireland. Similarly, Ireland could not be indifferent, or neutral, in the case of threats to the EU, EU citizens and the shared institutions and infrastructure that we have built together with other European States. Attacks and threats against the EU would, in essence, be against ourselves.

In this context, a key question is whether Ireland's policy of neutrality should continue to restrict the State to defence within its territory only.

At present the EU Treaties leave this question to Ireland. Article 29.4.9° of the Constitution of Ireland prohibits the State from adopting a decision to establish an EU common defence where that would include the State. It seems clear therefore that a referendum would be required in order for Ireland to join an EU common defence arrangement should one ever be established.

Nevertheless, the absence of an EU common defence and Ireland's potential non-participation in an EU common defence (if this were to be established), should not preclude Ireland from deploying its

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Defence Forces within the EU should it choose to do so. At present, however, this is not permitted by the Defence Forces Acts[1] which foresee service for the Defence Forces outside of the State in the context of United Nations missions (other than certain specific, unarmed, purposes). Therefore, Ireland is restricted from sending members of the Defence Forces on missions within the EU unless these are also United Nations missions.

The possibility that Ireland may wish to deploy Defence Forces personnel to safeguard the EU or any of its elements is not reflected in our legislation. There is an inconsistency between Ireland's duty to defend itself as an EU Member State, and Ireland's role and responsibilities to defend the EU it has built with its partners, and legislation that enables non-EU States, in particular the four permanent members of the EU Security Council that are not EU Member States, to prevent deployments of the Defence Forces within the EU.

It is submitted that the Defence Forces Acts should be amended to clarify that deployments outside of the State but within the EU do not need to be part of a United Nations Force and such deployments may be made upon authorization of the Government and the Dáil.

Offshore wind

Ireland's significant offshore wind resource could power 15% or more of the EU's electricity needs. This is a significant opportunity for Ireland that may transform our western seaboard. Much of this capacity will be developed during the 2030s and 2040s. It is vital in the fight against climate change that this offshore wind resource is brought online as quickly as possible.

However, with this will come the enormous responsibility of safeguarding such a large portion of the EU's energy resource. Hundreds of square miles of wind turbines and thousands of kilometers of cables will be vulnerable to attack from terrorist or state actors.

It is unlikely that the EU will be satisfied to allow 15% of its electricity generation capacity to remain undefended and unpatrolled. Therefore, it is clear Ireland will need to upgrade its naval and air capacity for these purposes.

Ireland's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) covers an area of 437,500 square kilometres and the Naval Service currently has 6 vessels with another two due to enter into service in 2024. All of these vessels are offshore and inshore patrol vessels. Ireland does not have any larger warships capable of defence activities.

In contrast, Norway has an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) covering 819,620 square kilometres and has over 30 ships between its military and coastguard and 6 submarines (with another 4 on order). Norway's air force has over 120 aircraft. Ireland's Air Corps is not equipped with any combat aircraft.

It is clear Ireland will need to upgrade its naval and air capacity with ships, aircraft and possibly submarines to provide security if this huge offshore energy production is to be located in our waters. Aircraft for surveillance and air defence/interception will be required, including a number of modern fighter aircraft and drones, in addition to a greatly expanded air-sea rescue capability. These upgrades go far beyond the current Government commitment to Defence Forces Levels of Ambition 2.

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[1] Defence (Amendment) (No. 2) Act 1960, Defence (Amendment) Act 2006.

Given that the primary role of the upgraded Air Corps would be to patrol and protect the enormous Atlantic offshore wind resource, it would make most sense for these assets to be located at Shannon Airport in Co Clare. It is submitted that preparations for the Air Corps to be based at Shannon should begin as these will need to be in place once the first offshore wind generating stations are in place in 2030. Nearby educational institutions, the University of Limerick and Technological University of the Shannon could also be engaged to develop relevant training and educational programmes.

Internal Security and planning for reunification of Ireland

The island of Ireland is undergoing significant demographic changes both in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland.

Current trends indicate that 'cultural Catholics' of voting age may be in a majority in Northern Ireland by the end of this decade with the population of Northern Ireland remaining about 1.9 million up to 2040. In the Republic of Ireland, the most recent census identified the population as being 5.1 million and some estimates suggest this figure may have since grown to 5.3 million in 2023. Growth trends suggest the population will grow to 6 million during the 2030's and could reach 7 million during the 2040's.

The debate about reunification of Ireland and calls for referenda on this question have begun. A reunification scenario by the end of the 2030's or early 2040's seems likely. A United Ireland could have a population of 8-9 million in the 2040s.

Given the above, it would be prudent to prepare for reunification in security terms.

At present Ireland's Defence Forces number under 8,000 full-time personnel and a reserve of under 1,800. The Commission on Defence recommended a minimum of 11,500 personnel. It is submitted that these figures fall well below the strength required in a United Ireland with a population of over 8 million.

As a comparison, during the Scottish independence referendum proponents of independence proposed that Scotland (population 5.5 million) would have 15,000 regular and 5,000 reserve personnel in its defence forces. Denmark (population 5.8 million) has 20,000 military personnel and 12,000 reserves. Sweden (population 10.3 million) has 24,000 active personnel and 32,900 reserves. Norway (population 5.4 million) has 23,000 active personnel and 40,000 in its home guard.

Based on these comparisons Ireland would need to grow the Defence Forces significantly in order to have a military equivalent to peer countries with closer to those set out in Level of Ambition 3 in the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces Levels of Ambition.

There are three key reasons why a re-unified Ireland will need a substantially larger military:

- **Credibility**

  Citizens of a United Ireland will expect that the Defence Forces offer a credible deterrent to both external and internal threats. As regards internal security, while it is to be hoped that re-unification will proceed peacefully, citizens will expect that the Defence Forces will have sufficient credibility to deter any potential dissident activity and be able to deal with challenges quickly and effectively.

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- **Careers**

    Many in the Unionist tradition value the role of the military in society, take pride in the role of the military in maintaining order domestically and internationally and seek military careers. The Defence Forces in a United Ireland will need to cater for these aspirations. In addition, it is likely that opportunities for career exchanges between the Defence Forces and the UK military and defence forces of other friendly nations will need to be considered.

- **Nation building and integration**

    Pro-active measures will be required to integrate the peoples of a United Ireland. The two jurisdictions have been separate for over a century and in addition Northern Ireland is divided as a large section of the population there is British and currently prefers that Northern Ireland remains in the United Kingdom.

    Integration measures will need to include initiatives such as education and work exchanges. A form of national service may also be required so that young people from different parts of the country have the opportunity to work together towards common goals. Young people could be afforded a choice of national service in civilian or military roles. As an example, school leavers in Denmark may join its defence forces for a periods as short as four months to receive basic training. Integrated reserve forces drawing on persons from different parts of the country could also assist with national integration measures.

As it will take time to build these capabilities and systems it is imperative that we now develop a plan for this and to develop and commence a national service model (civil and military) so that this is in place in advance of reunification.

Media Freedom and Disinformation

A free media and credible public information are cornerstones of a democratic society.

However, the current business model of many companies that have grown to dominate the Internet has undermined free media and facilitated the spread of misinformation and disinformation.

Ireland has benefitted greatly from the Foreign Direct Investment of technology companies. Without doubt part of the attraction of Ireland is a benign regulatory environment. However, this also entails costs for our society. Competition authorities and regulatory bodies in other countries have taken action to address the diversion of advertising revenues from local media to dominant social media companies. Without advertising revenues local media cannot exist and important functions such as investigative journalism are no longer discharged. Australia, France, Canada and other countries have acted to ensure that social media companies contribute to local media and Ireland should establish a similar scheme.

Ireland's light-touch approach to regulation of social media and Big Tech companies is also misplaced. This not only weakens protections for democracy, society and markets in Ireland but also across the EU. Ireland is happy to take the benefits of the investments of these firms and must also shoulder its responsibilities as a hub for Big Tech in the EU. The Cambridge Analytica scandal and Brexit referendum demonstrated the vulnerability of our democratic institutions to online activities of

malign actors, in particular using social media. Ireland needs to take a more pro-active and robust approach to regulating and supervising the companies that are located here.

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Submission to the Consultative Forum on International Security Policy

International Security Policy Section

Department of Foreign Affairs

I am writing this submission from the viewpoint of a retired senior officer who has spent over 43 years serving the State as a member of the Defence Forces.

My military CV is at Annex A.

In essence, I served in several prestigious appointments at home and overseas, and have a distinguished military academic record. Key appointments in relation to this submission include serving for four years on the European Union Military Staff, specifically in EU Cell at SHAPE (NATO's Military Strategic Headquarters), and as Commander of NATO's KFOR Headquarters Support Group in Kosovo. I was also the author of the submission by the Representative Association of Commissioned Officers (RACO) to the White Paper process in 2000. My degree thesis for my Bachelor of Arts in Public Administration was an examination of Ireland's defence policy in a comparative context.

Introduction

Defence is not a one off. It is not a quick fix. It commences with the foundation of a state and ceases when the state itself ceases to exist. From earliest times, defence has been seen as one of the fundamental activities of government. Adam Smith, the father of classical economics, believed that the role of government was to guarantee the conditions necessary for the proper functioning of the market. He allowed for only three areas of governmental activity - defence, the administration of justice and certain public works. Defence is the foundation on which political, economic, social or cultural activity can take place in security. It is continuous, not a luxury to be afforded in good times, and put in abeyance when times are bad. Defence takes time to implement. It is necessarily a long term project, continuing as long as the State. An important consideration is that "a conventional military capability cannot be quickly acquired. It must be built up over years and maintained at a level consistent with threats and roles. Once lost, it could not be easily regained." (footnote 1)

Historical Perspective. Ireland is not neutral and has never been neutral. As far back as 1925, the prospect of engaging in an alliance was mooted. A memo of that time noted that the Defence Forces should be "organised, trained and equipped as to render it capable, should the necessity arise, of full and complete co-ordination with the forces of the British Government"[1]. The late Taoiseach Mr Sean Lemass in Dáil Éireann in 1960 said "there is no neutrality, and we are not neutral". In 1962 he said " we think the existence of NATO is necessary for the preservation of peace and for the defence of the countries of Western Europe including this country. Although we are not members of NATO, we are in full agreement with its aims". In an interview with the New York Times in 1962 Mr Lemass stated "we recognise that a military commitment will be an inevitable consequence of our joining the Common Market and ultimately we would be prepared to yield even the technical label of neutrality. We are prepared to go into this integrated Europe without any reservations as to how far this will take us in the field of foreign policy and defence". In 1981, Mr C J Haughey as Taoiseach stated in the Dáil "we are neither ideologically neutral nor politically indifferent". The former Minister for Defence, Mr Patrick Cooney in the Dail

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[1](Price Waterhouse Review of the Defence Forces. Pg 30)
[2]Defence Council memorandum dated 22 July 1925.

debate in 1983 stated "our economic, political and cultural interests lie with the Western World".

Neutrality – a Sacred Cow

The essence of neutrality is not being involved in wars between other states, and it only applies in wartime. This condition has a strict legal basis in the Fifth (War on Land) and Thirteenth (War at Sea) Hague Conventions of 1907. As a legal status, neutrality involves the right to respect for the neutral country's integrity from the belligerent states. In return, three main conditions apply to the neutral state. Firstly, the use of the national territory must be denied, by force if so required, to all belligerents. Secondly, no support may be given to any belligerent, though normal trade may continue. Finally, the rules of neutrality under international law must be applied impartially.[2]

Neutrality is not a unilateral action. It must be recognised by the belligerents. In fact, a "belligerent who, at the outbreak of war, refuses to recognise a third state as a neutral does not indeed violate neutrality, because neutrality does not come into existence in fact and in law until both belligerents have, expressly or by implication, acquiesced in the attitude of impartiality taken up by third States"[3].

Since the end of World War II, the practical effects of neutrality law have undergone a marked change. Nations are increasingly reluctant to declare war on each other, though wars on a larger or smaller scale have occurred since then. Three conflicts will suffice to illustrate this: the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, the UK/Argentine War of 1982 and the US invasion of Grenada in 1983. It has been estimated by the British Army that they themselves have been involved in more than seventy conflicts since 1945. During all these and other conflicts, which are not legally defined wars, the rules of classical neutrality do not apply. Further, the Cold War between the Western States allied in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact (WP) states involving a high state of preparedness for war on both sides, also blurred the distinction between war and peace.

Neutrality essentially describes the behaviour of governments, and this behaviour is now construed internationally to mean that, not only may a state not start any war or join any military alliance, but it must also provide for its own armed defence, and in general "arrange its foreign policy as not to be able to be drawn into any war"[4]. It is this aspect that has caused Switzerland to refrain from joining international organisations, which may have defence commitments attached. This latter principle must be interpreted by policy decisions in response to individual circumstances, so neutrality policy is not rigid or static. The strictures applied to a government do not, of course, apply to the ideological commitments of its individual citizens.

Recent calls on the Government here to enshrine neutrality in the Constitution have highlighted the fact that there is no legal basis for neutrality in Ireland. However, there are provisions in the Constitution that are directly relevant. Art 1 refers to the nation's "sovereign right.............. to determine its relations with other nations"; Art 5 describes the state as "Independent" and Art 29 "affirms........... devotion to the ideal of peace", "Its adherence to the principle of the pacific settlement of international disputes" and "accepts the generally recognised principles of international law". So, though neutrality may be hinted at in the Constitution, Ireland approximates more closely to the Swedish policy model than either does to Finland, Austria, or Switzerland. Former Taoisigh have accepted this fact when referring to the prospect of European Political Union.

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[2]For more detail on rights and duties of neutrals see Salmon, 1989. Pgs 11 - 17
[3]Lauterpacht and Oppenheim, 1952. Pg 661
[4]Verdoss, 1978

The then Irish Permanent Representative at the United Nations, Ambassador Noel Dorr, speaking at the General Assembly's First Committee in 1982, stated that "we are small, militarily insignificant and outside any alliance, and we have acknowledged our own vulnerability. Our armed forces are about the same size, and serve the same peacekeeping and other purposes, as those which every country would be allowed to maintain even in a disarmed world[5]". That was the case in 1982. The situation is now much worse - the Defence Forces are at their lowest ebb since the build up commenced after 1969.

The European Union – Our Future

A Pragmatic Decision. Even if the EU did not exist, there would be a great deal of common sense in a small country lining up with the some other countries to protect itself, given that there is "safety in numbers". NATO was one such alliance but we did not join when it was formed in 1949. We used the excuse of partition to remain aloof from the gathering of European and North American democracies. Perhaps we were also hoping to avoid or minimise damage in a nuclear conflict. The true power of nuclear weapons and their side effects were not well understood at that time, as was recognised later in the 1960s.

Safety in numbers is even more important for a country like Ireland, unwilling to pay, unable to pay, for a realistic stand-alone defence capability. Alignment does allow us to ride piggy-back on others' defence efforts. It is also anticipated that were we to become an active defence partner with our EU partners, we could expect to procure more modern equipment than we have at present by way of increased co-operation with the other EU member states, whether by way of fuller engagement with the European Defence Agency (EDA), or by increasing our involvement with PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation)

Choice of Defence Partners. What Alliance would be most appropriate to Ireland's present situation? Ireland operated a benevolent neutrality, involving "a certain consideration", towards the Allies during World War Two. In 1949 the Republic was invited to join NATO but declined to do so on the grounds that joining that Alliance with Britain might serve to legitimise the political division of Ireland. In summarising Ireland's defence policy Mr Peter Barry, Minister for Foreign Affairs stated in the Dail in December 1983 that "The ideological divide between East and West is an enduring reality of international life and we naturally find ourselves closest to the Western World." All current partners in the EU are part of that same Western World, and all aspirant partners are also aspirants to the EU ideals.

Increasingly, the interests of Europe are seen to diverge from those of the United States. For example, western European states have a different view as to what would be an acceptable and equitable solution to the problems of the Middle East. The formalising of European Political Co-operation in the framework of the Single European Act resulted from the realisation that there will not always be a coincidence of interests between NATO as led by the US and the states of the EU.

A public attitudes survey conducted by Market Research Bureau of Ireland in as far back as July 1997 is significant in terms of the misconceptions which the public have in terms of defence arrangements. Of the members of the public surveyed, 75% stated that it was important that the Defence Forces would have a role in defending the EU states. A total of 60% answered affirmatively when asked if Ireland should come to the aid of a European partner which was itself involved in a conflict situation. This contrasts with the 79% who stated that Ireland should retain a neutral status. It is clear that a minimum of 54% of those surveyed found no problem in holding completely opposing views - at the same time. The question asked on coming to the aid of a neighbour was clear and unequivocal. The

question asked in relation to neutral status, on the other hand, was such that the perception of what neutrality is, coloured the answer. This dichotomy once again underlines the ambivalence of public opinion and the misunderstanding of what is implied by neutrality. What is clear is that people in general have a positive approach to assistance to our partners, and that based on this survey, a significant majority of the population would have no ideological problem in entering a joint defence with other EU states. Very little appears to have changed in relation to the public's view, if the more recent MRBI surveys are anything to go by. President Michael D Higgins' recent intervention in relation to this specific commission found a ready audience, if the reported views in the newspapers opinion and letter columns are anything to go by,

NATO

The joining of an alliance would appear to be an effective means of ensuring that external assistance would be available in the event of a conflict. In fact, Ireland has only two real choices if contemplating alliance, and that is either joining NATO as a full member or concluding a mutual assistance pact with one or more individual NATO members. The rationale underlying the choice is purely pragmatic, and is based on our traditional friendships, values, and connections.

Joining NATO would have a consequence often overlooked by those in favour of joining that organisation, and that is the necessity to beef up our armed forces in all areas in order to contribute positively to such an alliance. There is no doubt that it would confer the distinct advantage of access to the weaponry and expertise of our allies, and possibly, though doubtfully, some financial contribution would be forthcoming for the raising and training of our own increased forces. NATO nations' expenditure norms are well over twice that of Ireland and the possibility of military aid would be both limited and, very likely, short term. It should be borne in mind that a minimum of 2% of GDP is the benchmark for NATO states' defence budgets, and currently some states are edging towards 3%. Presently, our defence budget stands around 0.26 % of GDP. Our mission as a NATO member would most likely be to provide secure air and sea bases for our allies and to deny these facilities to an aggressor.

For over forty years, NATO shielded Western Europe from Soviet subjugation; a protection we have shared, as a former minister noted, premium free. But, while many would have little objection to our joining an Alliance that anchored its defence on a fully-committed conventional strategy, in general the Irish seem to be even more anti-nuclear than the New Zealanders, who effectively abrogated the ANZUS Pact because it would not have US nuclear armed warships in New Zealand waters. There is no doubt that, if we join NATO, we would be required to accept the nuclear umbrella and with it, if not the doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), at least part of the responsibility for the cataclysm of an enervating nuclear winter which would assuredly follow even a small scale nuclear war. The major disadvantage of joining an alliance is that the event of a major conflict, there would be the certainty of a direct nuclear attack on the state, rather than just the possibility. Such an attack would have catastrophic consequences.

Until relatively recently, it could also be argued that NATO had outlived its purpose, in that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the Warsaw Pact disintegrated, and the former satellite states ceased to exist as Communist states within the orbit of the Soviet Union. Indeed, three former constituent republics of the Soviet Union, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, became independent for the first time since 1940, when they were forcibly incorporated into the USSR. The fomenting of internal troubles in Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine,by the Russian Federation however gave added impetus to NATO. It is for that reason that NATO was rejuvenated, and caused many more states to apply to join it, including the former neutrals, Sweden and Finland.

A further complication in relation to joining NATO is its ambivalence towards the Rule of Law. NATO has in the past been prepared to flout international law at various times, including for example, in its bombing campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1999.

The European Union – A Developing Security and Defence Policy.

The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), developed from the European Security and Defence policy, enables the Union to take a leading role in peace-keeping operations, conflict prevention and in the strengthening of international security. It is an integral part of the EU's comprehensive approach towards crisis management, drawing on civilian and military assets. In effect, and briefly, it has been developing from the time of the Yugoslav wars of secession, when the EU found that it did not have the legal instruments to intervene in the Balkans. The European Community Monitoring Mission was the only legal instrument available to it, and it deployed Monitors on the ground throughout the war zones, in order to keep Brussels appraised of the situation throughout Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In 2023, The EU is facing increasing threats and challenges, ranging from conventional to transnational threats including hybrid threats, cyber-attacks and pervasive and persistent instability and conflict in its immediate vicinity and beyond. At the same time, climate change is exacerbating conflicts and instability in fragile societies, while melting ice in the Arctic is turning the region into a geopolitical flashpoint, with the opening of new shipping routes and access to natural gas and oil deposits. To address a fast-changing geopolitical landscape, the EU needs a Common Security and Defence Policy fit for the future. This will require new efforts and sustained efforts, as well as more investment in capabilities and innovative technologies to develop cutting-edge military capabilities, fill strategic gaps and reduce technological and industrial dependencies.

