Pakistan's political and security challenges (RP 07/068)
2007 marks the 60th anniversary of Pakistan's independence. By contrast with the identical anniversary of neighbouring India, the international response has been muted. This reflects the relative uncertainty that many observers feel about Pakistan's future prospects. Pakistan has had a central role as an incubator of militant Islam since the 1980s. Equally, despite the fact that there have been several periods of civilian rule, democracy has failed to embed itself and the military has been a powerful player within Pakistan's polity and economy since independence. This paper reviews the threats and challenges facing Pakistan and discusses its current political crisis.
http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2007/rp07-068.pdf

A political introduction to India (RP 07/041)
2007 marks the 60th anniversary of Indian independence; this Research Paper gives an insight into India's ongoing transformation. Part I provides key facts and figures about India. Part II offers a broad analytical overview of key issues affecting India's past, present and future trajectory. Part III looks at domestic developments and some of the major challenges facing India at home. Part IV discusses India's evolving foreign and security policy. Part V surveys political and military relations between India, the UK and the European Union.
http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2007/rp07-041.pdf

North Korea: The nuclear issue and prospects for change (RP 07/003)
In July 2006 North Korea test fired seven ballistic missiles. This led to the imposition of targeted UN sanctions. Then, on 9 October 2006, North Korea conducted its first ever nuclear weapons test, provoking virtually unanimous international condemnation and the imposition of additional UN sanctions. The scene seemed set for escalating confrontation. However, in December 2006 North Korea returned to the Six-Party Talks, which had been stalled for over a year. This Research Paper surveys the chequered course over the past 15 years of negotiations designed to end North Korea's nuclear weapons programme, including the Six-Party Talks. Looking to the longer-term, the Paper also briefly assesses the likelihood of three different scenarios for change in North Korea: sustained reform; 'stop-start' reform; and regime collapse.
http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2007/rp07-003.pdf

The future of the British nuclear deterrent (RP 06/53)
The UK's strategic nuclear deterrent will reach the end of its service life in approximately 2024. In summer 2006 the Government announced that a White Paper on the future of the British nuclear deterrent would be published before the end of the year and that the issue would be debated and put to a vote in Parliament. This paper sets out a number of issues that may inform that debate, including assessments of the future security environment; the UK's international treaty obligations; the potential cost of procuring a successor system; and the

implications of dispensing with the deterrent. It also examines public opinion and the options available to the Government.
http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2006/rp06-053.pdf

The African Great Lakes region: An end to conflict? (RP 06/51)
Since the early 1990s the African Great Lakes region - defined here as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania - has been convulsed by genocide, civil wars, inter-state conflict and flawed democratic transitions. With UN-sponsored peace processes underway in DRC and Burundi and projects of state and societal reconstruction apparently advancing in Rwanda and Uganda, there are hopes that the epoch of violence and exploitation in the African Great Lakes region is finally drawing to an end. This Research Paper offers an assessment of how well founded these hopes are. The next step on the road to regional peace and stability is the second round of the presidential election in the DRC, which takes place on 29 October 2006. Much rests on a peaceful and legitimate outcome.
http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2006/rp06-051.pdf

European Security and Defence Policy: Developments since 2003 (RP 06/32)
Since the Nice European Council in December 2000 significant progress has been made in furthering the defence capabilities of the EU. Institutional planning structures have been established and a number of measures introduced to promote the development of military and civilian crisis management assets, including the creation of the European Defence Agency. More recently the European Commission has also introduced measures to facilitate harmonisation of the defence market in Europe. This paper examines these developments and looks at the prospect for taking European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) proposals forward outside the framework of the EU Constitution.
http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2006/rp06-032.pdf

Afghanistan: the culmination of the Bonn process (RP 05/72)
The Afghan parliamentary elections of 18 September 2005 marked the final step in the political process set out in the Bonn Agreement of December 2001, which sought to establish a stable, democratic government for Afghanistan. This paper includes an overview of historical developments up to the overthrow of the Taliban in 2001. It goes on to examine the main stages of the Bonn process, before looking at the evolving security environment, the narcotics issue and the progress made with disarmament and demobilisation. A map of Afghanistan is included as an appendix.
http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2005/rp05-072.pdf

The defence white paper: future capabilities (RP 04/72)
The Defence White Paper of December 2003 sets out the MOD's analysis of the future security environment and how the UK's strategic interests should be prioritised in light of this assessment. It is regarded as a baseline from which decisions on the future size and composition of the Armed Forces will be made. In July 2004 an additional chapter to the White Paper entitled Future Capabilities was published. It sets out in detail the intended changes to the structure and role of the Armed Forces and identifies specifically where cuts will be made. This paper examines the key motivations that are driving this change, the adjustments to force

composition and the potential impact these may have on sustainability and affordability.
http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2004/rp04-072.pdf

The defence white paper (RP 04/71)
In December 2003 the Ministry of Defence published its Defence White Paper Delivering Security in a Changing World. Following the Strategic Defence Review (SDR) in 1998 and the SDR New Chapter in July 2002, the White Paper sets out the MOD's analysis of the future security environment and the UK's strategic priorities in light of this assessment. It is generally regarded as a statement of policy against which decisions on the size and shape of the Armed Forces will be made. This paper outlines the main elements of the Defence White Paper and examines some initial comments.
http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2004/rp04-071.pdf