

News Release

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EXPERTS DEMAND NEW MINISTERS RETHINK UK'S SECURITY APPROACH

Rethinking Security, a network of peace and security experts, today called on the new Secretaries of State for Defence and International Development to adopt a more humane, collaborative and sustainable approach to international peace and security.

In an open letter to the Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP at the Ministry of Defence and Rory Stewart MP at the Department for International Development, the organisation highlighted 10 actions to end the UK's contribution to worldwide insecurity and violence. It called on the new ministers to rethink the government's Global Britain agenda by prioritising a sustainable, collaborative approach to worldwide stability.

The experts recommend a focus on prevention of instability by tackling climate breakdown, inequality and marginalisation and rebalancing military forces away from expeditionary capabilities and towards territorial and cyber defence, where the need is greatest.

The letter pressed on the new ministers the importance of public opinion, noting that over half of UK adults oppose the use of UK troops in other countries and almost two thirds consider the sale of arms to Saudi Arabia unacceptable.

Rethinking Security Co-ordinator Celia McKeon said:

"These appointments, against the backdrop of Brexit, are a unique opportunity to rethink the UK's relationship with a changing world.

"The previous Defence Secretary saw military might as the only way to keep people safe. He was wrong.

"In fact, conflicts are problems to be solved, not fights to be won. The UK public knows this¹, and supports a vision of security that works with people and communities.

"We hope that the newly appointed ministers will meet with us to discuss our priorities in the coming months."

¹ [YouGov \(2018\)](#)

[Henry Jackson Society \(2019\)](#)

[Populus/Conciliation Resources/Alliance for Peacebuilding \(2017\)](#)

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Notes to Editors

1. Letter to the Secretaries of State is attached to this email.
2. Rethinking Security Co-ordinator, Celia McKeon, is available for comment on 07990 816543
3. The Rethinking Security media page and factsheet is at www.rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/media
4. The Rethinking Security Parliamentary briefing, including 10 priorities for security, can be found at <https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/briefing>
5. About Rethinking Security:
 - Short description – Rethinking Security is a network of peace and security experts.
 - Long description – Rethinking Security is a network of organisations, academics and activists working together for security based on justice, co-operation and sustainability.
6. Member organisations:
 - Campaign Against Arms Trade
 - Campaign For Nuclear Disarmament
 - Conciliation Resources
 - Forces Watch
 - International Alert
 - Oxford Research Group
 - Peace Direct
 - Quaker Peace And Social Witness
 - Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network
 - Saferworld.

Our work also benefits substantially from the active participation of academics from the universities of Bradford, Coventry, Kent and Oxford Brookes.