In order to remain in good standing, it is necessary, particularly at this time of existential threat to certain EU member states, following on from the invasion of Ukraine, and the fomenting of internal aggression organized by the Russian Federation in the neighbourhood, that Ireland stands up as a reliable partner in European Defence. We are currently supplying military aid of a non-lethal nature to Ukraine, thus making a mockery of our self-declared neutrality, and we should step forward in line with the vast majority of EU states, and provide what limited military support we can, for example, by way of Javelin anti-tank weapons, currently languishing in our stores. Further, and more long term, we should take part in advancing the progress of the CSDP, under the guidance of the European External Action Service. As can be seen from my own CV, we have at present and have had for over 20 years, members working in the European Union Military Staff. It is time to take a step further, and integrate ourselves wholeheartedly in the future preparation in the Security and Defence fields of appropriate obligations and capabilities. The 26 other member states stood by Ireland in our difficulties over Brexit, and we have a moral obligation to stand by them in their hour of need. It is appropriate for Ireland to join with the remainder of the member states in this endeavour, knowing that such action will be strictly legal within the international rule of law.

The Triple Lock
Government decision and Dail approval should be enough for deployment of troops abroad on Petersberg tasks. We have seen in the past that permanent members of the United Nations Security Council have vetoed the deployment of UN Missions. Any of the five permanent members have the power of veto. We should not be held hostage by any of them, all of whom have interests world wide, and only one of whom is an EU member state. Indeed it is now nine years since a new Mission was authorised by the Security Council.

The Reserve

When I was posted to the appointment of Staff Officer to the 5th Field Artillery Regiment, a reserve unit, back in 1982, the unit had over 500 reservists on the books, of whom about 350 were active. The three batteries covered the areas of Galway City (which also had Engineer, Infantry, Supply and Transport and Military Police reserve units), North Galway (Tuam and contiguous region) and South Galway (Gort and its contiguous region). This meant that there was a large state presence in the area, in practically every townland. The net effect was to socialise young people into the service of the State, and to provide a bulwark against subversive activity. In all there were at the time about 22,000 personnel throughout the State, meaning that there was a military presence from North Donegal to West Cork and South Wexford. That presence is effectively gone.

Political Considerations.   Military life appeals to many young people. There is an aura of excitement about the process of weapon handling and firing. If this interest is not capitalised on by the agencies of the State, there is the danger of subversive groups recruiting among those who are so enchanted. Not all personnel who are interested in a military life can, or would wish to, join the Regular Forces. Accordingly the Reserve is seen as being capable of giving opportunities to serve the State in a military capacity, to personnel from all parts of the State, and from all walks of life and sectors of society. This service can be used as a means of educating people into support for the State and its structures. It is also the case that each member of the Defence Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, is part of an extended network of family and friends. By socialising one person into acceptance of the legitimacy of the State, many others are also so socialised. This is particularly important in areas of deprivation which may be breeding grounds for subversion and criminality. The educational standards for entry into the Regular Forces are now quite high, even for short service duration enlistments. Yet many young people are leaving school annually without completing the Leaving Certificate examination. Such persons are more likely to be targeted by subversive or criminal groupings, and are least likely to get a place in the Defence Forces. They must be given the opportunity to compete with those with Leaving Certificate qualifications, and this is best done by testing them in the Reserve. Traditionally, Ireland is a recruiting ground for British forces. By providing an outlet for those who are militarily inclined, we will cut down on the number of personnel who will leave Ireland to join the British military. This argument applies particularly to the Regular Army, but also to a lesser extent, to the Reserve.

Social Considerations.   The Defence Forces as a whole have a socialising influence on their members. This influence tends to be very positive, in that personnel entering the Forces come from a variety of backgrounds, and do so for a variety of reasons. There is the potential for breaking down barriers between different social groups, thus encouraging, in some way, social cohesion. It has also the potential of taking personnel from disadvantaged backgrounds, and by education, training and socialisation, giving them self-esteem and a stake in society. Military training concentrates on military skills. However, many of these skills also have value in the civilian workplace and in society generally. Personnel on discharge bring those skills with them into civilian life, and enhance society.

The Current Reserve Organisation. It is my considered view that the current organization of the Reserve was malevolently designed by DFHQ to bring about the diminution of the Reserve, to disillusion Reservists, to persuade them to give up, and let the organization wither on the vine. There was no logic to many decisions – for example, converting an artillery unit with a sixty year tradition in Mullingar into an infantry unit, while converting an infantry unit in Athlone into an artillery unit. The lack of logic lies in the fact that the troops in Mullingar had to travel into Athlone anyway to avail of weapons training. The skills that had

been built up by both units were wasted. That was a deliberate decision. I am personally aware of many reservists who left the organisation rather than take part in the charade.

Policy Recommendation.

Ireland's defence policy for the medium term should be based on:

    v   a decision that our future security needs would be best achieved by a defence arrangement within the EU, and

    v   a realisation that satisfactory arrangements may yet be several years away, and

    v   the undertaking of defence, security and peacekeeping co-operation with other European theatre states through the Partnership for Peace framework, and current and emerging EU capabilities, such as the Battle Groups or a possible Rapid Reaction Force.

Such a policy would not commit Ireland at this stage to any particular defence arrangement and yet would signal our willingness to participate in the defence of the European Union. Pending the finalising of satisfactory arrangements, Ireland could co-operate with her European partners in matters of training, common operational procedures and defence procurement. Even in advance of a formalised defence arrangement, this type of co-operation would enable Ireland to participate in joint EU action in particular circumstances if a situation so warranted.

This flexible stance could accommodate the wishes of some Irish people to remain non-aligned militarily but by the adoption of very real practical steps could signal our willingness to "play our part" in all aspects of the developing Europe. Co-operation programmes such as sending students abroad, having observers at exercises and attachments to units of other European Defence Forces can achieve a great deal. The Irish Defence Forces already incorporate many standardised European military practices which have stemmed from NATO standardised practices.

In the meantime, it is imperative that moving to Level of Ambition 2 in the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces should be accelerated, with a firm commitment to move to Level of Ambition 3. This is the time to invest in the Defence Forces, given the overflowing coffers in the Department of Finance. It should be noted that expenditure on defence has a very limited effect in relation to increasing inflation, and this is the therefore an ideal opportunity to enhance our Defence Forces, while providing its members with a living wage and appropriate equipment and technology.

Afterword

I had a very rewarding career, and it pains me to see the state of the Defence Forces at present. I would be willing to expand on any, or all, parts of this submission if it is requested.

Annex A

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL DETAILS

Full Name   :   **John Gerard Brendan Hamill**

Address   :

Telephone   :
e-mail   :

Date of Birth   :   24 April 1955

Nationality   :   Irish

Profession   :   (Retired) Army Officer

Qualifications :   Certificate in Public Administration
                        Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Public Administration
                        Graduate with Distinction, Command and Staff Course

Publication   :   Defending the Future, Dublin, 1999

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EMPLOYMENT RECORD

Since my enlistment in 1972, I have served in the Permanent Defence Force initially as a cadet , and as an Officer since Commissioning in September 1974. I retired in April 2013.

Aug 12 – Apr 13   :   Special Projects Officer
                            Training Section
                            Defence Forces Headquarters

Aug 10 – Jul 11   :   School Commandant
                            United Nations Training School Ireland
                            Curragh Camp

Sep 03 – Jul 06   :   Commanding Officer
                            2 Field Artillery Regiment

Dec 01 – Jul 02   :   Senior Staff Officer
                            Directorate of Combat Support
                            Defence Forces Headquarters

Nov 99 to Apr 01   :   Staff Officer
                            Administration Section
                            Defence Forces Headquarters

May 97 to Nov 98	:	Staff Officer, Directorate of Artillery/Combat Support Defence Forces Headquarters
Aug 95 - Oct 96	:	Staff Officer, Planning and Research Section Defence Forces Headquarters
Jun 91 - Aug 95	:	Instructor Command and Staff School Military College
Jan 89 - Jun 91	:	Battery Commander 2 Field Artillery Regiment
Oct 86 - Jan 89	:	Instructor Artillery School
Jul 82 - Sep 86	:	Staff Officer 5 Field Artillery Regiment
Feb 81 - Jul 82	:	Adjutant 4 Field Artillery Regiment
Feb 81 - Jul 82	:	Adjutant 4 Field Artillery Regiment
Nov 78 - Feb 81	:	Troop Commander, 8 Battery 4 Field Artillery Regiment
Jun 76 - May 78	:	Transport Officer 4 Field Artillery Regiment
Oct 74 - Jun 76	:	Command Post Officer, 4 Field Artillery Regiment
Oct 72 - Sep 74	:	Officer Cadet, Cadet School, Military College

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OVERSEAS SERVICE

Jul 11 – Aug 12	Commander, Headquarters Support Group, KFOR (Kosovo)
Aug 06 – Aug 10	Strategic Planner, EU Military Staff attached to SHAPE (Belgium)
May 03 – Sep 03	Senior Staff Officer, KFOR Inspectorate for Kosovo Protection Force (Kosovo)
Jul 02 – Mar 03	Senior Irish Officer and Sector Commander UNIKOM (Iraq/Kuwait)

Apr 01 – Nov 01	Chief Logistics officer 89 Irish Battalion UNIFIL (Lebanon)
Jan 2000	Election Monitor, ODIHR, OSCE in Croatia
Nov 98 - Nov 99 Appointments held	European Community Mission (ECMM) Monitor Senior Operations Officer, Control Centre Sokolac, Republika Srpska, BiH Senior Operations Officer, Regional Office Vukovar, Croatia Senior Operations Officer, Mission Office Zagreb, Croatia
Oct 96 - May 97	Chief Logistics Officer 80 Irish Battalion UNIFIL (Lebanon)
May 93 - Jul 94 Appointments held	United Nations Military Observer UNPROFOR (Former Yugoslavia) Team Leader and Sub-Sector Commander Sarajevo Deputy Senior Military Observer, Sector West, Croatia Deputy Chief Operations and Acting Chief Operations at HQ, Zagreb
Oct 89 - Apr 90	Company Commander Recce Company 66 Irish Battalion UNIFIL (Lebanon)
Oct 83 - May 84	Troop Commander Heavy Mortar Troop 54 Irish Battalion UNIFIL (Lebanon)
May 78 - Nov 78	Acting Troop Commander Heavy Mortar Troop 43 Irish Battalion UNIFIL (Lebanon)

SUBMISSION TO CONSULTATIVE FORUM ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

Name: Michael Higgins (International Relations Consultant)

I wish to make a series of points based on my experiences as an international relations consultant, who has worked for and with governments and communities from around the globe, who is familiar with the United Nations and African Union systems, and was a member of the team that campaigned for and worked for Ireland during its campaign for and participation on the UN Security Council 2021-2022

Neutrality is key to Ireland's success at the United Nations

Neutrality was a major point of distinction between Ireland and the other candidates for elected membership of the Security Council in 2021-22. It was routinely referenced in interactions with countries from the Global South in efforts to build support for Ireland's Council membership. Not only is Ireland's Neutrality a principle reason why we were elected on to the Security Council, it is a major source of our relevancy and influence at the UN. The extent to which smaller countries can be successful at the UN is largely dependent on their capacity to forge cross-regional alliances. Our neutrality means that we are not seen as having ulterior motives or hidden agendas and this has allowed us to become an effective bridge-builder between nationas and groupings.

During the Security Council campaign we spent a lot of time assuring other non-western countries that we were fair-minded, independent, and would not be beholden to the P3 (Western Permanent Council Members). And when we were on the Council many of our greatest successes were due to our getting the benefit of the doubt that we would maintain distinct positions and stay independent in the face of pressure to conform to P3 interests. Ireland, for example pulled off a remarkable feat in diplomatic terms, of getting African and Latin American council members to join with Ireland at a crucial moment on an important statement on Ethiopia when it was a topic on the Council Agenda. This simply wouldn't have been possible if Ireland were seen as close to NATO.

A perceived association with NATO or EU military and security architecture will harm Ireland's reputational standing

As someone who has worked with African Governments, Civil Society and Communities, I can say with some certainty that it is hard to overestimate the dislike that is felt towards NATO. Part of Africa's indelible memory is NATO's support in the 1960s and 70s for Portugal when it was still a fascist Dictatorship, to attempt to brutally crush democratic independence movements. This conflict in which thousands died was characterized by the longest serving NATO Secretary General, Joseph Luns, as "Shedding Blood for our Freedom"". To many African eyes NATO is viewed as a kind of military wing of white supremacy. This reputation is compounded by the fact that the deaths of dozens of African political leaders are associated with European security and intelligence agencies (Amilcar

Cabral, Patrice Lumumba etc). The consequences of these actions very much continue to be felt throughout nations in Africa.

Ireland in contrast is renowned throughout Africa for the work and lifetimes of dedication of its missionaries, teachers, nurses, doctors, engineers, humanitarian and development workers. This good will that has been built up and Ireland's neutrality and reputation for independence was a major reason why Ireland was accorded the honor of drafting Agenda 2030 (the Sustainable Development Goals), perhaps the single most important United Nations agreement of the last decade.

Potential harm of proposal to adopt a siloed approach to security which is at odds with Irish statements at the United Nations

The SDGs or 2030 Agenda, when taken together with the other major UN agendas such as Sustainable Peace, New Agenda for Peace, Our Common Agenda, and the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit comprise a roadmap, for how countries can engage with each other and make progress on shared issues of concern.

A common binding thread of these agendas is the emphasis on the interlinkages between peace, development, human rights, humanitarian action and security and the need for them to be viewed not in isolation but addressed in concert in a manner that is mutually supportive. This concept is broadly termed the 'Nexus Approach' and has guided the reform efforts of the United Nations over the last ten and more years.

It is therefore frankly baffling that the documents that would seem to be most salient and relevant to Peace and Security discussions in Ireland have been neglected. The approach of the Consultation Forum would seem to telegraph an apparent shift by Ireland towards a siloed approach to security, divorced from and untethered to these international frameworks and concepts is at odds with the direction of travel at the UN, the position of the UN Secretary-General, and indeed Irish statements at the United Nations. This is not only a recipe for a parochial, ill-informed, and incoherent foreign policy.

Why was peacekeeping not framed as an element of wider efforts to bring about political solutions?

On a related note, as someone who attended the sessions on peacekeeping, the narrow framing of the sessions was very surprising. At the United Nations, peacekeeping is always discussed with reference to wider peacebuilding and political efforts, with peacekeeping clearly framed as an extension of collective efforts to arrive at political solutions. This very basic and fundamental point was ignored.

Tone and tenor of the consultation forum was not conducive to a constructive debate

While it is a great thing that public debates can take place in Ireland, it is better that they shouldn't take place in a fractious and distrustful atmosphere. The conspicuous and glaring

omission of peace from the title of the form, the skewed composition of panels and audiences, and the alarmist tone of the briefing material has been unhelpful.

Would it not have been better to strike a tone of calm and reassurance. After all Ireland is still one of the safest and least threatened countries in the world. We are held in high regard internationally and even should any of the hypothetical threats mentioned came to pass. Our existing membership of the EU and UN, means Ireland would have a wide array of options at our disposal in terms of how we responded. This failure by the Forum to inform the Irish people of the many options available to Ireland as a member of the European Union and United Nations to respond to the threats that were invoked and hypothesized was highly irresponsible.

Danger of reputational damage of sidelining peace in favor of security

Returning to the provocative decision to omit discussions of peace from the title of the discussion. Is it not of great relevance that the core reason for establishing both the United Nations and European Union was to bring about and secure peace. Ireland has staked its foreign policy reputation on being a voice for peace in the world. This is seen through our commitment to peacekeeping, development and humanitarian programmes, our support for peace processes and our leadership on international disarmament and peace initiatives. Ireland for instance was supportive of ICAN's work which led to them being granted the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize. Ireland was notable too, in facilitating the treaty on the global ban on cluster munitions in 2008. Any close engagement with entities that seek to employ cluster munitions, for example, would undo the work and reputation of decades

Peace and Security Flow from Diplomacy

The higher Ireland's diplomatic capital and global reputation, the greater the deterrent, the higher the cost, the less the incentive for any country to act against Ireland. One of the phrases that has appeared in this debate, which is both erroneous and insulting to Ireland and Irish peacekeeping efforts, is idea that Ireland is a 'free-rider' in security terms. On the contrary, the reality is that other European member states have been riding on Irish diplomatic coattails for decades. Ireland is regularly approached by other European States to act as an informal go-between or carrier of ideas to other countries, because of its perceived independence and fairness. This is a good thing for Ireland, Europe and the wider diplomatic community. The European Union and its member states often struggle to make connections and establish rapport with countries outside of the Europe and countries like Ireland are needed to do this. It would be an act of tremendous diplomatic self-harm, to Ireland and Europe, if Ireland, as seems to be suggested by the thrust of the Consultation Forum, were to sacrifice its global reputation for peace, in an effort to ingratiate itself with the European Military and Security architecture. Ireland's future security as in the past is better served by phone calls than fighter jets.

The consequences of Putin's War

The revival of Russian imperialism

The top of the agenda of global threats is a crowded place. To the effects of climate change, pandemics, economic disruption and geopolitical rivalries we must now add the particular case of Russia's blatant aggression against Ukraine. Three decades after the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and foreshadowed by the bloodless annexation of Crimea and a proxy war in the Donbas since 2014, the outright war since February 2022, if limited geographically, has had negative human and material consequences far beyond the battlefield.

The war has demonstrated the basic weakness of the multilateral order. In the United Nations, the response of the Security Council has been limited by the aggressor's power of veto, and the General Assembly includes a substantial minority of fence-sitters, including several of the larger states in the 'global south'.

The resolution of the conflict is still in doubt. Even the best case scenario for Ukraine - a negotiated withdrawal of Russian forces - would be unlikely to represent a settled peace. Russian acquiescence to such an outcome would probably be fiercely contested from within. The restoration of trust between all parties to "the Russian question" promises to be a difficult matter for the foreseeable future. And this is only one security problem in an increasingly unstable world.

The impact on Ireland: vulnerabilities and dependencies

As a member state of the European Union, Ireland is part of one of the collective targets of the Russian aggression. We may be located on the other side of the Union, but gone are the days of "a faraway country …. of which we know nothing"; the protection of the EU is a vital interest for us, as the territorial base of most of our economic and social policy and a multiplier of influence in our foreign policy.

A more specific vulnerability stems from the practice of cyber warfare, which trumps the effect of geographical distance, and which we have already experienced.[1] Nor do we possess the capabilities to monitor either our maritime responsibilities, the territorial waters and the extended economic zone, or our air space. What formerly could be regarded as our protective seas now cover undersea cables which are a critical part of the state's technological infrastructure, and which are vulnerable to interference by a hostile force.

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[1] See Cian Fitzgerald, Black Swans in the Grey Zone: Defending Ireland's Energy System Against Cyber Threats, IIEA 2023.

Shortly before the 2022 invasion of Ukraine the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces exposed the striking shortfall of Ireland's military defence[2]. We clearly depend on the kindness of others. In the likely absence of a veto-bound UN Security Council this means in the first instance the EU, which has a proven record of solidarity on our behalf with regard to Brexit. In the particular case of our maritime and air cover we rely on bilateral arrangements with the naval and air forces of the United Kingdom, no longer in the EU but a prominent member of NATO[3]. And like it or not, in the face of the uncomfortable nuclear sabre-rattling of Russia, we depend on the restraint of NATO's deterrence to avoid catastrophic escalation in the Ukraine war.

Military neutrality: "the specific character" of Ireland's international security and defence policy

If these vulnerabilities and dependencies are distinctive features of Ireland's security and defence policy so too is the claim to "military neutrality". This is the "specific character" of the state's policy, the phrase contained in the clauses which qualify the defence commitments made in the relevant EU treaties. The adjective "military" matters. This is not neutrality in a general or absolute sense of the word, implying political impartiality or indifference; the government is at pains to insist the Russian attack on Ukraine is a hostile and unlawful act. Military neutrality is understood in a narrower sense of remaining free from formal alliance commitments and refraining from the use of force.

