

## Press release

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# Consultative Forum on International Security Policy – Day One, University College Cork

From [Department of Foreign Affairs \(/en/organisation/department-of-foreign-affairs/\)](/en/organisation/department-of-foreign-affairs/)

Published on 22 June 2023

Last updated on 26 June 2023

Tánaiste, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence, Micheál Martin formally opened the Consultative Forum on International Security Policy on Thursday morning in UCC.

In his opening remarks, the Tánaiste said:

"It is a fundamental duty of every Irish Government to put in place policies and practises to keep Ireland and her people, safe and secure. Russia's brutal and illegal invasion of Ukraine has fundamentally changed the geopolitical and security landscape in Europe. In its wake, countries all over Europe have examined and re-examined their foreign, security and defence policies. Ireland is no different."

The Tánaiste went on to state that:

"The Forum aims to build a deeper public and political understanding of the international security environment and Ireland's role in this complex world. I am confident that, as a country, we can have a respectful and informed debate, from which we can all learn."

The first session, moderated by the Forum Chair Louise Richardson, addressed the challenging global security environment and the implications for a small state like Ireland. In particular, panellists discussed how Ireland can advance our traditional foreign policy values in this increasingly difficult context.

The second panel examined the impact of Russia's aggression on Europe's collective security architecture, the framework of the OSCE, disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation and the impact of the breakdown or suspension of strategic arms control treaties.

The third panel discussed the cyber threats facing Ireland, including the impact of emerging and disruptive technologies, and how Ireland can work with European and other international partners to tackle these threats and to ensure responsible State behaviour in cyberspace.

The final session of day looked at maritime security and critical infrastructure including the State's role and responsibilities in protecting offshore critical infrastructure as well as how best the government might cooperate more closely with international partners, including the EU in relation to the European Union's Maritime Security Strategy, and with the private sector, particularly in view of increasing investment in offshore wind energy and the importance of safeguarding telecommunications networks.

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## Notes

The Consultative Forum on International Security Policy will focus on a wide range of issues, including Ireland's efforts to protect the rules-based international order through peacekeeping and crisis management, disarmament and non-proliferation, international humanitarian law, and conflict prevention and peacebuilding as well as allowing for a discussion on Ireland's policy of military neutrality.

It will look at our current international partnerships in the area of peace and security, particularly as a member of the UN and the EU, as well as with our engagement with NATO through the Partnership for Peace framework.

New and emerging threats will also be discussed, including cyber and hybrid attacks, the use of disinformation and growing concerns over the protection of critical offshore infrastructure.

The Forum will also provide an opportunity to examine the experiences and choices of other partners in responding to the new security environment in Europe.

The Independent Chair of the Forum is Louise Richardson DBE, President of the Carnegie Corporation and former vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford. Ms. Richardson is a political scientist with particular expertise in security policy.

Ms. Richardson will produce a report that will be presented to the Tánaiste in a timely manner following the conclusion of the Consultative Forum.

A livestream of each event, along with the daily programme is available on [www.gov.ie/consultativeforum. \(https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/e2a6b-consultative-forum-on-international-security-policy/\)](https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/e2a6b-consultative-forum-on-international-security-policy/).

The public consultation will remain open until 7 July 2023 and is available on [the government's open consultation platform \(https://www.gov.ie/en/consultations/\)](https://www.gov.ie/en/consultations/).

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