

The Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology, Peter Luff MP, today laid in Parliament, a Green Paper entitled Equipment, Support and Technology for UK Defence and Security: A Consultation Paper.

He said "The first duty of Government is the security of our nation. It is therefore essential that the UK equips itself with the right tools to tackle current and future threats. The convergence of defence and security that underpinned the Strategic Defence and Security Review means that we should seek to bring together our approach to equipment, support, and technology in both the defence and security sectors. I have therefore worked with the Minister for Security in preparing this Green Paper to reflect our new approach. We have also included cyber security as a separate section because it is a new and fundamental challenge."

"Our default position is to use open competition in the global market; to buy off-the-shelf where we can; and to promote open markets in defence and security capabilities. We will take action to protect our operational advantages and freedom of action, but only where essential for national security."

"The UK currently enjoys a strong industrial presence in the defence and security markets and export success abroad in those markets; last year, defence and security exports achieved around £8.5 billion revenue. We are committed to doing more to promote exports of both defence and security products from the UK to responsible nations, as well as to boost the role of small and medium sized enterprises, both in their direct and indirect supplies to the Government and its agencies."

The Green Paper is available online at <http://defenceconsultations.org.uk/>. The formal public consultation period will run from January to March 2011. The Government plans to publish a White Paper on these issues in 2011.

Defence Viewpoints will publish further comment and analysis shortly