If the meaning of the concept of "neutrality" is arguably ambiguous, so too has been the practice of Irish security policy which has varied over time and in comparison with other neutrals[4]. In the Second World War neutrality was seen as a mark of stubborn independence but it was also the occasion for covert cooperation with the Allied side. In the Cold War period Ireland shunned membership of the West's military alliance, initially because of partition, but eventually became the only European neutral in the European Community. This position was rejected by other neutral states and raised some awkward questions for those who cared to look closely. In 1989 a detailed analysis of Irish policy was published under a rather provocative title - "Unneutral Ireland: An Ambivalent and Unique Security Policy"[5].

In the same year, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, the importance of the distinction between neutrality and military alignment started to recede. By this time, over the preceding three decades, the overall diplomatic profile of most of the few European neutrals reflected an emphasis which still prevails. The neutral state facilitates conflict mediation, promotes disarmament in multilateral institutions, and participates in international peacekeeping operations. In Irish political discourse this package has often been labelled "positive" or "active" neutrality, and has been widely understood as an essential element of the state's

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[2] See Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces 2022.
[3] See Conor Gallagher, "Secret deal allows RAF to defend Irish skies", The Irish Times, 8 May 2023. Conor Gallagher's book on Irish neutrality may be published before the Forum meets.
[4] See Patrick Keatinge, "European Neutrals, then and now." IIEA 2022.
[5] See Trevor C. Salmon, "Unneutral Ireland: An Ambivalent and Unique Security Policy", Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989.

foreign policy identity and reputation. It is often forgotten that small Nato member states do these things too. Take Norway, for example, which was recently elected to the UN Security Council with one more vote than Ireland. Norway does UN peacekeeping, and demonstrated its diplomatic capacity by facilitating the negotiation of the Oslo Accords between Israel and the PLO in 1993. There is, however, a difference when it comes to nuclear disarmament. In 2021 the Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons came into force. Ireland was an early advocate of the treaty; Nato member states, which follow a policy of nuclear deterrence, are notable for their absence from the list of the 92 signatories. So long as Putin rattles his nuclear sabre that is likely to remain the case.

Debating the options for international security policy

Public opinion polls taken after the Russian invasion In February 2022 show substantial majorities in favour of retaining military neutrality. Over the years it has come to represent the advocacy of strict sovereignty, the views of a vocal peace movement and for some a dash of anti-Americanism. In sum, it has become a valued element of national identity. Public debate often seems to be about the defence of this idea rather than the defence of the state and its people - a sterile binary clash between "principled patriots and pacifists" and "pragmatic militarists". In order to examine the state's security and defence policy more closely, consider a more nuanced selection of options, ranging from a pacifist approach to a treaty-based commitment to a military alliance, viz:

- **Zero-weapons:** There have been many vocal anti-war movements in Europe since 1945, including in this country. However, the only European state with a pacifist tradition and no national standing army is Iceland, which became a founding member of Nato and thus (also?) belongs on the other end of this spectrum. (This option is not likely to appeal to either Irish pacifists or Nato in 2023).

- **Strict neutrality:** Switzerland comes closest to this model, where neutrality reflects a very long tradition and a constitutional form which follows the Hague Convention of 1907, and where the state avoids membership of multilateral institutions which might compromise neutrality (Nato, the EU, even the UN until 2002). It emphasises a credible national defence (including conscription, advanced military capabilities and a military industrial sector). Irish advocates of stricter neutrality by"enshrining" it in the Constitution should ask themselves whether it is a good idea to leave the definition of neutrality to constitutional lawyers, or even make Irexit the price we should pay for our security and defence.

- **Military neutrality:** Ireland's present policy, which is based on a distinction between political partiality and military commitments. It has started to move towards a credible defence.

- **Extension of participation in cooperative networks:** Ireland's role in the EU's PESCO framework is an important example; the national government decides the specific projects it wishes to participate in. Nato's Partnership for Peace (PfP) framework has a similar approach. It may involve consultation, intelligence sharing, joint training and exercises. For Finland, Sweden (and possibly eventually Ukraine) the status of

"enhanced opportunity partners" preceded full membership of Nato. But the PfP framework does not necessarily end up there (even Switzerland is a Nato Partner). Arguably, this option is the most relevant for the development of Irish security and defence policy. In particular, it could provide solutions for the state's capability weaknesses in maritime and air defence.

- **Full military alignment, as a signatory of the Nato treaty:** Opinion polls do not currently support this option.

What next?

The first priority for government action is clear: complete the implementation of the commitments already made following the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces, and review the Report's recommendation on the level of ambition in the light of the current situation.

Review the operational rules of the game, i.e. what can and cannot be done within the existing policy of military neutrality. The Triple Lock procedure for significant military deployments outside the state received a lot of attention at the Forum; whatever the final decision, the unintended but absurd consequence of making Irish decisions hostage to the will of an aggressor should be removed. There are other ways to ensure the legitimacy of this important decision.

Review the method of communicating what is likely to be a more significant and expensive sector of public policy in the future. We have a series of regular defence white papers from the Department of Defence and less frequent foreign policy white papers from the Department of Foreign Affairs. We now need a "Security Strategy" document, which combines both departmental perspectives, and is subjected annually to parliamentary debate and approval.

Patrick Keatinge

Patrick Keatinge, former Jean Monnet professor in European Integration at TCD, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for European Affairs (1993-96), 22May-30June 2023.

Consultative Forum on International Security Policy
International Security Policy Section
Department of Foreign Affairs
80, St Stephen's Green
Dublin D02VY53

Consultative Forum – Submission Attached

A Chara

I have completed an on-line submission to the Consultative Forum and look forward to attending at Dublin Castle on Tuesday next, June 27th.

In making the on-line submission, I became aware that my Submission to the Commission on the Defence Forces, which I made in March 2021, includes the core elements of my submission to the Consultative Forum, supplemented by a good degree of detail in regards to the capabilities of our Defence Forces, the involvement of Ireland and that of other Member States of the European Union in what are essentially European focused missions and initiatives and thus is complementary to my submission to the Forum.

Accordingly, I attach a copy of my submission to the Commission on the Defence Forces and request that this be taken as a necessary complement, providing a significant amount of relevant research, to my on-line submission to the Forum.

I am fully supportive of the Forum and its aims, believing it to be based on significant and meaningful contributions to global order and international peace since the 1960s. It has become increasingly important and relevant as the political institutions of the European Union and the growing identity and solidarity of its citizens become ever more important in how we live and behave.

Alongside the growth in wealth and identity comes the responsibility of participation, engagement and commitment. Ireland is not an ordinary or insignificant member of the Union, rather it is a small Member State that has earned a high level of influence on global affairs, from peacekeeping to technology, and which is also geographically located at the north-western boundary of the Union. This boundary is exposed to external military threat, as seen by the various intrusions by Russian military aircraft and naval vessels, often under conditions of stealth, requiring surveillance and monitoring well beyond the capabilities of our Defence Forces. A hypothetical landing of Russian military forces in a 'neutral' Ireland would present a very serious challenge to both this country and the European Union as a whole; a challenge that would be offset, at least, and countered by a commitment to European Defence as a Member-State. Thus while Russia has no land border with Ireland, the persistent presence of Russian forces close to our coast, and infringing both our airspace and EEZ may be taken as signs of potential hostile military capability.

I urge the Forum to consider my submissions in their deliberations, and hope that I may have helped in some small way in this process.

Yours truly,

Donal Lamont (Captain, retired)

Submission – Commission on the Defence Forces

Strategy Overview

The White Paper on Defence, approved by the Government in 2015, provides the strategic and comprehensive defence policy for the State in the period up to 2025. The White Paper, Section 3.1 - Policy Context, states:

'As well as encompassing Ireland's landmass, the State extends to Ireland's territorial waters and territorial airspace. In addition, Ireland has certain sovereign rights that extend some 200 miles off-shore (our exclusive economic zone) and others that extend further to the extended continental shelf'.

This comprehensive defence policy is based on a forward-looking assessment of the dynamic security environment and the defence contribution to security, including defence of the State from armed aggression as well as domestic security. In regard to the international sphere, the 2019 Update on the White Paper affirms Ireland's active approach to international engagement as an absolute necessity in the present and likely future security environment, and that Ireland's approach of military neutrality is neither isolationist nor capable of providing a protective buffer against global events or developments which impact on Ireland.

The international aspect of defence policy commits Ireland to maintaining support for the United Nations (U.N.), and to working closely with European partners in accordance with the European Union's 'Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)'. The continuous evolution of UN-mandated missions under NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) has extended Ireland's overseas military commitments in developing an interoperability necessary to operate seamlessly with partner-Nations in overseas peace support and crisis management operations.

Threat Assessment

While the obvious threat of armed aggression is directly addressed as a fundamental element of defence policy, requiring a direct military response, the range of threats described in the Update, Section 2.2.2 – The Hybrid Sphere, reflect the insidious and indirect actions that may be engaged in by enemies of the State, either directly or as a Member State of the European Union. Such hybrid threats may involve a mixture of coercive and subversive activity, using conventional and unconventional methods (diplomatic, military, economic, technological etc.) and which remain below the threshold of formally declared warfare.

The combination of the departure of the United Kingdom from the EU with the increasing interest and activity of Russia in European and Irish affairs fits with a geopolitical scenario that adds to the urgency of adapting our defence response to a range of potential threats to the State (including sea and airspace), its natural resources, industries and infrastructure. The additional threat posed by the rapidly evolving area of cyber, its threats and the essential security against such threats, combine to demand a collaborative approach with other EU Member States under the CDSP to ensure that the optimum level of resources are available to counter the range of evolving threats.

Under this collaborative approach, and to address the range of threats to the State, the implementation of White Paper decisions (detailed in the Project List and progress report in the White Paper Update), taken together with the

implementation of the projects identified under Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), established by the European Council in 2017, provide a strategic direction to determine the resources required to meet future threats.

Resource Capability

'As the future security environment is uncertain, and the type of operations that the Defence Forces may be required to undertake can change significantly as new threats emerge, capabilities must there fore be developed and maintained to meet the challenges of a dynamic security environment.' (Update – 3.5).

Under both the 'Capability Development Plan', and the 'Equipment Plan', there are numerous references to *'should additional funding become available'* (and similar wordings around the approach to Defence funding).

A primary responsibility of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform is to carry out an annual spending review as part of that Department's policy in ensuring that spending under each Department of Government appropriate. The Spending Review of 2017 examined the 'Defence Vote Group', and stated that: *'[As] much of this is contingency-based, which make it difficult to segment or capture by annual output, it is possible to use comparative indicators to gain some insight into how Irish defence expenditure fits into international patterns and to identify present trends within Irish defence spending.*

'This paper first provides a summary overview of Ireland's defence sector, including a side-by-side comparison with New Zealand's similarly-scaled defence establishment, before the same comparative approach is used to focus on specific categories of Irish defence expenditure, including spending on equipment, personnel and overseas operational deployment.'

The comparison is based on population (4.9m – Ireland; 4.5m – New Zealand); regular military personnel (Ireland, establishment 9,500; New Zealand, 9,199) and Global Militarisation Score (Ireland 135; New Zealand 109 – both 2019 data). However, the New Zealand defence budget for 2019 was $2.93bn, representing 1.50% of GDP, while Ireland's was $1.11bn, or 0.3% of GDP. The New Zealand Defence Forces' mission statement is not dissimilar to that of Ireland:

'To secure New Zealand against external threat, to protect our sovereign interests, including the Exclusive Economic Zone, and to take actions to meet likely contingencies in New Zealand's area of strategic interest.'

The report notes that defence expenditure as a percentage of GDP is a widely-used international benchmark for defence spending. Analysis by the European Defence Agency (EDA), (with the addition of Denmark, using World Bank data) of the expenditure on defence by EU Member States in 2019, ranked Ireland 24th of 27 Member States, with a per capita amount of €204, where the average is €420, with a high of €793 for Denmark, and with only Malta (€148) and Hungary (€188) lower than Ireland. The total defence expenditure among EU Member States was 1.4% of the combined GDP of all Member States in 2019, whereas that of Ireland was, at €1.077bn, just 0.3% of GDP, significantly lower than any other Member State.

While a majority of Member States are members of NATO, Ireland, along with Austria, Finland and Sweden are associated under the NATO PfP programme, each having a greater GDP %age defence expenditure than Ireland, at 0.7% (Austria); 1.5% (Finland) and 1.1% (Sweden).

The profile of the defence forces in most countries is usually seen through foreign assignments (predominantly U.N. related in Ireland), the involvement in public ceremonial events and in weather-related disaster relief. In both Canada and New Zealand, the profile of the defence forces is enhanced by public, 'town-hall' type gatherings to develop and maintain support for the military and the resultant expenditure. This is important, as defence expenditure, while treated by economists as a 'sunk cost', or one delivering no return to a society, is of great value in the protection of that society, and this needs to be communicated as it is less well understood when compared to the provision of health, education or other societal services.

Capabilities – Defence Forces

Both the Spending Review of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the EDA data confirm that the vast majority of defence expenditure is on pay and pensions, with only a small percentage allocated to capital spending on equipment, supplies and maintenance. Additionally, there is a disproportionate level of spending on the non-military personnel in the Department of Defence. This, however, does not necessarily show any over-employment of non-military personnel, but more likely confirms that the civilian support structure is in place for a more substantial Defence Forces, with the establishments of Army, Air Corps and Naval Service expanded to meet the challenges identified as requirements in accordance with the policy objectives of the White Paper and detailed in the project listing in the White Paper Update, where a substantial number of the 95 listed projects are either 'paused', or 'not yet commenced'.

Given that the White Paper Update is dated 2019, it is both clear that a number of projects (e.g. replacement of Cessna aircraft by PC-12s, the decision to purchase Airbus C-295 aircraft to replace existing C-265s etc.) have been completed and a further number have been progressed, it is increasingly urgent to review those that are paused or not yet commenced in the context of the review schedule of the White Paper. Failure to do so would transfer a number of identified projects to the next three-year review, further delaying the modernisation of the Defence Forces in line with Government Policy. The work of this Commission should prioritise the provision of the resources, both of personnel and equipment in accelerating and concluding the projects identified in the White Paper Update. The completion of an implementation review with associated actions is essential if the combined work of the White Paper, its (2019) Update and the work of the Commission is not to be wasted, with the resultant failure of Ireland's ability to meet growing and complex defence and security challenges.

White Paper Projects

The table below lists those projects which I propose as needing the attention of the Commission:

Project No	Summary	Status	Comment
1	Assessment of security & associated arrangements	Underway	Commission Report
2	Defence Organisation capabilities	Not yet commenced	Commission Report
3	Contribution to UNSAS & EU Headline Goal	Not yet commenced	Essential that Commission evaluate and identify required resources for capabilities
4	Bilateral relations; appointment of Defence Attaches	Not yet commenced	Commission Report
6	Expand Ireland's participation in multi-national capability projects – EDA framework	Not yet commenced	Essential that Commission evaluate and identify required resources for capabilities

9	Explore synergies in maritime area to ensure most efficient use of all State resources	Not yet commenced	Explore use of Coastguard in other EU/Nordic States to extend roles of naval and air assets.
10	Maritime security arrangements, including governance, on an inter-agency basis	Paused	Explore matching this requirement with PESCO HARMSPRO project
16	Emergency Aeromedical Support (EAS)	Not yet commenced	In parallel with internal policy, explore European Air Transport Command (EATC), under EU, for pan-EU requirements.
20	Department of Defence procurement in consultation with Enterprise Ireland, to the benefit of Irish companies	Not yet commenced	Explore offset arrangements within an EU context for technology transfer.
29B	Replacement of five Cessna aircraft.	Completed	Further evaluate whether replacement aircraft fully meet ISTAR mission requirements, and propose additional aircraft resources to supplement PC-12 aircraft if such a requirement is established.
29C	Replace existing CASA 235 aircraft	Order Placed	Further evaluate whether replacement aircraft fully meet maritime and airspace mission requirements. Propose additional aircraft resources to supplement Airbus 295 aircraft if such a requirement is established. Examine mission, role and equipment of Portugal, Canada and New Zealand in protection of Exclusive Economic Zone and associated airspace.
29G	Develop a primary radar surveillance capability	Not yet commenced	This is a complex requirement, both technically and financially. The limitations of primary radar, together with the complexity of HF-based Over-the-Horizon radar (used by Canada, France, etc.), combined with the limited use of satellite surveillance, particularly in a military context, make this a significant challenge to even the most advanced States.
30	Develop a more capable air combat/intercept capability	Not yet commenced	This proposal awaits the provision of radar as a prerequisite. However, given the challenges of (29G) above, there is potential benefit of the provision of a sufficient number of high-performance aircraft to carry out the intercept role within Irish airspace, and particularly in the airspace off the West Coast, which is subject to military intrusion. In addition, there is no capability in the case of civil aircraft subject to a hijack or otherwise in need of assistance. This proposal should not be subject to the provision of primary radar, as much of the capability can be attained by suitable aircraft, operating under existing communications and surveillance arrangements.
31	DoD to develop a detailed capability development plan	Underway	Commission Report
40	Review HR policies in relation to recruitment etc., and including retention and retirement policies	Not yet commenced	Essential role for Commission in balancing the structural and promotion requirements with the retention of sufficient personnel at all levels of skills and competencies identified.
66	Develop the necessary regulatory changes and service criteria of the FLR.	Not yet commenced	Consider extending the FLR to the Air Corps. In line with projects #70 and 76, develop policies for the establishment of an 'Inactive Reserve' for use in crisis scenarios.
87	Collaborative or joint procurement approaches with EU partners	Not yet commenced	Commission Report.

88	Funding of defence requirements.	Underway	The level of defence expenditure in Ireland is significantly less as a percentage of GDP of any other EU Member State, and lower than all but two others on a per-capita basis. To meet policy requirements identified in the White Paper, significant additional military resources of equipment and personnel are required.

Note: I have chosen not to comment on a number of projects.

