

Home Secretary - John Reid

Speech to RUSI launching RISC - 29 March 2007

Delighted to be here at RUSI today and would like to say thank you to the organisers for inviting me to formally launch of RISC, which, I am told stands for 'the security and resilience industry and suppliers council'. I know many of you were in the audience when I spoke to the industry last October. As I said at the time it is "vital that our enterprises sustain the delivery of innovation at a pace that outstrips our adversaries'. This is certainly a vital key to our fight against terrorism.

We cannot assume that advanced technology and innovation is sole prerogative of rich nation-states. Technology is proliferating in ways that give access to mass-innovation on a hitherto unknown pace and scale. Our adversaries will adopt and adapt new and old technology in increasingly innovative ways against us. So we must have the capacity and competence to harness technology in more agile and decisive ways. That is why the partnership offered by RISC with Government is so important.

As an alliance of trade associations, suppliers, academia and think tanks, I know RISC offers a powerful channel of communication between Government and markets in security and resilience from which we all need to benefit. With my long experience of the Aerospace and Defence Industrial Base, I welcome this fresh initiative. There is much that we can learn from the past but many new ways of doing business that will be quite different.

As the work of RISC recognises, we have entered a new age. An age of unparalleled opportunity. But an age too of vastly increased insecurity and global mobility.

Mobility in every sense brings great potential wealth for our country. These opportunities need to be capitalised upon.

But there is the other side of the coin.

Mass migration

- Which needs to be managed fairly and effectively

International Crime

- Which we need to detect and counter

And International Terrorism

- Which needs to be countered, at home and abroad.

- And to be defended against and ultimately defeated.

There are great issues of personal, community and national security.

Great issues of substance.

And the highest concerns in people's priorities.

It is right therefore that they should be the focus of our concern as a Government.

That is why we have taken the decision to refocus the Home Office

- and the great and historic Office of Home Secretary towards personal, community and national security.
- to meet the need of the modern world
- and meet the priorities of today's people

As the Prime Minister announced to Parliament this morning he has considered carefully my advice on our counter terrorism capabilities and decided to:

Strengthens my role and the strategic capacity of government to anticipate and deliver against the challenge of 21st century security and counter-terrorism.

I will ensure details of our plan are available to your organisation because I see you as vital partners in our common endeavour.

We face a seamless threat; I look forward to working with you on our integrated response.

ENDS