

and extend this cooperation to other suitable European partners.

Liberal Democrats are committed to meeting our national and international obligations in security and defence. This is why in government over the last five years we met the NATO commitment to spend 2% of our GDP on defence, most recently restated in the Readiness Action Plan and Defence Industrial Pledge at the Wales NATO Summit in 2014. We are committed to completing a comprehensive Strategic Defence and Security Review early in the next Parliament to inform future defence spending decisions. We recognise that the world has changed fundamentally since the last such review. It is vital that our real security and defence needs and international obligations are considered in the SDSR, and this is why we wish to move towards a Single Security Budget.

We will:

- ◆ Conduct a Strategic Defence and Security Review in which we will revisit and update the Future Force 2020 vision and ensure the capabilities we are invested in are relevant for keeping Britain safe.
- ◆ Use the SDSR to establish a Single Security Budget, including not just conventional defence spending but the work of our security agencies, cyber defences and soft power interventions. The Single Security Budget will be distributed by the SDSR process, as part of an overall Spending Review. This integrated approach will ensure spending choices follow the capabilities we need, not traditional departmental silos.
- ◆ Maintain strong and effective armed forces and the capability to deploy rapidly expeditionary forces.
- ◆ Set long-term budgets to invest in the right equipment at competitive prices.
- ◆ Recognise the expansion of warfare into the cybersphere, by investing in our security and intelligence services and acting to counter cyber attacks.
- ◆ Remain fully engaged in international nuclear disarmament efforts.
- ◆ Step down the nuclear ladder by procuring fewer Vanguard successor submarines and moving from continuous at sea deterrence to a contingency posture of regular patrols, enabling a surge to armed patrols when the international security context makes this appropriate. This would help us to fulfil our Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty commitments and reduce the UK nuclear warhead stockpile.
- ◆ Work for new global standards to end the use of conventional explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas.
- ◆ Promote European defence integration where appropriate by enhancing European defence industry co-operation.