PESCO Projects

The PESCO projects, in addition to those where Ireland has decided to become involved, which appear best suited to both Ireland's defence policy and to matching with the implementation of projects in the White Paper on Defence are:

Project Title/Participants	Description	Application(s) for Ireland
Integrated European Joint Training & Simulation Centre (EUROSIM); *Hungary, France, Germany, Poland, Slovenia*	Establish a tactical training and simulation cloud-based network	Training in simulation and the use of cloud-based systems for the development of intelligent military systems.
EU Cyber Academia and Innovation Hub (EU CAIH) *Portugal, Spain*	The creation of an innovative web of knowledge for cyber defence and cyber security education and training	This is an opportunity for involvement in cyber education, training and exercises, exploring synergies with industry and academia, and fits well with the involvement of Irish IT companies
Special Operations Forces Medical Training Centre (SMTC). *Poland, Hungary*	Establish a centre of medical training and excellence supporting Special Operations Forces (SOF) missions and operations.	As SOF is an integral and essential element of modern military forces, this would be a very beneficial project with the potential dual benefits of contribution and output.
CBRN Defence Training Range (CBRNDTR) *Romania, France, Italy*	Development of site(s) for training for Chemical, Biological, Radioactive and Nuclear in both simulated and live conditions, to increase interoperability between EU Member States.	With the increased threat posed by the use of CBRN by both State and non-State actors, every EU Member shall have the need to equip and train for the necessary counter-measures.
Deployable Military Disaster Relief Capability Package (DM-DRCP) *Italy, Austria, Croatia, Greece, Spain*	Establishment of a specialised military assets package deployable at short notice within both EU-led and non-EU-led operations to respond to emergencies and exceptional events	This is in parallel with, and an extension of a number of UN-mandated missions of which Ireland has been and is a participant, and fits with the White Paper strategy for crisis management.
EUFOR Crisis Response Operation Core (EUFOR CROC) *Germany, Cyprus, France, Italy, Spain*	Creation of a coherent full spectrum force package, which could accelerate the provision of forces.	This is a project where Ireland could better understand the development of crisis responses in an observer capacity.
Harbour & Maritime Surveillance and Protection (HARMSPRO) *Italy, Greece, Poland, Portugal*	HARMSPRO is planned to deliver a new maritime capability to provide Member States with the ability to conduct surveillance and protection of specified maritime areas, from harbours up littoral waters, including, inter alia, critical infrastructure	This appears as an essential project for Irish involvement, given the importance of the maritime environment to Ireland, and as an extensive segment of the EU's external border.
Upgrade of Maritime Surveillance *Greece, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Ireland, Italy, Spain*	The deployment of assets and the development of related capabilities are the core of this project.	Ireland is involved in this important project.
European Patrol Corvette (EPC) *Italy, France, Spain*	Design and develop a new class of military ship, hosting several systems and payloads for a wide variety of tasks and missions	This project is well-matched to Irish Naval needs, adding the requirement for a ship that can operate in Atlantic waters while fulfilling EU maritime tasks; enabling commonality of equipment, operational procedures and training.
Counter Unmanned Aerial System (C-UAS) *Italy, Czechia*	The system is designed to be swift to deploy and reach operational status, to ensure protection of forces, as	This is an important project, aiming to provide an unmanned system for military use with a wide range of potential applications.

	well as employed for homeland defence, security and other tasks	
Airborne Electronic Attack (AEA) *Spain, France, Sweden*	The system is planned for Airborne Electronic Attack (AEA) missions that could adapt to the latest in electronic warfare requirements.	As Ireland's extensive airspace forms a significant segment of the western border of the EU, a capability must be developed to carry out necessary electronic surveillance in defence of Ireland, its economic area and airspace, while also protecting the EU border.
European Secure Software defined Radio (ESSOR) *France, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain*	ESSOR is planned to develop common technologies for European military radios, providing a secure military communications for voice and data.	An essential requirement in the evolving interoperability required of UN-mandated and other EU-led missions.
Cyber Threats and Incident Response Information Sharing Platform *Greece, Austria, Cyprus, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Spain.*	The project aims to help mitigate cyber risks by focusing on the sharing of cyber threat intelligence through a networked Member State platform	Management of cyber threats shall have to be based on a shared network among Member States - involvement is essential.
Cyber Rapid Response Teams & Mutual Assistance in Cyber Security (CRRTs) *Lithuania, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Romania*	CRRTs will allow Member States to help each other to ensure a higher level of cyber resilience and collectively respond to incidents.	Involvement in this project would be beneficial to Ireland in the understanding and management of growing cyber threats.
European Medical Command Participant (EMC) *Germany, Belgium, Czechia, Estonia, France, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden; Observer – Bulgaria, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Portugal*	EMC will support the EU with an enduring medical capability to enable joint and combined operations.	Involvement (with the majority of Member States), particularly in an environment of the necessary response to pandemics, such as COVID19, in an interoperability environment.
Military Mobility *(All Member States except Ireland, Denmark and Malta)*	This project supports Member States' commitment to simplify and standardise cross-border military transport procedures.	There are two separate intra-EU Member airlift systems, in neither of which Ireland is involved. These are the European Air Transport Command (EATC) and the Heavy Airlift Wing. These two entities provide airlift for participating Member States (both NATO and NATO PfP). In contrast, the movement of Irish troops is carried out an a lowest-cost tender basis, using charter airlines. This is an unsatisfactory situation and involvement in and commitment to the Military Mobility project and the use of EU resources is the proper means by which members of the Irish Defence Forces, and their equipment, should be transported to and from the locations of UN-Mandated and other EU-led missions.
Timely Warning and Interception with Space-based TheatER Surveillance (TWISTER) *France, Finland, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Germany*	TWISTER aims at strengthening the ability of Member States to better detect, track and counter evolving air threats, particularly in the missile domain.	Optimal surveillance capability is important for Ireland in the protection of its western borders, maritime area, economic zone and airspace.
European Military Space Surveillance Awareness Network (EU-SSA-N) *Italy, France.*	This project is to develop an autonomous sovereign EU military SSA capability that is interoperable, integrated and harmonised with the EU-SST framework initiative for the protection of Member States' Space assets and services.	Involvement is such evolving technologies and capabilities fits with Ireland's defence policy in meeting current and future threats.

Donal Lamont, Captain (Retired)

19 March 2021

Submission to the Consultative Forum on International Security Policy from Frank Litton

Introduction

I 'attended' most of the Forum's sessions online. I am sure I am not alone in finding value in its deliberations on foreign and defence policy. It opened horizons and informed. I look forward to the report that will solidify its contribution. That contribution would be enhanced if the report went beyond summarising what was discussed to note what was not discussed. An important dimension was missing. As a consequence, the value of the Forum as guide to the way forward is diminished.

The wit, poet, surgeon, Oliver St John Gogarty was walking down Holles street, then a narrow thoroughfare flanked by tenements. Two women were engaged in furious argument shouting across the street from their respective windows. Gogarty turned to his companion: 'those women will never agree'; 'how do you know?' They are arguing from different premises.' My argument is concerned with premises, or the suppositions that remain unsaid as arguments proceed. These provide the 'horizon' in which facts are gathered and judgements made. So disagreement can occur at two levels. We can disagree about what we see and its implications. We can also disagree on the horizon. The German philosopher, Gadamer, famously wrote of conversations as the 'merging of horizons' . One horizon was not brought into the Forum's conversations, a fundamental flaw. The Chair in her opening remarks reminded us of Darwin's lesson: adaptability in a changing environment is key to a species' survival. I was reminded of distinctions made by the United State's philosopher John Dewey, famous for his pragmatism, in his examination of how we interact with our environment. He wrote of 'accommodation', 'adaptation' and 'adjustment'.

Accommodation

We can think of the environment as both the source of problems and solutions. We encounter the problems as we go about our daily business; we look for solutions in the more or less tacit understandings that underpin the roles and routines through which that business is conducted, as we draw on the common stock of knowledge.

For example, a tricky problem surfaces in the United Nations. Conflicting loyalties must be reconciled, compromises made as allies are recruited. A diplomat advises the Minister on a speech she is to deliver to the Assembly. Diplomatic nous is required respecting the boundary that separates the civil servants role from that of the Minister and in finding the form of words best matched to the situation. Considerable skill may be deployed, nonetheless, it is a matter of routine. The respective roles are well established, the memoranda and reports in the file provide the background. The purposes pursued are well served by accommodation. [The Diplomat's task will become easier as AI develops its capacity to mine and represent data analysed in tune with the tacit understandings that generated it.]

Adaptation

What do we do when we encounter problems that cannot be solved by accommodation however skilfully deployed? Dewey tells us that our stance changes. Where we allowed the environment to shape us, now we must adapt it to better suit our purposes. Purposes, of course, are part of the environment, elements of its tacit understandings. They occasionally surface when values are proclaimed. Adaptation requires that they be made explicit, rendered in a form that allows them be interrogated in ways that the assertion of values cannot.

The Forum: accommodation and not adaptation

The publicity surrounding the Forum suggested that its business was adaptation. In the event, evidence of adaptation was scant. What we heard most of the time in most of the discussions was accommodation thinking, often of a high quality. Lurking in the background was the question of whether changed circumstances meant that we change the character of our alliances or enter into new ones: join NATO or deepen or involvement in EU defence initiatives. If this question was answered in adaptation mode, the problems that demanded the change would have been discussed in extensive detail and, importantly, the following questions would have been addressed.

The overriding purpose of our foreign policy is that it should be moral and that it should seek to make the world a better place. We hold, I suppose, that there are no circumstances in which the taking of innocent life can be justified. Is joining an alliance armed with nuclear weapons whose raison d'être is the slaughter of the innocent compatible with this? What military alliances are allowable given that the killing of civilians appears to be an inevitable part of modern warfare? Interdependence does bring obligations. We benefit from our membership of the EU. We should be prepared to pay our dues which include contributions to the defence of the Union. We have to take the character of the Union into account when assessing these obligations. To simplify, consider a continuum: at one pole we have an imperial order dominated by one or two great powers. They find it expedient to incorporate smaller, weaker powers on their periphery who find sufficient economic and security benefits in the shelter the order provides to acquiesce to its hegemony. The calculus is the balance of powers, the matching of needs with alternatives. At the other pole, we have an association of nations who find in a shared tradition the resources to act in solidarity. The calculus is the common good. Where does the EU lie on this continuum? What are the implications of its position for our obligations?

These questions were not addressed. Should they have been? Much was made of the changing world order and the problems this brought. If this talk had been taken seriously, the answer is, obviously, yes.

Adjustment

Adapting brings our purposes into focus as we modify our environment the better to pursue them. Adjusting takes this a stage further as we transform our understanding of our purposes and how they relate to the world in which we find ourselves. At the level of the individual this entails something like a religious conversion. At the social level, it entails the transformation of what the Canadian philosopher, Charles Taylor calls the social imaginary: 'the ways in which [people] imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations which are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images which underlie these expectations.' Though imaginaries endure for long periods of time, they develop, change, mutate and eventually slowly collapse to be replaced. The origins of the western, democratic imaginary can be traced to the 17th century when the wars of religion showed the prevailing imaginary incapable of delivering peace and security and providing the framework to sustain a nascent capitalism. Is our imaginary facing threats akin to the wars of religion? Are we in need of adjustment? Some of the threats adverted to in the forum could be understood as suggesting 'yes'.

Take two issues: populism and misinformation. The consensus is that while they are troubling, bring uncertainty into calculations, solutions can be found in existing frameworks. The classic distinction between left and right applies. The problem is extremists on both wings , especially those on the right. Disinformation is a problem that comes with technological advances equipping the political rogues that are always to be found, with new powers to do their mischief. New forms of censorship can, if not remove, the threat, mitigate it.

Another reading is possible. What we are facing is the collapse of the mediators that linked the citizens into the wider picture of national politics. Peter Mair, the Irish political scientist, noted the transformation of the role of political parties more than a decade ago. Up to the 1970s and beyond, political parties in European democracies could rely on the support of solid blocs of supporters. Their support ran from membership, financial contributions, to consistent voting in their favour. Rather than voting for a party because they judged its program matched their interests, they trusted the party to instruct them in their interests. This trust had to be sustained, hence the importance of local organisation and a partisan press which communicated the party's position. This world is disappearing fast; membership of political parties declines, voter turnout declines. We are witnessing what the French political scientist Bernard Manin calls the move from 'Party Democracy' to ' Audience Democracy'. With it, the role of party leader changes. A Trump, a Johnson, a Macron can win the votes of the audience without progressing up the party hierarchy where their abilities would be tested and skills honed. While political parties were the major mediators, they were not alone. Trade unions, business, social, charitable, religious, associations, all brought local interests and perspectives into the 'big picture' while communicating it down the line. These follow the path of political parties. Misinformation is as much a cultural as a technological problem. It reflects the collapse of authority that follows from the disappearance of mediating hierarchies.

Any reformulation of the social imaginary must include a global, international dimension. We can find the kind of thinking that feeds into the recasting of the social imaginary without difficulty. I mention just two names among many. Bruno Latour's wide-ranging reflections, on technology, the environment, politics attract increasing attention. Pope Francis's encyclicals *Laudato Si* and *Fratelli Tutti* provide a deeper, richer account of how we are in the world than the thin gruel served up

by neo-liberalism with its exclusive concern with economics. Neither they nor anybody else addressing these issues were mentioned.

Conclusion

Research reports invariably conclude with 'more research is needed'. The report on the Forum cannot avoid the conclusion 'more deliberation is needed'.

Frank Litton

5 July 2023

Dear Mr Bruck,

I am writing to you as part of the submission process of the Consultative Forum. I am guided by Professor Richardson's suggestion, in her closing remarks, that we could engage either through the submission template or by 'writing to us'.

You have already received from me two copies of Afri's publication A Force for Good? (The online version is available at https://www.afri.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Irish-Neutrality-WEB.pdf). It contains two contributions from me, but all of its contents are relevant to the topics covered, and others regrettably not covered, in the Forum sessions.

I have also sent you one copy of my book Defending Peace, which deals with a number of such topics - for example, the ethics of defence and war, the role of the UN in our foreign and defence policies, and the damage done to our democracy by the lack of openness while highly significant developments were put in place.

I am also including here the link to an article which I published just before the first session in Cork. It reports on a truly electrifying paper by the late Erskine Childers III in UCC in 1995. He was speaking at the invitation of your Department, during the preparation of the White Paper on Foreign Policy. One could hardly imagine a more telling combination of critique with positive guidelines for future policy, then and now:
https://www.echolive.ie/corkviews/arid-41165224.html

In the days preceding the Forum sessions I was preparing a detailed covering letter to accompany these documents, but it has been unavoidably delayed. I am accordingly sending this present message to arrive by today's closing date. I intend soon to write somewhat more fully to Tánaiste Micheál Martin, in the coming period during which Professor Richardson will be preparing her report to him.

I would be grateful if you could forward this letter, if necessary, to any other relevant address. Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely,

John Maguire,
Professor of Sociology Emeritus,
University College Cork

Q1 Your Name
Peter Nolan

Q2.Organisation NA

I was born in Dun Laoghaire in 1974. I've degrees from TCD (Business, Economic and Social Studies), City University (Mathematical Finance) and Birkbeck College, University of London (US Politics and International Security) and I'm doing an M.Sc. program at National College of Ireland (Data Analytics).

I have been living in Dublin for the past two and a half years, having returned from Stockholm, in January 2021. Before that, I have lived for periods of a year or more in Finland, Singapore, Turkey and London. I have worked for periods over a month in France, Germany, Hong Kong and Tel Aviv.

I have written opinion page articles published in the Irish and foreign press including The Irish Times, Sunday Business Post, Magill, Business & Finance, The Sunday Times, Prospect Magazine, the Wall Street Journal, the Daily Star of Lebanon and The Jerusalem Post.

Q 3.In view of the current global security environment, do you perceive Ireland's security to be under threat?

Yes

Q 4.If so, what do you perceive to be the greatest threat(s) to Ireland's security?

I have to begin by apologising for the length of my response to this question: My motivation is to make as complete and persuasive case that are not likely to be in any other response to this process.

My starting point is to do a simple extrapolation over the next two to three decades, of what we have already observed in the immediate past. I foresee three security threats being particularly important over this time: First, we risk serious violence in Northern Ireland. Second, democratic decay and social turmoil may destabilise our neighbours, threatening international cooperation in economic, social and defence issues. Third, we may be already in the early stages of a third world war.

The island of Ireland is like an inherited family home that has sheltered generations, enjoys picturesque views and has been lovingly-maintained, but has a crack house on the top floor. Not many people are thinking deeply about the significant risk from Northern Ireland, as we continue to move towards unification as Professor Brendan O'Leary has in his recent book,[1] which he also forecasts could be in as little as seven years. Senator Tom Clonan and Sam MacBride of the Belfast Telegraph have written about this already. Ian Paisley MP has commented this week also. All of them appear to me to be discussing the issue responsibly, without any intent of threatening either side.

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[1] O'Leary, Brendan, "Making Sense of a United Ireland: Should it Happen? How Might it Happen?", Penguin, 2022

There is no avoiding the fact that support for the Good Friday agreement is now a minority view among the Protestant, Unionist and Loyalist (PUL) community, falling from 57% at the time of the referendum to about 38% in recent polls. Observe that the Loyalists were first to kill in the 'sixties, when there was no active Republican violence and no threat to their majority status and a degree of prosperity in Northern Ireland: Any sense of security for them seems to be almost impossible to obtain. Unionist politicians often characterised the Republican campaign of the Troubles period, and not without some justification, as ethnic-cleansing or genocide, especially in border areas and Mid-Ulster, setting the stage for further violence.

The trigger in situations like Lebanon, Iraq or Yugoslavia, the last days of apartheid South Africa or French Algeria or, arguably, Trump's America, is when a formerly-dominant group wakes up to the permanent loss of power: Violence, often nihilistic and unguided by any political strategy and carried out with the constraint of a political solution.

The scale of a potential insurgency should not be underestimated: The community-wide mobilisation of 1912, the Loyalist general strike of 1974 or the Drumcree protests of the 'nineties could be expected. Violence would not just be the random murders by Loyalist paramilitaries from 1966 onwards, but something much broader, aimed at triggering forced population transfers or coercing the Republic.

Gun and bomb attacks with improvised explosives can be sourced relatively easily. With some broad support within the community, I would not be surprised by the use of chlorine diverted from water purification to use as a crude chemical weapons or even the use of radiation sources diverted from hospitals or the nuclear industry in mainland Britain to build radiological weapons ('dirty bombs').

Security solutions for this will be complex. The Irish border is nearly 500km long, 50% longer than the border between Israel and the occupied West Bank that the Israelis have always struggled to control even with full security mobilisation. Traffic coming south by car or even infiltration by foot will be very difficult to intercept. Unlike IRA campaigns in mainland Britain, the journey is quick and easy, without security choke-points at airports or ports. Dublin and the border towns are unprotected by checkpoints, cameras, number plate readers or public vigilance. Prime sites are unprotected, including the centres of government, major business premises, monuments, embassies, the media and prime shopping areas.

Looking at the map as a defence correspondent might, I note that the geography of the PUL population and infrastructure present a significant geographic disadvantage to the Catholic, Nationalist and Republican (CNR) community in the event of an insurgency, potentially cutting off food, water, medicines and essential services: To begin with, the placement of Belfast and the other large cities and towns, now most with a CNR majority, leaves many of them surrounded by countryside dominated by the other community. Major infrastructure, such as both Belfast's airports, the ports at Belfast and Larne, the coastline and smaller harbours, power stations, reservoirs, hospitals also lie in PUL-majority areas, as are significant military bases and weapons manufacturers. Also, with Enniskillen at the southwest of the six-counties, movement by road either within Northern Ireland or inside the Republic, including at the 10km wide strip between the border and the sea in Donegal around Belleek, can be cut off by insurgents, essentially cutting off most of Donegal, Mid-Ulster and Derry city and their 250,000 people, effectively creating a second siege of Derry.

To use a phrase used by historians of British imperial expansion in India and Asia, Northern Ireland is the 'turbulent frontier'[2], with expanding demands of security on the periphery pulling the Republic into deeper involvement or full control, without any particular desire at the centre. This risk is connected to the second risk I identify as significant and unaddressed, namely of democratic decay and social turmoil in our wider European neighbourhood, manifesting itself in political, economic and security challenges for Ireland.

Factors within Northern Ireland or the Republic could be enough to trigger an NI insurgency, but the instability coming from the aftermath of the Brexit referendum in 2016 highlights how it could arise from heedless politics in the UK. However, the situation also provides an opportunity for a any hostile outside power: I am stricken by how similar the current conflict in Northern Ireland is to those Russia has involved itself in, in Georgia, Armenia, in eastern Ukraine and Crimea in 2014, an attempted coup in Montenegro[3] and destabilisation of Moldova[4].

A full-scale Russian invasion of Ireland would be would not be possible. However, the payoff from having a single diplomat deliver a suitcase with 20 kilos of Semtex and a sports bag filled with banknotes to kick off shooting and bombing, and support through subversion information operations could be enormous. British military commitment during the Troubles peaked at over 20,000 troops, enough that their forces in mainland Europe could do no significant training for a period in the 1970's[5], according to the official history. Significantly, Northern Ireland also supplies defence equipment, including Javelin anti-aircraft missiles now being supplied to Ukraine. The effect on the Republic of Ireland would also be significant.

Unionist and Loyalist politics have been embedded in the political right in Britain, indeed often within extreme-right forces, advocating racial and religious hatred and violence within the UK, similar to those which the Kremlin aids across Europe. The path to Loyalist intransigence or even insurgency gaining support either by Russia itself or by other authoritarian political forces or governments elsewhere in Europe follows existing ideological affinities, organisational links, funding and media, all of which show no sign of lessening in power over time.

Indirect effects are likely from the same sources also. The UK might show further decay in its politics and governance. France has been threatened with a capture of its presidency, with its almost monarchical powers, by the extreme right for decades and now the party of Mme Marine Le Pen is close to outpolling the incumbent President[6]. These two are significant powers, but the

[2] Galbraith, John S. "The 'Turbulent Frontier' as a Factor in British Expansion." Comparative Studies in Society and History, vol. 2, no. 2, 1960, pp. 150–68. JSTOR, http://www.jstor.org/stable/177813. Accessed 1 July 2023

3 Walker, Shaun, "Alleged Russian spies sentenced to jail over Montenegro 'coup plot'", 29 May 2019, Guardian https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/09/montenegro-convicts-pro-russia-politicians-of-coup-plot
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[5] Operation Banner: An Analysis of Military Operations in Northern Ireland
https://www.vilaweb.cat/media/attach/vwedts/docs/op_banner_analysis_released.pdf
page 7-3

[6] Abboud, Leila and Adrienne Klasa, "Marine Le Pen seizes on French riots in push to outflank Emmanuel Macron", 4 July 2023, Financial Times,

same phenomenon is present throughout Europe. It threatens to paralyse or break apart the freedoms of movement and commerce and institutions that Ireland relies on such as the Euro, common European institutions for international trade, financial regulation, energy, public health, policing, frontier control, environmental protection, industrial policy and diplomacy. Also at risk will be the EU support for Ukraine through refugee support, funding and weapons. Common EU security policy could become impossible under this scenario.

