



Ministry  
of Defence



## An SMA & UK Ministry of Defence Speaker Series

# ***Fresh Options for Strategic Advantage in the Global System Now***

*"I'm no prophet. My job is to make windows where there were once walls."*

- Attributed to Michel Foucault

*"Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back."* - John Maynard Keynes

*"You have to produce results in the short term. But you also have to produce results in the long term. And the long term is not simply the adding up of short terms."* - Peter Drucker

### Speaker Series Description

What options do the US or the UK have now to gain strategic advantage? The global economic centre of gravity is moving ever further eastwards into Asia, whilst global politics becomes more multipolar. New technologies provide vast new opportunities at global scale. To be sure, the US remains a superpower—even if China may also attain that status in the next decade or two—and a country like the UK retains considerable strengths, such as the scientific prowess it showed in Covid-19 vaccines, genetics and treatments. But how can such nations use their strengths, and minimise their weaknesses, to control or influence the course of events to their advantage? And to the advantage of democracies more broadly?

We seek to identify and debate fresh options for countries like the UK and US to strengthen their position and principles in the global environment. If politics is the art of the possible, then what's possible? What is the space of options for strategies to create strategic advantage in the technological, security, economic and political spheres? How can we think long-term? How can we best blend established, reimaged and entirely new allied institutions? Indeed, although alliances are crucial, how do we go beyond fine aspirations in order to identify clear options—like the "Five Eyes" and "Democratic-10" (G-7 plus India, South Korea and Australia) networks—that can put meat on the bones of an alliance strategy? Domestic and foreign policy imperatives must be aligned, but how can we do that effectively now?

To see new windows of opportunity for our contemporary epoch, we bring together leading scholars and practitioners in a new event series. Recent series in this forum have included speakers such as Sir Lawrence Freedman (King's College, London), General David Petraeus (former Director, CIA), Sir David Omand (former Director, GCHQ), Moises Naim (former Exec. Director, World Bank), Jack Lew (former US Treasury Secretary), Barry Posen (MIT), Anne-Marie Slaughter (former Head of Policy Planning, US State Dept.) and Dr Thomas Bagger (Foreign Policy Director for the German President).

From 2021 through 2022, the US Joint Staff Strategic Multilayer Assessment and the UK Defence Science Technology Laboratory (Dstl; part of the UK Ministry of Defence) collaborated on this series.

- *16 March 2021*: Mr. Mark Montgomery (US Cyberspace Solarium Commission), Mr. Robert Morgus (US Cyberspace Solarium Commission) – [The Global Struggle for Strategic Advantage in ICT](#)
- *13 October 2021*: Air Marshal Ian Gale (Director General Joint Force Development, UK StratCom) and Vice Admiral Stuart Munsch (Director for Joint Force Development, J7, US Joint Staff) – [Adapting the Future Forces for Strategic Advantage—US and UK Senior Leaders in Conversation](#)
- *19 October 2021*: Sir John Sawers (Former Head of MI6), James Schoff (Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA), and Odd Arne Westad (Yale University) – [How to Make Alliances Succeed Across Multiple Dimensions of Power: Atlantic, Indo-Pacific, and Historical Lessons](#)
- *15 June 2022*: Lieutenant General (Retd) Richard Nugee (Former Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Lead, UK Ministry of Defence) and Mr. David Livingston (Senior Advisor in the Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, John Kerry) and moderator Dr. Nicholas Wright (Intelligent Biology; Georgetown Medical Center; University College London; New America) – [How Can They \(and We\) Wield the Green Energy Transition for Geostrategic Power?](#)
- *15 December 2022*: Dr. Barry Posen (Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)) and Prof. Christopher Coker (London School of Economics (LSE) IDEAS) – [The 2022 NDS in Its Historical and Strategic Big Picture: Expert Q&A](#)