This leads onto my third risk, what I label as World War 3. Some experts, such as Professor Fiona Hill[7], already apply this label to the Russia-Ukraine war. However, contrary to the fear and hatred of NATO and the United States expressed by so many of our very vocal bedwetters at the Forum, missed the point, namely that the alliance is very unlikely to survive much longer. America is likely to be unwilling or unable to help Europe.

One factor is growing isolationism in the US. NATO escaped an American withdrawal in 2018 by one of the whiskers of National Security Advisor John Bolton's moustache, as he relates in his memoir[8]. We can be certain that we will not be so lucky in the event of a second Trump administration which the early polls show is already more likely that the re-election of President Biden.

Besides Trump's own animus towards Ukraine, another problem is that, even given the desire, the Americans now often say that they do not have the equipment and supplies to support Europe when they have to prepare for a war in Asia with China. This view is most articulately presented by the former Trump administration Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence, Elbridge Colby in his book[9].

Without American support, Europe thrown back on its own resources is unlikely to be able to protect Ukraine or allow the EU defend itself. Not just Russian aggression but also fear and tension among Europe's states also may become a factor in security challenges.

In the nightmare scenario, given Russia's growing dependence on outside help and China's own actions in the Pacific, a logical strategy for China would be a commitment of its diplomacy, industrial base and even military to Russia if conflict over Taiwan becomes likely.

Under this scenario protection of sea and air traffic in Ireland's geographic space will be in grave danger. With the Artic seas becoming more ice-free over time with climate change, a sea route for Russia, especially of energy to China has already been established and will likely only grow in importance for both countries. Scotland and the Nordic countries are positioned to put them directly in the front line of any Russian movement into the Atlantic through what has been called

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[7] Glasser, Susan B. "What if We're Already Fighting the Third World War with Russia?", New Yorker, 29 September 2022, https://www.newyorker.com/news/letter-from-bidens-washington/what-if-were-already-fighting-the-third-world-war-with-russia

[8] Bolton, John, "The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir", 2020, Simon & Schuster Publication

[9] Colby, Elbridge A., "The Strategy of Denial: American Defense in an Age of Great Power Conflict", 2021, Yale University Press

the Greenland-Iceland-UK (GIUK) gap. Some of this area, particularly Iceland, Ireland may be the closest nation to an attack from the north.

However, the real focus in periods of tension or war would be, again as in the Cold War, on disruptions to the vital Transatlantic sea and air routes, now also carrying North American oil and gas to Europe, as well as imports and exports for all Europe and any military resupply and troops from the US and Canada to Europe.

Also, in this scenario, we might find ourselves with a migration crisis from a direction that we have not expected, but which I am already seeing some early signs of, namely America. After Brexit, both the people of Northern Ireland and perhaps an additional 6 million Britons were able to claim Irish citizenship and passports to allow travel and residency in the European Union.

Somebody in the Irish government and media should have working on this, but friends and relatives have started on this already: Even if residency in Canada is attainable, as American liberals habitually start checking on the election of Republican presidents, the country is too vulnerable to the spread of instability from the US through economic links and its own populist movements in Ontario and the western provinces to provide a safe-haven. I would expect that many Americans instead may seek Irish citizenship, perhaps for residency here, perhaps as a ticket to live and work elsewhere in the European Union. This can be both a huge boon for Ireland, in building committed relationships with Americans in the US, but sheer numbers may overwhelm Ireland, given that 30 million Americans may have Irish ancestry and even 1% would likely be too many to handle, especially if we see political refugees, dissidents, journalists and politicians fleeing here. Becoming a safe-haven could also become a source of tension with a future American government, over people, or for media and social media regulation. Some Americans coming here could be extremists or insurgents, of whom John Walker Lindh, the American Taliban, now released from prison and intending to live here in Ireland, is perhaps another harbinger.

5.Do you think that Ireland currently has the necessary capabilities to deal with the threats faced? If no, explain what capabilities you believe are needed.
(Recommended maximum of 500 words)

No, not at all. The Republic has the raw resources in line with other states that face, but not the capabilities, which can be built. With 5 million plus people in the Republic and other citizens and diasporas in Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand, we have a lot of human resources that can be mobilised. Our population and national income are at the same or higher than states with similar or greater security risks; I would point to Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Israel and Singapore as particularly useful examples.

For my first risk scenario, the vulnerability to violence in the north of Ireland, the capabilities needed are probably outlined accurately by Professor Brendan O'Leary in his recent book, namely police, army, navy and air force capabilities to prevent to suppress violence to the extent that a cross-community police force can manage this. To summarise, I believe that we would need to create the national security institutions adapted to our needs, not just the military, but for internal security (MI5, FBI), external intelligence (MI6,CIA), cybersecurity and signals intelligence (GCHQ, NSA), financial crime, corruption, election security and organised crime (FBI and IRS) and media regulation (Ofcom, FCC).

Military intelligence should be a particular priority, as our under-resourced present capability is inadequate. Past political interference, reaching a nadir in the Arms Crisis of 1970, makes it imperative that intelligence has a functional independence, through a civil-service mechanism as in the UK Joint Intelligence Committee, a cabinet-level position (America's Director of National Intelligence) or mandatory direct reporting to the Oireachtas or a small committee drawn from it, as also done by the US.

For land forces, requirements would probably match the British commitment in the troubles, at least to start with and to surge if needed, which was 12 battalions in the UDR, plus 20,000 troops from the mainland UK, so perhaps a military of 30,000 plus troops who can act as light and mechanised infantry in situations similar to Irish peace-keeping missions. Added to that will be mechanised forces, artillery and engineering troops. In this mission, forces will require precision in targeting to avoid killing civilians, escalation and damaging infrastructure, so requiring advanced weapons, excellent communications, extensive intelligence and skilled operators. Troops on the ground would, we might hope, be trained and skilled in operating in a grey zone, where violence is a risk but needs to be avoided and local people engaged with for the purposes of peace-keeping.

Air and sea control will be needed to prevent small boats, ships, drones, helicopters, light planes or commercial aircraft from bringing heavy weapons, explosives and foreign fighters onto the island. Much of the air and sea challenge may be dealing with small boats, drones, light leisure aircraft, helicopters, trawlers, or anything that can make the short journey from Scotland. Dealing with this will likely need novel capabilities, a navy and air-force that can detect, challenge or destroy these. This may require slower and smaller ships that can operate in open water and onshore, or even in lakes and rivers, so a lobster navy. Aircraft that are cheap but can be fitted with the necessary sensors and weapons, like the British Hawk, the American F5 or the Russian Mig-21 might also be suitable for this mission.

Defence spending up to the 2% of national income set as a NATO benchmark may be required. I will wait until the publication of the final report to attempt more detailed costings.

If a security crisis triggers an asymmetric economic shock only affecting the Republic of Ireland a small number of Eurozone states, the EU institutions including the ECB and EIB should have mechanisms for the necessary response in fiscal, monetary and banking policies to alleviate adverse effects.

The second and third scenarios I outline above, I think would need a larger commitment of resources and partnership of some sort, as I comment in question 7 below.

6.What additional steps, if any, should Ireland take to build its resilience to the threats we face?
(Recommended maximum of 500 words)

The Forum speakers and audience, correctly in my view, focused on climate change, infectious diseases and other environmental risks in the future. Solutions to such risks are already in place in Singapore from heat, heavy rainfall and typhoons, mosquito-borne diseases and pandemics. Israel and Turkey rely extensively on trading fresh water through treaties to manage water resources, international pipelines and desalination. The Nordic countries have active and efficient control of their environmental risks through dams for water management and electricity and efficient and

pervasive removal of snow and ice from streets. All these are capabilities that I would expect Ireland may need in the future under different climate scenarios. While living in Singapore, government inspectors would visit my apartment each quarter to check my toilet and other areas did not leave any stagnant water for mosquitos or areas for snakes. I can foresee similar government capabilities being needed in Ireland also, a significant increase in the role for the state in these issues.

For our infrastructure, since the cables and pipelines near our coasts and in the Irish sea are at shallow depths, maybe 50-150 meters, these are very vulnerable to sabotage, likely even a domestic terrorist group, using trawler dragging a grappling iron or amateur divers without involving military or specialist industry professionals. Drawing on my experience in trading oil, experience during wars in Colombia and Iraq suggest that rapid repair, to replace damage within 24 hours if possible, is the best form of resilience. To this end, Ireland should ensure access to the specialist ships. buy or develop undersea vehicles and stockpile replacement cables and look to practise this exhaustively.

Under catastrophic conditions, another innovation now used in England, the Netherlands and Singapore is urban farming, the growing of high-value crops, so usually fresh salad vegetables, under controlled indoor conditions, might be needed here in Ireland also. In the further future, I would hope that we can grow the food we need as molecules with more advanced biotechnology, as a hedge extreme weather, soil loss, flooding or radioactive contamination.

More broadly, systematic and extensive strategic stockpiling, of food, medical supplies, machine parts, oil and gas, and defence supplies within the Republic of Ireland will likely be necessary under conditions of regional and global insecurity going beyond the current International Energy Agency policies. These should also be dispersed as much as is feasible to increase resilience.

Most of these solutions are developments of existing capabilities of the State. However, one major weakness in Irish government and society that nobody has addressed is the lack of opportunities for public service and volunteering. The official name of the Defence Forces is the Irish Volunteers, not the "Irish poorly-paid career civil-servants living in Kildare".

I would like to see the opportunity for voluntary service to expand to give a greater degree of what the American military calls quality of service: I suggest that Irish citizens *en masse* be encouraged to take a year or two as necessary to serve in a citizen army along Finnish lines. Other options might include training and service in an expanded Civil Defence capability for emergency support, disaster relief or environmental projects. Social service may be a third option. Reserves of the military and the Gardai should also be large and trained to being capable, regardless of any complaints from their unions over the competition for budgets.

7.Should we, or can we, take these steps on our own?
(Recommended maximum of 500 words)

I would expect that Ireland, if facing a crisis if the regional or world order, would find formal relationship, if not full military alliance, with either the EU or NATO useful to share capabilities in air, sea and communications.

However, the key to security under my second or third scenario is, I suggest, that our geographic position makes us the western gateway to Europe, in communications, in the air

and at sea. Adopting this role ourselves will give Ireland more independence than relying on and also create dependence on us by other states, opening opportunities for us to employ coercion or cooperation as needed. If any nearby state should threaten our interests, then the capabilities should exist to intercept or cut communications, to threaten marine infrastructure and interfere with their trade and military transport.

Q8. Should Ireland continue to play a role in UN and/or EU peacekeeping and crisis management?

If possible, we should continue. As outlined above, I expect the skills from peace-keeping to be useful under all the scenarios above. More generally, we can expect to gains from being a good neighbour.

Q.9. If yes, should we maintain the "Triple Lock" mechanism? In your view, is there an alternative to the "Triple Lock"?

No, the Triple Lock should not be maintained. The Republic of Ireland's sovereignty has to begin with the government as agreed by Dail Eireann who have the greatest accountability to the electorate.

As an example, one reason that the White House got approval from Congress for the wars in the Gulf in 1991 and 2003 was that the President was, in both cases, able to demand approval in order to strengthen his hand in negotiations with the UNSC, rushing the decisions.

There should be no amendment to the constitution to try to constrain defence and foreign policy freedom action by the Irish government. American experience around the War Powers Resolution is that legal definitions cannot be agreed and courts have no expertise or ability to decide or enforce decisions on foreign policy questions, certainly not at any speed.

Q10. What do you view to be the defining features of Ireland's current policy of military neutrality?

Discussions at the Forum and press and social media commentary allow me to identify two broad clusters of opinion supporting the current rhetoric of neutrality.

Both highlight that a persistent problem with foreign policy as a subset of politics is its abstraction: Without everyday engagement, our understanding of situations that are culturally and geographically distant from us comes from dealing with disembodied simplifications, without the emotional and intellectual engagement with people and their real emotions and opinions. This is a hindrance to understanding for two of these groups.

One of these constituencies consists of what I label as the beautiful souls, taken from the French phrase 'belles âmes'. They usually use a language derived from Christian rhetoric, emphasising pacifism, multilateralism rather than alliances, the United Nations especially. The 'Third World', or 'Global South' is a particular emphasis also.

For all the hostility to NATO, few among these would grant the alliance the credit for a successful intervention to halt violence in Sarajevo and Bosnia, after years of hand-wringing by the EU and UN, followed by half-hearted deployments.

Talking of the 'Global South' further masks ignorance of the complex motivations of other nations. China is the most important of these given its rise to power after Mao's death: I was startled to hear one forum speaker describe China as being entirely at peace with its neighbours over the past forty years, as during the 'eighties, it had supported the Afghan Mujahaddin against the Soviets, the Khmer Rouge against Vietnam. More recently, we see its continuing repression of its own Uighur and Tibetan minorities, clampdown on more liberal Hong Kong and menacing Taiwan and carried out a bloody clashes on its Indian border, killing over fifty troops on both sides. India, Turkey, Nigeria, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Cambodia, the world is full of the

More generally, this school of thought fails to recognise that humanitarian interventions of any sort are the product of US and European dominance and the hierarchy among states and not in any sense an alternative to it: In the Bosnian case, the governments that were first reluctant began by providing UN blue helmets before turning to NATO to run an air war. Irish peacekeeping now has usually focused on supporting Israel's security relationship with its neighbours as with UNIFIL and the 'seventies treaties with its neighbours as in the Golan or Sinai missions.

The inclination rejecting nationalism and violence, even from legitimate governments, looks to me to be a legacy of the disgust at the futile killing and destruction of the Troubles and the ideologies of the paramilitaries on both sides. More explicitly, it recycles the cultural isolationism of a past Irish Catholicism, of Ireland's God-given goals as exemplar and missionary, as if ministering to a Europe in the Dark Ages.

Ironically, often using the same Christian-derived rhetoric and often overlapping with the beautiful souls, are a faction one might call the bank-robbers, extreme factions of the left or of Republicanism also opposing American or European foreign policy while explicitly supporting other authoritarian states. This has a long history, going back at least as far as the alliance of some IRA factions with Nazi Germany. There may be a similar program of violent seizure of power. Or, this may be a bid for foreign support from foreign states or in gratitude for it. Less as a guiding philosophy, such an affiliation serves more to intimidate; the Black Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver displayed posters of Mao, because he was 'the baddest motherf---er on planet Earth[10]'. Or, this can give access to a fantasy of violent revolution that has been abandoned as a practical program at home, particularly after the Northern Ireland peace process. The USSR, North Korea, Russia, Hamas, Hezbollah and especially Cuba, all serve this role at one time or another.

Q.11. Should we maintain or change our current policy of military neutrality?

To the extent it exists at all, we are not neutral in any sense at all. Nobody in Beijing or Moscow believes so that settles the question decisively.

Our history, the diaspora populations put us among the US and its allies. Our economy and society are tied almost irrevocably to the other members of the European Union. Geography dictates that we are Europe's back door.

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[10] Lovell, Julia, "Maoism: A Global History", 2019, Vintage

Q12. If we retain our policy of military neutrality, does it need to be defined more clearly?

See Q11

Q13. Should Ireland continue to work with other countries and/or international organisations, such as the EU and NATO, in the area of security and defence? What areas should this work focus on? Are there areas that should be excluded?

I have had conversations with cabinet-rank former officials who judge that we basically have the same issues – freedom of sea and air navigation, subversion, cybersecurity, protecting critical infrastructure, as the Nordic countries. However, this is based on my describing the situation to them. If there is any person or publications body in Europe or the US who thinks about Ireland in defence terms, I have not found them.

A third school of opinion on foreign policy might be called the bureaucrats, being the politicians, diplomats, public servants and the military in Ireland or working abroad on our behalf who engage in security policy. While dedicated, open-minded and impressively skilled, they necessarily have a good understanding of the limitations of Ireland's capabilities. However, they always strike me as being uninhibited compared to their European or American counterparts. Caution is needed against any sense of triumphalism over the successes such as the UNSC membership, the NI peace process, excellent relations with most US administrations and Brexit negotiations.

I also observe that, as a nation, unlike the Turks, Israelis or Singaporeans who think the world hates them, our vanity lies in thinking that the world finds us both interesting and lovable, like dolphins or pandas. As a principle, I would suggest we must urgently work to replace a sentimental approach with the more rigorous logical of realism in the form of rearmament and alliance commitments.

One warning I would add is that multilateral alliances are more likely to be available than bespoke, bilateral deals. Irish security policy seems to be conducted like we are a neurotic vegan invited to a dinner party. I have no confidence that other nations will go to much effort to accommodate our peculiarities, as the British learned to their cost during Brexit.

Q. 14. Is there anything further you would like to add? Please indicate here if there are confidential elements in your response which should not be published.)

The issue of Northern Ireland has to be handled carefully to avoid appearing to threaten the Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist community with subversion, violent coercion or forced, violent population movements. Neither will the UK take kindly to anything it perceives as threats of violence. Early and extensive consultation and cooperation will be essential.

Irish nationalists of all parties committed to unification may find my analysis above repellent, convinced as they are of the attractions of unification. Our heritage of guerrilla war risks trapping us in complacent vanity on security more generally, when even the British at their worst in the last century were nowhere near as violent in Ireland as they and other great powers have been everywhere else in the world.

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In Confidence

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Consultative Forum on International Security Policy

For the Attention Of Professor Louise Richardson DBE

Dear Professor Richardson,

In advance of the 7 July deadline I hope this submission will be of interest to you.

I am an Irish Citizen with experience of National Security and Defence which is perhaps,unique.I spent about 30 years in the UK Defence Industrial Sector,advised a UK Prime Minister on the presentation of the multilateral vs unilateral approaches to nuclear disarmament and have first -hand experience of wars and war zones-including to the present day.

In 1993 a US Congressional delegation led by Representative Ike Skelton came to Ireland to see at first hand the Irish approach to peacekeeping. He was a good friend of mine and came at my suggestion.

I held security clearances of NATO Top Secret during my work with Plessey Radar on the AR320 Radar Programme.

I was similarly cleared to UK MOD Top Secret (Nuclear) in my time as a Director of VSEL,Prime Contractor of the UK's Nuclear Submarine Deterrent Programme.

In light of the above you might consider it surprising to find that I would consider myself a pacifist who fully supports our Constitution's objective of the settlement of international disputes by pacific means.

I often hear politicians and academics calling for extremes in terms of waging or avoiding war.Most of them have never experienced war at a close distance.I have and I can say with absolute certainty that it is to be avoided at almost any cost.The sights and sounds can be replicated on film,the smell never leaves.It is an indelible and horrible assault on the senses.
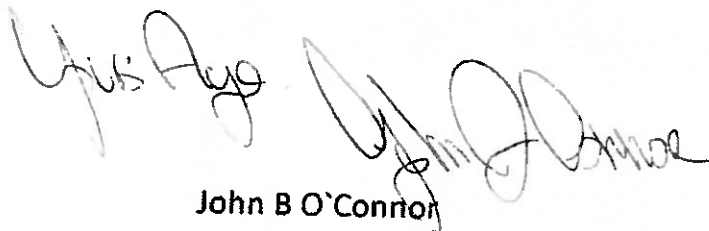
One way to become involved in a war is through the reckless pursuit of ill guided Foreign Policy.

Another,almost equally likely to lead to war,is to appear unwilling or unable to defend the National Interest in its many shapes and forms.

With the foregoing in mind I attach some thoughts on some of the current issues under discussion.My views I stress, are not ideological, not "left" nor "right".Simply based on my experience and observations over a protracted period of time.

I attach an overview of my career as a background note. I would ask that this and any other views that I put forward are protected and suitably redacted if necessary.

Should you decide to " Red Team" a draft of your report I have plenty of experience in that regard and would be more than happy to assist.

John B O`Connor

1st July 2023

The Issues

NATO. Irish membership of NATO would not be good for either party.

NATO is an intensively bureaucratic and expensive club to join. There is the risk of drawing Ireland into conflicts in which it has no interest. In peacetime there is no economic upside. Ireland has no Defence Industrial capability of any note so bidding for NATO prime contracts is not an option.

NATO has shown highly dubious decision making. Its post Cold War policy of admitting ex Warsaw Pact members, its inaction on Georgia and Crimea has scored the double own goal of emboldening and provoking Russia. Even considering letting Ukraine into NATO gave Putin the very excuse he needed to launch his invasion.

Does Ireland need to be tied to such flawed decision making? Is it likely to improve with the quality of leadership that has emerged in the US and UK?

In a full scale East-West war in Continental Europe the ill equipped Irish Defence forces would simply, in the main, get in the way.

Triple Lock. We are grown up Country if we decide that there is a reason, almost certainly humanitarian, to deploy forces abroad then that should be good enough. No need to seek permission from the UK, China, Russia etc

Its an absurd concept. The Romans made their position quite clear, their legions owing allegiance only to Senatus Populus Que Romanus. We can follow that example.

Neutrality. Often described in Constitutional terms it is in fact a matter of the policy of the Government of the day and the Dail. The Constitution does not need to be amended. It confers perfectly adequate powers to the Government to take actions as it sees fit, particularly in times of emergency or invasion.

Where care needs to be taken though, is in confusing Neutrality with protection from hostile action. Ireland along with many other Countries is already programmed into the Russian fire control system. Every target of value-political institutions, airports, power stations, miltary bases etc etc are already entered in and assigned a target number. If an East-West conflict breaks out Ireland, though neutral, will be engaged and those targets attacked as a matter of routine.

Under these circumstance Irelands's position on neutrality will be completely immaterial. The US and the UK will decide what is in their own interests and act accordingly.

So neutrality does not offer Ireland protection at a National level or an individual level as soldiers serving abroad have tragically learned.

Still, on balance neutrality brings more good than harm with it and should be preserved. But in the realistic recognition that it offers little or no protection from malign actors across the board .

Counter Intelligence. Not a subject which seems to have been ventilated much and perhaps judged to be too sensitive to do so.

If Ireland has succeeded in foiling Russian policy and doctrine aimed at gaining influence and intelligence in and from the Western democracies it is surely unique among them -and that is just not credible.

It would be beyond belief to assume that a Country with no established Counter Intelligence /Security Service has succeeded where other democracies with vast budgets and highly trained staff have failed.

It will be the job of some of the "diplomats" based in the Russian Embassy in Dublin (and others) to cultivate and control decision makers here .This is their Standard Operating Proceedure. They will target Politicians,Civil Servants,Journalists ,Academics just about anyone who has an ideological or personal attraction. "The Needy or The Greedy" is how it is often described in CI circles and it is an area which must be taken very seriously, very soon.

JOHN O'CONNOR DEFENCE & SECURITY EXPERIENCE.

SELECTED ACTIVITIES.

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Enclosed : Copy of leaflet →
             2nd Copy for Forum submission

To Minister Mícheál Martin, T.D.,
Dept. of Foreign Affairs
Iveagh House, 80 St. Stephen's Green
Dublin 2.

Dear Minister Mícheál,

      I am writing, conscious of the fact that tomorrow, 7th July is stated to mark the deadline for submissions to the Irish government's Consultative Forum on International Security Policy. I was unable to attend any of that Forum's four sittings as I do not operate on-line, having long ago opted out of using 'smartphone' or computer for strong personal and medical reasons. All of these sittings seem to have been booked out at an early stage and my efforts to secure a ticket for either of the Dublin Castle events by visiting the front office at Iveagh House on Wed. 7th June and Fri 23rd June were unsuccessful. Those I spoke to there seemed to have little information about it, even after they phoned (your?) the 'Minister's office'. I was advised to go on line and apply on the Ir. gov website(?) which I had informed them was inaccessible to me. I mentioned my problem to your good self personally when you were arriving at Govt. Buildings for a pre-Cabinet meeting interview on Thursday morning the 8th of June.

      As part of my submission to the Consultative Fora, I enclose a copy of my leaflet outlining key points of concern about Irish neutrality and NATO. I personally handed you an earlier edition of that leaflet when I met you on the 8th of June.

      To conclude my submission I want to underline and emphasise a few key points relevant to the Forum's remit.

1. The Belfast / Good Friday agreement of 1998 is generally considered to be extremely important, and rightly so. Its terms are absolutely incompatible with any association of Ireland with the NATO alliance.

2. I, and many others, consider the facilitation and protection of the US war machine at civilian Shannon Airport, and in Irish airspace to have seriously undermined any principled Irish neutrality and also the Belfast / Good Friday agreement.

3. Given the current widespread concern of the Irish government, politicians and the printed media about accountability for taxpayers money and misinformation, I wish to underline the fact that there are similar serious accountability and information concerns about Irish government and security dealings with the US military (and C.I.A.). There appears to me, and many others, no accountability and serious misinformation about the use of Irish taxpayers' money at Shannon Airport. Given that each US military plane on the tarmac at Shannon Airport is protected by three Irish army personnel and a member of the Garda Síochána… (and 2 vehicles) … all of them public servants and paid by the Irish taxpayer… many millions of tax money has been spent since 2001/2, vastly more than the amount spent by R.T.E. For twenty years and more I have been unable to establish accountability for this use/abuse of taxpayers money from any Irish government department, politician or public servant. There is, it seems to me, not just a lack of accountability, but also considerable misinformation, even in official answers to Parliamentary Questions about US military use of Shannon, given the millions of armed personnel and vast amounts of munitions transiting the airport since 2001/2. This is a' matter of profound concern and complicity.

      Sincerely,   Colm Roddy (COLM RODDY) Irish citizen.

REFLECTIONS on IRISH NEUTRALITY and U.N. PEACE KEEPING

The 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement commits all parties "to move from force to exclusively peaceful and democratic means of resolving conflict"

'The Economist' noted in 2020 that this small neutral country "has a good claim to be the world's most diplomatically powerful country."

Speaking in March 2022 in support of a Referendum on Neutrality," Senator Tom Clonan, retired Irish Army Captain and former U.N. peacekeeper, emphasised that if Ireland surrendered its neutrality, if we merged into an EU defence force, we would become invisible. Our diplomatic clout would be seriously diminished."

"NATO is a nuclear weapons-based military alliance and an instrument of U.S. hegemony which seeks to divide and dominate rather than to resolve international conflict by peaceful and non-military means. "

" ... a policy of principled neutrality precludes not only formal membership of NATO but also participation in NATO programmes and structures such as PfP."

BUNREACHT NA hÉIREANN

Article 5. Ireland is a sovereign, independent, democratic state.

Article 6. All powers of government ... derive, under God, from the people, whose right it is ..., in final appeal, to decide all questions of national policy, according to the requirements of the common good.

Article 29.2. Ireland affirms its adherence to the principle of pacific settlement of international disputes by international arbitration or judicial determination.

A Referendum is therefore essential to give the sovereign Irish people a say in any proposal to apply for membership of NATO.

* Quotations above from Nobel Peace Prize winner, Mairéad Maguire, Iain Atack and Carol Fox, taken from AfrI 2022 publication "A Force for Good"?"

CR 030623 (Colm Roddy) Colm Roddy   21/6

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CR 030623   Signed: Colm Roddy   21/6

COLM RODDY (81),   SUBMISSION

Dr Andy Scollick

E:
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Professor Dame Louise Richardson DBE
C/o International Security Policy Section
Department of Foreign Affairs
80 St Stephen's Green
Dublin 2, D02 VY53

6 July 2023

Public Consultation on International Security Policy

Submission by Andy Scollick, PhD

Dear Professor Richardson,

I would like to focus on Ireland's foreign, security and defence policies in the context of climate change. The first part looks at some background from the latest scientific assessments regarding climate change, focusing on the human dimension, which sets the evidence-based scene for my assumptions, arguments and opinions that follow. The second part looks at the implications for future policies.

Before beginning, as a write this, the five top headlines on the *Guardian* climate crisis section on 5 July 2023 are indicative of the dire state of affairs regarding climate change:

- *China floods: Xi Jinping urges action as rains destroy buildings and displace thousands*
- *Revealed: UK plans to drop flagship £11.6bn climate pledge*
- *Extreme weather: Monday was hottest day for global average temperature on record, as climate crisis bites*
- *El Niño: Climate-heating El Niño has arrived and threatens lives, declares UN*
- *Climate crisis: Will El Niño on top of global heating create the perfect climate storm?*

1. Climate Change

1.1 Latest IPCC assessment of climate change

Despite the 2015 Paris Agreement, various national climate action plans and significant progress in the transition away from fossil to renewable energy sources, global warming will continue to by driven by future emissions. According to the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change** (IPCC) *Synthesis Report of the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6)* (Lee *et al.* 2023: pp. 33–43), this will affect all major components of the climate system, that is, the atmosphere, hydrosphere, cryosphere, land, biosphere, anthroposphere and the interactions between them. Every region will experience multiple and concurrent changes, many of which will be irreversible on centennial to millennial time scales.

In nearly all scenarios and modelled pathways considered by the IPCC, global warming will continue to increase in the near term (i.e. before 2040). The Earth will reach a global average temperature of 1.5°C above the 1850–1900 baseline level in the first half of the 2030s. Under the very lowest, most optimistic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions scenario, the 1.5°C global warming level is likely to be exceeded, with an overshoot of no more than 0.1°C before declining back to 1.4°C by the end of the 21st century. Under higher emissions scenarios, global warming is likely or very likely to exceed the 1.5°C level in the near term. 'Global warming of 2°C will be exceeded during the 21st century unless deep reductions in [carbon dioxide (CO_2)] and other GHG emissions occur in the coming decades' (p. 33).

Future warming depends on future GHG emissions, with cumulative net CO_2 being dominant. The IPCC gives best estimates (and corresponding ranges in brackets) of global warming above the 1850–1900 baseline for the period 2081–2100 that spread from 1.4°C (1.0–1.8°C) for a very low GHG emissions scenario to 2.7°C (2.1°C–3.5°C) for an intermediate scenario and 4.4°C (3.3°C–5.7°C) for a very high GHG emissions scenario. Furthermore, modelled emissions pathways that are consistent with a continuation of current climate policies (as of the end of 2020) lead to global warming of 3.2°C (2.2–3.5°C) by 2100.

Many climate-related risks (i.e. the potential for adverse consequences) are higher than previously assessed. Projected long-term impacts 'will be up to multiple times higher than currently observed' (p. 36), for example, in terms of the number of affected people and species. 'Many changes in the climate system become larger in direct relation to increasing global warming. With every additional increment of global warming, changes in extremes continue to become larger' (p. 34).

Continued global warming will: further amplify permafrost thawing and loss of seasonal snow cover, glaciers, land ice and Arctic sea ice; further intensify the global water cycle, including its variability, global monsoon precipitation, and very wet and very dry weather events and seasons; lead to more frequent and intense marine heatwaves; increase ocean acidification and deoxygenation; and increase global mean sea level. Sea level rise is unavoidable and will continue for thousands of years, 'with higher emissions leading to greater and faster rates of sea level rise' (p. 42).

With every increment of global warming, climate change influences and risks will become increasingly complex and more difficult to manage as regions experience multiple and concurrent changes and events. Compound heatwaves and droughts will become more frequent. At 1.5°C global warming, heavy precipitation and flooding events are projected to intensify and become more frequent in most regions in Africa, Asia, North America and Europe. At 2°C or above, these changes expand to more regions and/or become more significant and more frequent. Severe agricultural and ecological droughts are projected in Europe, Africa, Australasia and North, Central and South America. Other projected regional changes include intensification of tropical cyclones and/or extratropical storms, and increases in aridity and fire weather (pp. 34–35). Risks will potentially cascade across sectors and regions due to the interactions between multiple climatic and non-climatic risk drivers such as biodiversity loss or violent conflict (p. 37).

At 1.5°C global warming, climate-related risks to ecosystems and human health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security and economic growth are projected to increase. At 2°C global warming, overall risk levels will transition to *high* and *very high*. Climate-related

changes in food availability and diet quality will increase nutrition-related diseases and the number of undernourished people, affecting tens to hundreds of millions of people, particularly among the more vulnerable in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Central America. 'Climate change risks to cities, settlements and key infrastructure will rise sharply in the mid- and long-term with further global warming, especially in places already exposed to high temperatures, along coastlines, or with high vulnerabilities' (p. 36).

At 3°C global warming, 'additional risks in many sectors and regions reach high or very high levels, implying widespread systemic impacts, irreversible change and many additional adaptation limits' (p. 37). At 4°C and above, global warming will lead to far-reaching impacts on natural and human systems. It is projected that about 4 billion people will experience water scarcity and the global burned area will increase by 50–70% and the fire frequency by about 30% compared to today.

As global warming increases so does the likelihood of abrupt and irreversible changes and their impacts. Between 1.5–2.5°C, risks associated with large-scale singular events or tipping points, such as ice sheet instability or ecosystem loss from tropical forests, transition to high risk and then to very high risk between 2.5–4°C. 'The probability of crossing uncertain regional thresholds increases with further warming' (p. 42).

The IPCC synthesis report also addresses high-impact, low-probability risks:

> **'The probability of low-likelihood outcomes associated with potentially very large impacts increases with higher global warming levels [...]**. Warming substantially above the assessed *very likely* range for a given scenario cannot be ruled out, and there is *high confidence* this would lead to regional changes greater than assessed in many aspects of the climate system. Low-likelihood, high-impact outcomes could occur at regional scales even for global warming within the *very likely* assessed range for a given GHG emissions scenario' (p. 43, emphases in original).

For example, a low-probability event such as a sequence of large explosive volcanic eruptions within decades, which would lead to substantial cooling globally and regional climate perturbations over several decades. Or an abrupt collapse of the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation — the 'conveyor belt' that carries warm water northward and cold, dense deeper water southward — which, if it occurs, would '*very likely* cause abrupt shifts in regional weather patterns and water cycle, such as a southward shift in the tropical rain belt, and large impacts on ecosystems and human activities' (p. 43, emphasis in original).

1.2 Climate change updates

Global
The **World Meteorological Organization** (WMO) *State of the Global Climate 2022* report (WMO 2023a) complements the IPCC AR6, which only includes literature submissions up to and including 2021. Key climate indicators show that planetary scale changes caused by record levels of GHGs continued in 2022:

Greenhouse gases — Concentrations of the three main GHGs (CO_2, methane and nitrous oxide) reached record highs in 2021, the latest year for which consolidated global values are available. The annual increase in methane concentration from 2020 to 2021 was the highest

on record. Real-time data from specific locations show that levels of the three GHGs continued to increase in 2022.

Temperature — The updated global average temperature over the period 2013–2022 was 1.15°C (1.00–1.25°C) above the 1850–1900 average. The years 2015 to 2022 were the eight warmest in the 173-year instrumental record despite the cooling impact of a La Niña event for the past three years.

Oceans — Global mean sea level continued to rise in 2022. Around 90% of the energy trapped in the climate system by GHGs goes into the ocean. Ocean heat content, which measures this gain in energy, reached a new record high in 2022.

Cryosphere — Sea ice in Antarctica dropped to the lowest level on record. The Greenland Ice Sheet experienced a reduction in mass for the 26th year in a row. The European Alps smashed records for glacier melt in 2022. Measurements on glaciers in High Mountain Asia, western North America, South America and parts of the Arctic also reveal substantial glacier mass losses.

Extreme meteorological and climatological events such as heavy rain and snow, droughts, heatwaves, cold spells and storms, including tropical storms and cyclones, individually, in combination and in conjunction with other factors, can lead to other events such as flooding, landslides, wildfires and compound extremes. 'Together, these have a wide range of impacts on human and natural systems' (WMO 2003a: p. 24). Populations worldwide continue to be gravely impacted by extreme weather and climate events. "For example, in 2022, continuous drought in East Africa, record breaking rainfall in Pakistan and record-breaking heatwaves in China and Europe affected tens of millions, drove food insecurity, boosted mass migration, and cost billions of dollars in loss and damage," said WMO Secretary-General Professor Petteri Taalas (WMO 2023b).

Excess deaths associated with record-breaking heatwaves in Europe in 2022 exceeded 15,000 in total across Spain, Germany, the United Kingdom, France and Portugal. China had its most extensive and long-lasting heatwave since national records began, resulting in the hottest summer on record by a margin of more than 0.5°C. 'As of January 2023, it was estimated that over 20 million people faced acute food insecurity across the region, under the effects of the drought and other shocks' (WMO 2023b). In Pakistan in July and August 2022, record-breaking rainfall led to extensive flooding. Some 33 million people were affected, while almost 8 million people were displaced, with at least 1,700 deaths.

In terms of socio-economic impacts: as of 2021, '2.3 billion people faced food insecurity, of which 924 million people faced severe food insecurity' (WMO 2023a: p. 32). An estimated 767.9 million people — 9.8% of the global population — faced undernourishment in 2021. 'Rising undernourishment has been exacerbated by the compounded effects of hydrometeorological hazards and COVID-19 on health, food security, incomes and equality, as well as the effects of protracted conflicts and violence' (WMO 2023a: p. 33). As of October 2022, people in several countries in Africa and Asia, plus Haiti in the Caribbean, experienced starvation or death and required urgent humanitarian action. 'In these countries, the key drivers and aggravating factors for acute food insecurity were conflict/insecurity, economic shocks, political instability, displacement, dry conditions and cyclones' (p. 33).

Furthermore, heatwaves in the 2022 pre-monsoon season in India and Pakistan caused a decline in crop yields. This, combined with the banning of wheat exports and restrictions on rice exports in India after Russia's attempted full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, 'threatened the availability, access, and stability of staple foods within international food markets and posed high risks to countries already affected by shortages of staple foods' (WMO 2023a: p. 33).

Throughout 2022, hazardous climate- and weather-related events and conditions drove new population displacement and worsened the situation for many of the 95 million people already living in displacement at the beginning of the year. Though most people displaced by such events remained within the territories where they resided, in some situations people were forced to flee across international borders in search of safety and assistance.

The Horn of Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia) was particularly badly affected due to the catastrophic impacts of drought, hunger and conflict. In Syria, severe winter storms, heavy snowfall and flooding damaged displacement sites, leading to secondary displacements. In Pakistan, by October 2022, some 8 million people had been internally displaced by the floods. In Bangladesh, the monsoon season brought the worst floods in 20 years, affecting nearly 7.2 million people, resulting in over 1 million displacements. In Brazil, floods and storms triggered a record 656,000 internal displacements. 'Some high-impact weather events in 2022 happened consecutively, leaving little time for recovery between shocks and compounding repeated and protracted displacement' (WMO 2023a: p. 36).

Europe
The *State of the Climate in Europe Report 2022* by the **WMO and the European Union's (EU) Copernicus Climate Change Service** (WMO 2023c) confirms that Europe is the fastest warming of all the WMO regions. Since the 1980s, Europe has warmed at a rate of +0.5°C per decade, more than twice the global average. The 2022 annual average temperature for Europe was between the second and fourth highest on record: approximately 2.3°C above the pre-industrial (1850-1900) average used as a baseline for the Paris Agreement. Much of south-western Europe was more than 1°C above the 1991–2020 average in 2022, with some areas more than 2°C above. 'The Arctic has been warming at a rate well above the global average since the 1990s, and over north-western Siberia in 2022 annual average temperatures were more than 3°C above the 1991–2020 average' (WMO 2023c: p. 8).

In 2022 Europe had its hottest summer since records began, while many countries in western and south-western Europe had their warmest year on record. Precipitation was below average across much of the region. The high temperatures "exacerbated the severe and widespread drought conditions, fuelled violent wildfires that resulted in the second largest burnt area on record, and led to thousands of heat-associated excess deaths," said Professor Taalas (WMO 2023c: p. 4). The severe heatwaves Europe experienced during the summer contributed to 16,305 reported excess deaths. "Our current understanding of the climate system and its evolution informs us that these kinds of events are part of a pattern that will make heat stress extremes more frequent and more intense across the region," said Dr Carlo Buontempo, Director of the Copernicus Climate Change Service (WMO 2023d). Storms and floods led to dozens of fatalities.

The lack of precipitation, in particular winter snow, combined with high summer temperatures, contributed to the largest loss of glacial ice recorded in the European Alps. The Greenland Ice Sheet continued to lose mass during 2022, and in September periods of exceptional warmth led to widespread surface melt. Meanwhile, North Atlantic sea surface temperatures in the WMO Europe region were the warmest on record and large portions of the region's seas were affected by strong or even severe and extreme marine heatwaves.

1.3 Global warming: where are we now and where are we heading?

The IPCC (Lee *et al.* 2023: p. 6) states that the updated global average surface temperature over the period 2013–2022 was 1.15°C (1.00–1.25°C) warmer than the 1850–1900 pre-industrial average. (The United Kingdom's Met Office puts the 2022 global average temperature at 1.16°C above the same baseline (Madge 2023), while Berkeley Earth (2023a) places it at 1.24°C above the baseline.) This observed net warming is the result of human activities and the emission of GHGs, dominated by CO_2 and methane, partly masked by aerosol cooling, primarily from the combustion of fossil fuels and changes in land use. The land temperatures were 1.65°C (1.36°C–1.90°C) and the ocean temperatures were 0.93°C (0.73°C–1.04°C) above 1850–1900 for the period 2013–2022.

A significant proportion of CO_2 emissions remain in the atmosphere for a very long time. According to the **IPCC** (Masson-Delmotte *et al.* 2021: p. 777), of the about 2,560 billion tonnes of CO_2 that were released into the atmosphere by human activities between 1750 and 2019, about a quarter was absorbed by the ocean (causing ocean acidification) and about a third by land vegetation. About 45% of these emissions remain in the atmosphere. Approximately 15–40% of an emitted CO_2 pulse will remain in the atmosphere longer than 1,000 years, 10–25% will remain for about ten thousand years, and the rest will be removed over several hundred thousand years (Masson-Delmotte *et al.* 2021: p. 2237).

(An earlier IPCC rule-of-thumb was that 'About 50% of a CO_2 increase will be removed from the atmosphere within 30 years, and a further 30% will be removed within a few centuries. The remaining 20% may stay in the atmosphere for many thousands of years' (Deman et al. 2007: p. 501).)

According to the **International Energy Agency** (IEA), global energy-related[1] CO_2 emissions grew by 0.9% or 321 million tonnes to a new all-time high of 36.8 billion tonnes in 2022 (IEA 2023: p. 5). These CO_2 emissions accounted for 89% of energy-related GHG emissions. Energy-related methane emissions rose to nearly 135 million tonnes CH4 or around 4 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent in 2022. Total energy-related GHG emissions increased by 1.0% to an all-time high of 41.3 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent (p. 14).

An analysis of data from the **Carbon Monitor** project[2] by Liu *et al.* (2023) finds that global CO_2 emissions from fossil fuel combustion and cement production reached 36.1 billion tonnes in 2022: an increase of 1.5% relative to 2021 and de facto rebound to near pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels.[3] 'These 2022 emissions consumed 13%–36% of the remaining

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[1] That is, emissions from all uses of fossil fuels for energy purposes, including the combustion of non-renewable waste, as well as emissions from industrial processes such as cement, iron and steel, and chemicals production (IEA 2023: p. 16).

[2] https://carbonmonitor.org

[3] NB. Land-use changes accounted for an additional 4 billion tonnes of CO_2 emissions in 2022.

carbon budget to limit warming to 1.5°C, suggesting permissible emissions could be depleted within 2–7 years (67% likelihood)' (p. 205). The authors speculate that 'global CO_2 emissions might have returned to a pre-pandemic trend of continuous growth, suggesting that the peak of emissions has not yet been reached' (p. 205).

The atmospheric concentration of CO_2 continues to increase. It has risen from a relatively stable 280 parts per million (ppm) for millennia prior to the Industrial Revolution to 370 ppm by 2000 and 400 ppm by 2015. According to the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration** (NOAA) and the **'Keeling Curve'**, the monthly average CO_2 concentration currently stands at around 420 ppm (415–425 ppm) and continues its upward trend (NOAA 2023a; Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UC San Diego). As does the atmospheric concentration of other significant greenhouse gases, including fossil methane, which is 82.5 times more potent than CO_2 over 20 years, and nitrous oxide, which is 273 times more potent than CO_2 over 100 years (Masson-Delmotte *et al.* 2021: p. 1017).

According to NOAA, the atmospheric concentration of methane has reached a global monthly average of 1,920 parts per billion (ppb). To put this in perspective, the level was about 1,775 ppb in 2005 (NOAA 2023b). Likewise, atmospheric levels of nitrous oxide continue to reach new highs: a global monthly average of 336.6 ppb in 2023, compared to 319.7 ppb in 2005 (NOAA 2023c).

In other words, the atmospheric levels of CO_2, methane and nitrous oxide are continuing to increase at an alarming rate. The annual increase in methane in 2021 was about 18 ppb: the largest annual increase on record (WMO 2023a: p. 2).

1.4 Internal displacement and migration

In its *2023 Global Report on Internal Displacement*, the **Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre** (IDMC) recorded 60.9 million internal displacements (the number of forced movements of people within a country's borders) worldwide in 2022, a 60% increase on 2021 and the highest number ever. This comprised 28.3 million people displaced as a result of conflict and violence, and 32.6 million people displaced as a result of disasters. Of those displaced by disasters, 31.8 million (98%) were displaced by weather-related hazards, including 19.2 million by floods, 10 million by storms, 2.2 million by droughts and 366,000 by wildfires. The number of people living in internal displacement (IDPs) reached a record high of 71.1 million people at the end of 2022 and continues to rise. In many cases, disasters and conflict overlapped, prolonging IDPs' situations and displacing some for a second or third time. Conflict, disasters and displacement have aggravated global food insecurity. Climate variability, slow-onset hazards linked to climate change and weather-related shocks are likely to continue to drive internal displacements and increase pressure on already stretched systems. IDPs are more vulnerable to climate change impacts (IDMC 2023).

Forcibly displaced populations also include externally displaced people, such as refugees and asylum-seekers. According to the **United Nations Refugee Agency** (UNHCR), at the end of 2022 there were 35.3 million refugees and 5.4 million asylum-seekers worldwide (UNHCR 2023).

The *World Migration Report 2022* by the United Nations **International Organization for Migration** (IOM) states that there were almost 281 million international migrants in the

world in 2020, which equates to 3.6% of the global population. This was up from 272 million (or 3.5%) in 2019 and 128 million more than in 1990. Nearly two thirds of these being labour migrants (migrant workers). Europe and Asia each hosted around 87 and 86 million international migrants respectively – comprising 61% of global international migrants. These regions were followed by North America, with almost 59 million international migrants in 2020 or 21% of global migrants, Africa at 9%, Latin America and the Caribbean at 5%, and Oceania at 3% (IOM 2021).

International migration is a complex issue that is subject to misinformation and politicisation. The vast majority of people do not migrate across borders; much larger numbers migrate within countries. Migration is not uniform across the world: it is shaped by economic, geographic, demographic and other factors, including the impacts of climate change, resulting in distinct migration patterns, such as migration 'corridors' being developed over many years. Migration corridors represent an accumulation of migratory movements over time. The largest corridors tend to be from developing countries to larger economies, such as those of the United States, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Germany. Large corridors can also reflect protracted conflict and related displacement, such as from Syria to Turkey (IOM 2021).

The relationship between the impacts of climate change and migration issues, including migration policy and practice, remains subject to significant knowledge gaps. However, it is recognised that migration[4] is generally multicausal, with decisions or the necessity to migrate being shaped by a combination of different factors, including a wide range of environmental and climate factors, from sudden-onset disasters such as typhoons and floods, to slow-onset processes like sea-level rise and land degradation (IOM 2021: p. 233).

In the context of environmental and climate change, migration can take many forms, 'with people moving near or far, internally or across borders, for a limited period of time or permanently' (p. 233). Climate change-induced displacement, migration and planned relocation constitute a continuum from forced (involuntary) to voluntary forms of migration. The corollary, of course, are the immobile and 'trapped' populations left behind who do not have the means to migrate out of areas degraded by the impacts of climate change.

A meta-analysis of literature by Šedová *et al.* (2021: p. 37) concludes that slow-onset impacts of climate change, in particular extremely high temperatures and drying conditions (i.e. extreme precipitation decrease or droughts), are generally more likely to increase migration than sudden-onset events (i.e. floods and hurricanes).

Projections of the number of climate migrants
The **World Bank**'s updated *Groundswell* report forecasts that without early and concerted climate and development action, as many as 216 million people could move within their own countries due to slow-onset climate change impacts by 2050. This comprises 85.7 million in Sub-Saharan Africa, 48.4 million in East Asia and the Pacific, 40.5 million in South Asia, 19.3 million in North Africa, 17.1 million in Latin America and 5.1 million in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. They will migrate from areas with water scarcity and lower crop productivity and from areas affected by sea-level rise and storm surges. 'Hotspots of internal climate migration could emerge as early as 2030 and continue to spread and intensify by 2050'

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[4] Chapter 9 uses 'migration' as an umbrella term to refer to forced and voluntary forms of movement that can occur in the context of climate and environmental change (IOM 2021: p. 236).

(Clement *et al.* 2021). Some places may become less liveable by 2050 due to heat stress, extreme weather events and land degradation.

The **United Nations** *World Population Prospects 2022* projects global population to grow to around 8.5 billion people in 2030, 9.7 billion people in 2050 and reach a peak of 10.4 billion people in the 2080s and to remain at that level until 2100 (United Nations 2022: p. i).

The **Institute for Economics & Peace**'s (IEP) *Ecological Threat Report 2022* assesses ecological threats relating to food risk, water risk, rapid population growth and natural disasters. Though such threats may exist independently of climate change, climate change will have an amplifying effect, causing further ecological degradation. There were some 768 million people already facing extreme food insecurity (undernourishment) in 2021, 92% of them living in the least peaceful countries. 'Food insecurity and water stress are interlinked, as without adequate water capture it is impossible to provide sufficient food' (IEP 2022: p. 3). More than 1.4 billion people live in regions already experiencing severe levels of water stress. Although sub-Saharan Africa is the most exposed, several European countries are projected to have serious water stress by 2040, including Albania, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Kosovo, Macedonia, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania and Turkey. 'Conflict over water has been increasing, with the number of incidents where water was a trigger of fatal conflict increased by 300 per cent since 2000' (p. 4).

By 2050, 70% of the world's population will live in cities, up from the 54% in 2020. Many megacities (cities with more than 10 million people) have high projected population growth rates, high levels of air pollution, poor sanitation, lack of infrastructure, high crime rates, low levels of societal resilience, low levels of peace and substantial ecological threats (IEP 2022: p. 5).

The *Ecological Threat Report 2022* identifies 27 hotspot countries that face catastrophic ecological threats while also having the lowest levels of societal resilience. These countries are home to 768 million people. Seven of the eight most at risk hotspot countries are in sub-Saharan Africa. These are Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda. The eighth country is Yemen (IEP 2022: p. 2).

The IEP estimates that in 2050, some 3.4 billion people (34.7% of the world's total population) will reside in countries facing catastrophic ecological threats, compared to 2 billion in 2022. Most of the increase will be in sub-Saharan Africa.

The shrinking human climate niche
A recent paper by **Lenton *et al.*** (2023) calculates the numbers of people likely to be left outside of the 'human climate niche' as a consequence of global warming. Humans have adapted physiologically and culturally to a wide range of local climates. However, human population density has historically peaked in places with an average annual temperature of approximately 13°C, with a secondary peak at about 27°C (associated with monsoon climates principally in South Asia). Therefore, our primary niche in which we thrive as a species is around 13°C. The density of domesticated crops and livestock follow similar patterns, while wealth (measured by gross domestic product or GDP) also peaks at about

13°C. Mortality increases at both higher and lower temperatures, consistent with the existence of a niche.[5]

The study shows that global warming has already put approximately 9% of the global population (more than 600 million people) outside the cooler primary (13°C) human climate niche. They are now living in the 'middle ground' between the 13°C and 27°C peaks. "While not dangerously hot, these conditions tend to be much drier and have not historically supported dense human populations," said Professor Chi Xu of Nanjing University (Morrison 2023). "Meanwhile, the vast majority of people set to be left outside the niche due to future warming will be exposed to dangerous heat."

Above the present level of approximately 1.2°C global warming, exposure to dangerous heat extremes (average annual temperatures of 29°C or higher) is predicted to increase markedly (Lenton et al. 2023: p. 6). Current climate policies are projected to result in 2.7°C global warming toward the end of the century (2080–2100). This could leave 22–39% of the global population outside the climate niche. **That's between 2.1 billion and 3.7 billion people.**

Population growth is projected to be highest in places at risk of dangerous heat. Assuming a future world of 9.5 billion people and 2.7°C global warming, India would have the greatest population exposed outside the niche at about 600 million people, followed by Nigeria with 300 million exposed. Exposure outside the niche could result in increased morbidity (illness or disease), mortality, adaptation in place, displacement or migration to lower temperature locations. High temperatures have been linked to increased mortality, decreased labour productivity, decreased cognitive performance, impaired learning, adverse pregnancy outcomes, decreased crop yield potential, increased conflict, hate speech, migration and infectious disease spread (Lenton et al. 2023: p. 2).

The 2.7°C level of global warming would expose large land areas of some countries to unprecedented heat. The worst-case scenarios of 3.6°C or even 4.4 °C global warming could put half of the world population outside the historical human climate niche, posing an existential risk (Lenton et al. 2023: p. 7). On the other hand, "Limiting global warming to 1.5°C rather than 2.7°C would mean five times fewer people in 2100 being exposed to dangerous heat," said Professor Tim Lenton, Director of the Global Systems Institute at the University of Exeter (Morrison 2023).

1.5 Overview and assumptions

Earth's climate shows a global warming of some 1.2°C since pre-industrial times. Concentrations of GHGs continue to increase in the atmosphere as a result of continuing emissions and probably also amplifying feedbacks (see below). Thus, heat continues to build up in the environment.

The impacts of climate change are already affecting many millions of people and this will worsen. In 2022 there were over 30 million people displaced by weather and climate related hazards (IDMC 2023). Some 768 million people faced extreme food insecurity in 2021 and 1.4 billion people live in regions already experiencing severe levels of water stress (IEP 2022). Lenton et al. (2023) forecast that under the 2.7°C middle scenario (see below) between 2.1

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[5] Exposure to temperatures greater than 40°C can be lethal and lethal temperature decreases as humidity increases.

billion and 3.7 billion people will live outside the human climate niche that has underpinned the emergence, development and continuation of human civilisation for millennia. **In effect, some 2.1–3.7 billion people living across the broad equatorial belt and parts of the adjacent mid-latitude belts will likely be under increased threat of internal displacement and forced migration in 60 to 80 years' time.**

Europe is already an average 2.3°C warmer than during pre-industrial times (WMO 2023c). Long-term (slow-onset) climate change will affect every aspect of Europe's social, economic and ecological fabric. Southern Europe will likely experience some of the largest percentage increases globally in extreme temperatures above 40°C, plus increases in the number of consecutive dry days. Drought, crop failures, wildfires and heat stress as well as extreme wet weather events will increase in frequency and severity, wreaking havoc on livelihoods and infrastructure, potentially including the growing renewable energy sector.

Continuing emissions of GHGs are super-charging weather extremes in Europe and every other region of the world. The UK Met Office (2023) has warned that European governments and citizens need to prepare for new extremes, with temperatures possibly exceeding 50.0°C in Europe in the future. (Temperatures reached 48.8°C in Sicily in 2021.) The French government is already preparing for a 'realistic' 4°C annual average warming in France (AFP 2023; Stam 2023).

Our neighbours in the Mediterranean, North Africa (plus sub-Saharan Africa) and the Middle East regions are all forecast to experience rising temperatures. Using the defence planning horizons of 2030, 2050 and 2070, the **table below** gives the average annual temperature increases for a middle scenario: an intermediate emissions trajectory that assumes that levels of GHG emissions stay approximately consistent through 2050, before gradually declining. Under this scenario, global average warming is expected to have reached approximately 2.7°C by 2100 and still be rising. 'Among the scenarios, this is the closest to the world's current behaviour and emissions' (Berkeley Earth 2023b).

| | Average Annual Temperature Increase (°C) | | | |
	2030	2050	2070	2100
Morocco	2.6	3.4	4.1	4.7
Algeria	2.5	3.3	3.8	4.4
Tunisia	2.6	3.3	3.9	4.6
Libya	2.2	2.8	3.3	3.7
Egypt	2.2	2.8	3.3	3.8
Mauritania	2.3	3.0	3.6	4.2
Mali	2.1	2.8	3.4	3.9
Niger	2.2	2.8	3.4	3.9
Chad	2.0	2.7	3.2	3.7
Sudan	2.0	2.7	3.2	3.8
Lebanon	2.4	3.2	3.8	4.3
Syria	2.5	3.3	3.9	4.4
Turkey	2.4	3.1	3.7	4.2
Greece	2.3	3.0	3.5	4.0
Italy	2.6	3.4	3.9	4.6
France	2.5	3.2	3.7	4.4
Spain	2.5	3.3	3.9	4.5

Saudi Arabia	2.3	3.1	3.7	4.2
Iraq	2.7	3.6	4.3	4.8
Iran	2.5	3.4	4.0	4.5

The most optimistic and probably least realistic IPCC scenario for later this century (2081–2100) is 1.4°C (1.0–1.8°C) of global warming above the 1850–1900 baseline. The realistic intermediate or middle scenario is 2.7°C (2.1–3.5°C), while the most pessimistic scenario is 4.4°C (3.3–5.7°C).

The IPPC tends to be conservative in its assessments. The recent AR6 continues to reflect uncertainties regarding the overall understanding of how climate change impacts will affect biodiversity and the anthroposphere. Significant feedbacks that could amplify and accelerate global warming, such as methane degassing from permafrost melting and reduced albedo affect from loss of snow and ice cover, are probably underestimated. So too is the reduced regional cooling effects of sulphate aerosols emitted from shipping, due to the International Maritime Organization's 2020 regulation limiting sulphur in ships' fuel oil.

There are critical thresholds or tipping points (points of no return) in the climate system, in ice sheets, ocean thermohaline circulation and major currents, ocean oxygenation, permafrost regions, tropical rainforests and boreal forests, warm-water coral reefs and monsoon patterns. The focus of climate science tends to be on these global and macro-regional tipping elements rather than on multiple interacting constituent thresholds in the myriad and complex processes and structures at sub-regional and local levels.

Social, cultural, political, military, economic, infrastructural and other anthroposphere system thresholds may occur at lower average global and regional temperatures than do critical thresholds in the other components of the climate system (i.e. atmosphere, hydrosphere, cryosphere, land and biosphere). **In other words, we may encounter a critical nexus of civilisational thresholds before we arrive at and breach the 1.5°C or 2°C temperature 'limits' of the Paris Agreement.** At this time, we simply don't know. It is an 'experiment' on a planetary scale involving the whole of humanity, with the long-term survival of our species at stake. We will likely only know that we have crossed civilisational level thresholds if or when we observe it.

The evidence is clear that our societies, economies, infrastructures, political systems and, consequently, institutions of governance and security will be affected by climate change-related disruption as the impacts grow with every increment of warming. Everything we currently 'take for granted' — a tolerable heat, water availability, crop production, a secure place to live — is in jeopardy. We are undermining nature's resilience and increasing the risk to human life and well-being.

Policy makers and decision takers rely on the IPCC, WMO and other institutions for information to help them understand the scale of the problem, the mitigation measures needed to reduce and eliminate GHG emissions and the need for adaptation. But that information is generally lagging behind the accelerating pace of the 'Climate Emergency', rendering today's decisions out of phase with the required urgent pace of climate actions. For example, the IPCC's Seventh Assessment Report (AR7) cycle is due to commence in July 2023 and will likely conclude around 2030 (Kashdan and Ostanek 2023). By its conclusion, the world is likely to be at 1.4°C average global warming and on the way to passing 1.5°C.

Therefore, we have to build more ambitious, credible and realistic '2.7°C scenario' climate actions into all policies and plans, including Ireland's foreign, security and defence policies, now, not in five or 10 years' time.

Assumptions

- Subject to future international agreement(s) and changing market forces, fossil fuels will be incrementally phased-out over many decades, possibly from the 2030s onwards, as renewables and other alternatives, including energy saving and efficiency measures, are phased-in as part of the global Energy Transition.

- However, the delay (due to lack of leadership and implementation failure) in phasing-out fossil fuels globally will continue to drive up atmospheric concentrations of CO_2 and other GHGs for many decades to come.

- However parsed, technologies and techniques for removing carbon from the atmosphere will not be scaled-up sufficiently this century in order to make a significant difference to atmospheric concentrations of GHGs.

- Geoengineering technologies and techniques, such as solar radiation management, will remain theoretical or experimental due to uncertainties, lack of international agreement and governance, and the potential for sparking off interstate conflicts.

- Therefore, the world is 'realistically' on a trajectory that will see global average temperatures of about 2.7°C toward the end of the century (2080–2100).

- Several critical thresholds ('tipping points') in and among the climate system's various subsystems ('tipping elements') will be crossed as global average temperatures rise between the 1.5°C (reached during 2030–2035) and 2°C Paris Agreement 'guardrail' limits as well as beyond.

- Some feedback processes in the climate system will amplify and accelerate the rate of global and regional warming.

- Flood- and drought-related acute food insecurity and malnutrition will continue to increase in Africa, the Indian subcontinent, East Asia, and Central and South America.

- Climate change impacts (heat, drought, intensification of heavy precipitation and associated flooding, tropical storms and hurricanes, and, increasingly, sea level rise) will worsen and continue to drive both internal displacement and transboundary migration upward, resulting in both attempted movement and net movement poleward from the equatorial belt and adjacent mid-latitude belts, involving hundreds of millions of people by 2050 and at least 1 billion by the end of the century (possibly a lot more).

- Geopolitical rivalries, tensions and conflicts will be exacerbated from the early 2030s onward due to the combination of: declining powers of petrostates, particularly Russia, and rising powers of renewables-dependent states and the shift from 'Big Oil' to 'Big Renewables' companies; increasing competition for control over and access to

critical raw materials vital to the global Energy Transition; and internal pressures on states arising from populations increasingly impacted by multiple interacting climate, ecological, food, energy, socio-economic, political, institutional, health and related crises.

- There is a vicious cycle between the degradation of ecological systems and environmental resources, which leads to the reduction of societal resilience, increased factionalism and higher levels of violence, which promotes vulnerability and the conditions for new violent conflicts as well as magnifying existing violent conflicts, which in turn further degrade social–ecological systems and resources. Together with socio-economic conditions and governance failures, climate change impacts help drive this vicious circle. Increases in population sizes, especially in cities, and climate mobility (i.e. the involuntary or voluntary movement of people as a result of climate and environmental impacts) further compound the situation.

- Therefore, ever more pronounced climate change impacts and weather extremes will continue throughout this century and beyond to both contribute to and create humanitarian crises and increase violent conflict, resulting in escalating climate mobility that will affect more people, creating more pressures on states, populations, societies and communities.

2. Implications for Future Foreign, Security and Defence Policies

The conjoint climate and ecological crisis has significant implications for the development of Ireland's foreign, security and defence policies. This is not some far in the future issue: climate change is here and now, and getting worse at an alarming rate. Put simply, climate change is *the* greatest threat to Ireland's security on multiple levels, and across multiple spaces and timescales. Why? Because climate change affects the current and future global and regional security environments at every level on every scale. Thus, it affects Ireland both internally and in its external relations, now and throughout the future.

2.1 Governance architecture

Climate change affects everything, including our systems of governance and their design. Governance provides the framework for capabilities, that is, the abilities or powers of a polity to make use of available resources to achieve an objective or desired outcome in specific situations and environments. Ireland does not currently have the necessary governance-related capabilities to deal with climate change in the security-related policy sense. No country does. Not yet. The nexus of climate change and foreign, security and defence policy is complex, dynamic and evolving. It is constantly shifting, which by necessity requires a fundamentally adaptive policy approach in order to align with it.

If we are to successfully future-proof governance architecture at international, supranational (i.e. EU), national and sub-national levels of polity, including processes for governing, institutional frameworks for decision making, methods and tools for policy formulation and implementation as well as planning, we must ensure that such architecture not only addresses, but also copes with the consequences and implications of climate change. How do we do that? First, by understanding the key design elements of a multilevel adaptive architecture (Scollick 2020: pp. 32–33).

Borrowing from the field of defence strategy and planning, there are various nested levels at which a broadly security-oriented governance architecture must deal effectively with climate change: the grand strategic (political) level of national policy; strategic level of national or collective multinational security strategy objectives; theatre strategic level of peacetime (or wartime) cooperation plus contingency, crisis action or adaptive planning and execution aimed at achieving strategy objectives; operational level of major operations and missions; tactical level of planning, execution, management and support of tasks to meet objectives; technical level of personnel and equipment; and cross-cutting institutional level of developing material and non-material capabilities (Scollick 2020: p. 31).

For further details regarding designing an adaptive architecture based on an understanding of complex adaptive systems, see:

Scollick, A. (2020) A Strategic Adaptive Defence Planning Framework for State Polities in the 21st Century. *Defences Forces Review 2020*, pp. 28–37. Available at: https://www.military.ie/en/public-information/publications/defence-forces-review/review-2020.pdf (Accessed on 4 July 2023).

2.2 Building resilience

Next, **how do we build Ireland's resilience** (i.e. the interrelated abilities to adapt and where necessary transform and, therefore, persist) to climate change in the policy environment of foreign affairs, security and defence? First of all, by significantly **raising the priority of climate change** and related issues in all policy making, planning and actions at and across every level in the multilevel governance architecture outlined above. Second, by further **investing in and improving both the soft and hard capabilities** (strategies, plans, procedures, logistics, equipment and personnel) of the Defence Forces AND the Civil Defence. In other words, our national civil and military security and defence assets need future-proofing: they need to become fit for purpose for the climate changing world in which they are required to operate. Third, by focusing on the following:

Greater interoperability between the two branches. Joint training and better coordination regarding preparedness for response operations, whether to extreme weather-related events at home or disaster response missions overseas. This is something which the militaries and civil authorities in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, the United Kingdom and elsewhere have come to realise through recent experiences of increasingly large-scale, frequent and persistent extreme weather events. Furthermore, the Defence Forces should explore opportunities for interoperability with other European (EU and UK) militaries regarding climate change and security (Wauters *et al.* 2021: pp. 10–14), including through the European Defence Agency[6] and Finabel European Army Interoperability Centre[7].

Preparedness, that is, being better prepared for multiple crises. The exercise of foresight is key. Preparedness begins with being informed about the evidence and projections regarding climate change. Future climate change-impacted operational environments require foresight

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[6] The EDA promotes and facilitates integration between member states within the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy. https://eda.europa.eu

[7] Finabel promotes and facilitates the interoperability of land forces through the harmonisation of military concepts, doctrines and procedures. https://finabel.org/

analysis, especially concerning Defence Forces' overseas deployments. More can be done to assess future operational environments, for example, regarding potential climate-related crises. The Defence Forces must be prepared to operate effectively whenever and wherever needed in response to climate change impacts; and to sustain multiple, concurrent and complex (MCC) response operations. Preparedness requires adaptive planning for enhanced defence capabilities to deliver an increasing number and range of MCC response operations. Preparedness also requires coordination with Civil Defence, Irish Coast Guard and An Garda Síochána to plan for joint MCC response operations at home.

Building adaptive capacity. The Defence Forces and Department of Defence must develop climate change adaptation policies and plans based on assessments of the projected negative impacts of climate change on Defence Forces' capabilities and operations as well as built and natural estate. Climate change and security should require an adaptive defence policy and planning approach (Scollick 2020).

Information is key to preparedness and adaptation. Evidence-based analysis is needed by policy makers as well as decision takers. Defence planners need data and military intelligence; crisis managers need timely information in order to build a picture and respond effectively to climate change-related disasters or changes in the operational environment.

For further details regarding climate change-impacted operational environment and the implications for the Defence Forces, see:

Scollick, A. (2022) The Irish Defence Forces in a Changing Climate: Implications and Suggestions for Preparedness, Adaptation and Mitigation Measures. Defence Forces Review 2021, pp. 32–43. Available at: https://www.military.ie/en/public-information/publications/defence-forces-review/df-review-2021-digital-versions-single.pdf (Accessed on 4 July 2023).

2.3 A multilateral approach

The **Public Consultation online questionnaire** asks if we should take or are we even capable of taking such steps, as outlined above, aimed at building resilience, in this case in relation to the threats posed by climate change, on our own? Should Ireland continue to work with other countries and/or international organisations, such as the EU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), in the area of security and defence?

Logic train
In short, yes we should take such steps, but our ability to take them on our own is limited. Ireland has a small military. That is unlikely to change in the near term (before 2040). Both costs and practicalities dictate that we have to not only continue to work with external actors, but also continue to deepen our cooperation and extend our coordination with them. Let's look at this further.

In terms of rationale, climate change will displace tens then hundreds of millions of people in Africa, the Middle East and beyond, and force many of them to migrate toward Europe (see Assumptions above). Even within Europe, millions of southern Europeans are likely to be displaced and many forced to migrate ('relocate') northward. In the coming decades, this net poleward movement of large numbers of vulnerable people will affect Ireland, both directly and indirectly. Directly in the sense that each EU Member State will (eventually) be required to receive, accommodate and assimilate a proportion ('fair share') of the net migration. It is

a question of basic humanity and morality. Indirectly in the sense that Ireland is — and ought to remain — a participant in one form or another in multinational frameworks (the United Nations, NATO and EU) that already address the climate–security nexus and/or internal displacement and/or migration.

People or even entire populations displaced and undertaking either involuntary or voluntary migration as a consequence of climate change, extreme weather events, conflict and related issues (hereafter 'climate refugees') will, because of the numbers involved, be extremely vulnerable to violence. This may originate from tensions within climate refugee groups or between groups and inhabitants of locations and areas that the climate refugees enter; or it may result from predatory and exploitative behaviours of brigands, extremists and people traffickers; or arise from a conflict environment, such as when warlords or commanders seek to conscript ('press-gang') refugees into warbands, mercenary groups or even state militaries. (This is a far more complex picture, for example, involving sexual slavery, than I can do justice to here.)

Therefore, ethically, the coming mass migration of climate refugees will require the militaries and civilian agencies of responsible state and intergovernmental actors to secure and protect migration corridors, transit camps, transports, reception camps, humanitarian aid and welfare distribution and, finally, resettlement locations in reception or destination countries — not 'host' countries, as this is a one-way migration. Climate refugees will not be returning. Their originating countries will likely remain inhospitable as the human climate niche continues to contract, rendering further areas of the world uninhabitable (Xu *et al.* 2020; Lenton *et al.* 2023).

It will likely take the combined capacities and capabilities of the world's responsible militaries (i.e. excluding Russia and other bad actors) as they are constituted today in order to cope with mass climate-related displacement and migration at its peak. This peak could come as soon as the 2060s, but is more likely during the 2070s to 2080s. However, the lead-up period during the 2030s to 2050s will require increasing focus and effort by our militaries. Such efforts require a framework or frameworks for cooperation and coordination to be effective in meeting the challenges and delivering favourable outcomes. In other words, it requires a massive coordinated global effort involving the United Nations, NATO, EU, African Union[8] and other regional organisations (including those yet to emerge).

Regardless of ongoing (no one expects Russia to cease its war against Ukraine and the West in general in the foreseeable future) and future interstate wars, it is necessary to further integrate and more deeply coordinate the functions of state militaries, including Ireland's Defence Forces, in order to address climate change impacts and the consequences, particularly regarding climate refugees and their security.

Put simply, we need to be humane and humanitarian in dealing with climate refugees. High levels of displacement and migration will occur. We must be prepared to provide security. This must be reflected fully in Ireland's foreign, security and defence policies. Providing security for climate refugees can only be achieved effectively through

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[8] Ireland continues to increase its diplomatic presence on the continent of Africa and, as part of *Global Ireland: Ireland's Strategy for Africa to 2025*, seeks to deepen engagement with African partners through multilateral institutions such as the African Union. See https://www.dfa.ie/our-role-policies/international-priorities/africa/

multilateralism, especially deeper cooperation through existing multilateral frameworks, including the United Nations, NATO, EU and African Union.

Recommendation 1

Incorporate the **defence planning horizons** of 2030, 2050 and 2070 into foreign, security and defence policies in relation to climate change. This is necessary in order to adequately address the 'slow-onset' aspects of climate change; the large scale of preparations required to deal with the projected consequences of climate change, particularly regarding climate refugees; and procurement issues regarding personnel and materiel of both the Defence Forces and Civil Defence. Procurement must factor in the lead-in time before acquisition of equipment (or recruitment of personnel), the expected lifespan (ca. 40 years) of equipment and replacement horizon. In other words, the Defence Forces require new and replacement equipment to continue to function effectively and securely in climate-changed operational environments in the 2030s to 2070s. In addition to procurement, Defence Forces planning, training, operations, logistics and infrastructure require future-proofing regarding climate change.

We will expect the Defence Forces to fully participate in multilateral missions between 2030 and 2070 aimed at securing and protecting (i.e. peacekeeping and kinetic peace enforcement) migration corridors and camps. Can we expect our Defence Forces personnel to do this inadequately equipped? No, of course not. The local, regional and global operational environments in which the Defence Forces will be expected to function are continually changing: it will be significantly different in 2030, more so in 2050 and radically different in 2070. Preparedness for this begins today in 2023.

Recommendation 2

Defence Forces personnel require and deserve whatever resources they need to do their jobs on behalf of our society and its civilised values. Can we afford to acquire those hard and soft capabilities on our own? Yes, Ireland is a wealthy OECD country. However, that is not necessarily a cost-effective or rational option. The logical option is to **spread the cost burden between partners** through greater integration, division of labour and materiel, pooling and other methods. This is not 'militarisation' or developing an 'EU army'. It is simple commonsense and thrift: value for the taxpayer. (Discussion of the EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and other frameworks regarding structural integration is beyond my remit here.)

Recommendation 3

It is unrealistic to expect the Defence Forces to be able to single-handedly mount an overseas mission, in an inhospitable operational environment, to protect hundreds of thousands of vulnerable climate refugees when required to. It can only be achieved effectively through multilateral cooperation and joint effort.

Work in partnership. The Defence Forces should leverage existing partnerships and seek to form new partnerships in order to share expertise and assist the development of joint capabilities and preparedness for MCC response operations. Staff exchanges and joint learning and training activities pave the way for multilateral responses to climate change-related events. The aim should be to improve operational effectiveness and efficiency.

Ireland can build resilience into foreign, security and defence policies as regards the climate change threat by proactively **working within existing and emerging frameworks** aimed at guiding actions to address interactions between climate change and security and defence.

One particular framework is the EU *Climate Change and Defence Roadmap* produced by the European External Action Service (EEAS 2020a). This includes a focus on:

1. The impact of climate change on the operational environment in which Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations are deployed;
2. Capability development to ensure that military equipment remains effective under extreme weather conditions, and that energy efficiency and new technologies and practices will reduce the carbon and environmental footprint of missions, operations and the defence sector in general; and
3. Strengthening diplomatic outreach in multilateral fora and partnership frameworks dealing with climate change, defence and security, including synergies with the United Nations and NATO (EEAS 2020b).

This EU framework provides a mechanism to transfer climate and security related knowledge and best practices among EU Member States. The *Roadmap* intends to draw on examples of innovation and implementation emerging in and around militaries from around the world (Scollick 2022: pp. 38–39).

For further details regarding progress made in implementing the *Roadmap*, see the *Joint Progress Report on Climate Change, Defence and Security (2020-2022)* (EEAS 2022). For additional reading, see European Defence Agency (20230.

Another notable framework within which Ireland could work, as part of the NATO Partnership for Peace programme, is the new NATO Climate Change and Security Centre of Excellence (CCASCOE) currently being established in Montreal, Canada (NATO 2022a).

The CASSCOE is intended to be a platform through which both military actors and civilians will develop, enhance and share knowledge on the security impacts of climate change. It will allow participants to work together to acquire and build the capabilities that will be required in the future security environment, and establish best practices and contribute to NATO's goal of reducing the climate impact of its military activities (Government of Canada 2023).

According to the *NATO 2022 Strategic Concept*:

> 'Climate change is a defining challenge of our time, with a profound impact on Allied security. It is a crisis and threat multiplier. It can exacerbate conflict, fragility and geopolitical competition. Increasing temperatures cause rising sea levels, wildfires and more frequent and extreme weather events, disrupting our societies, undermining our security and threatening the lives and livelihoods of our citizens. Climate change also affects the way our armed forces operate. Our infrastructure, assets and bases are vulnerable to its effects. Our forces need to operate in more extreme climate conditions and our militaries are more frequently called upon to assist in disaster relief' (NATO 2022b: p. 6).

The *Strategic Concept* emphasises the cross-cutting importance of integrating *inter alia* climate change and human security across all of NATO's core tasks. Regarding the strategic environment, NATO recognises that the impacts of climate change, fragile institutions, health emergencies and food insecurity aggravate interconnected security, demographic, economic and political challenges as well as conflict, fragility and instability in Africa and the Middle East.

Regarding crisis prevention and management, NATO intends to further develop the Alliance's ability to support civilian crisis management and relief operations and to prepare for the effects of climate change, food insecurity and health emergencies on Allied security, thus allowing NATO to respond to any contingency at short notice.

Regarding cooperative security, NATO will enhance the NATO–EU strategic partnership, strengthen political consultations and increase cooperation on issues of common interest, including the impact of climate change on security.

> 'NATO should become the leading international organisation when it comes to understanding and adapting to the impact of climate change on security. The Alliance will lead efforts to assess the impact of climate change on defence and security and address those challenges. We will contribute to combating climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving energy efficiency, investing in the transition to clean energy sources and leveraging green technologies, while ensuring military effectiveness and a credible deterrence and defence posture' (NATO 2022b: p. 11).

Recommendation 4
As stated in the background information to the Public Consultation,[9] Ireland is currently in the process of renewing its partnership with NATO through a transition to the new Individually Tailored Partnership Programme (ITPP) mechanism. This framework provides potential new opportunities for strengthening cooperation between Ireland and NATO in areas such as maritime security, cyber and hybrid, wider cooperation on civil preparedness, climate and security, and enhancing resilience, including of undersea infrastructure. Climate change is an area of common interest. Therefore, **Ireland should maximise its partnership with NATO through the new ITPP approach, particularly in relation to climate change.** Other countries currently negotiating or which have recently adopted an ITPP with NATO include Australia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Colombia, Japan, Kazakhstan, New Zealand and South Korea. As the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence, Micheál Martin TD, recently stated:

> "Cooperating with NATO on areas of mutual interest does not indicate a move closer to NATO, it is about practical cooperation, which is of benefit to Ireland. Considerable progress has been made on developing Ireland's ITPP and it is anticipated that it will be finalised by the end of 2023" (Houses of the Oireachtas 2023).

3. Conclusion

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[9] https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/9aa15-international-security-policy-background-information/

Given the continuing combustion of fossil fuels and land-use change, the most realistic projection for global average temperature in 60 to 80 years' time is about 2.7°C, with higher average temperatures over land, for example, 4.0–4.5°C in Europe's southern neighbourhood. Extreme heat, droughts, wildfires, storms, flooding, sea-level rise and other climate change impacts, combined with increases in violent conflict, will displace many millions of people and drive them to move from increasingly uninhabitable zones to seek refuge in more hospitable zones, including in Europe's northern regions. **There will be no remedy for this situation for centuries to come.**

Therefore, it is imperative that the Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Defence and other Government departments, the Defence Forces and, on the domestic front, Civil Defence prepare now for an operational environment that is shaped by climate change.
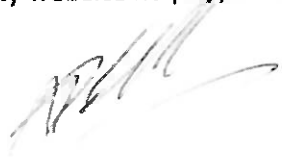
The impacts of climate change will fundamentally affect the ways in which the Defence Forces plan, organise, train, deploy and sustain the military means to advance state policy and achieve strategic, operational and tactical objectives.

Ireland should shoulder its responsibilities toward our fellow human beings, particularly the most vulnerable, in the climate-changing world. We need to dig deeper into our collective resourcefulness and national spirit to help humanity by doing all we can to improve its security in the most difficult of circumstances.

Thank you for your consideration of this submission, a copy of which will be available for download from my website https://andyscollick.com, should you require it.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Scollick

Biographical Note

Dr. Andy Scollick is an independent consultant in the field of European and transatlantic security and defence. He specialises in systems thinking and the interactions between climate change, the energy transition, security and defence. Since 2014, he has been a policy advisor to government, military and civil society actors in Ukraine regarding the development and implementation of security and defence policy. For 22 years before that, he was an advocate, policy wonk and consultant in the field of European marine sustainability and maritime policy, working for national, EU and international level NGOs. Andy holds a PhD in Sustainability Science (complex adaptive systems and resilience theory, and maritime governance) from University College Cork where he also worked as an EU project researcher and lecturer.

Declaration

I have no vested interests, financial or otherwise, in any of the companies or organisations or their products mentioned or implied in this submission.

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