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I. New 'rapid review' of extremism signals return to pre-Shawcross era of 'equal opportunities anti-extremism', with violent misogyny likely to be incorporated

- The Home Secretary has [commissioned a 'rapid review'](#) looking at extremist ideologies, which is set to inform an upcoming counter-extremism strategy.
- The rapid review will assess new ideological categories to be addressed through this counter-extremism strategy, beyond the existing categories of 'Islamist' and 'far-right extremism', including extreme misogyny and 'beliefs which fit into broader categories, such as violence'.

It will include an emphasis on radicalisation of young people, as well as radicalisation online.

- This emphasis on 'new' categories of extremism symbolises the current government turn back towards an 'equal opportunities counter extremism' - i.e. focusing beyond just Muslims - which was the status quo between 2016 and 2022, after which the Shawcross Prevent review represented a partisan break from that consensus with its return to focusing squarely on Muslim 'extremism'.
- The forthcoming counter-extremism strategy will likely be a successor to the 2015 [Counter Extremism Strategy](#) (CXS) which was published under the David Cameron government.

That strategy represented an expansion of the counter-extremism architecture beyond the confines of the Prevent programme alone - and sought to embed it within broader social policy.

- The CXS sought to tackle issues such as forced marriage and FGM through the ambit of counter-extremism, led to the introduction of the Building a Stronger Britain Together (BSBT) fund, and also infamously saw English language lessons for Muslim women [linked to tackling extremism](#).

This 'expanded' counter-extremism approach fell out of favour with latter Conservative administrations - a renewed CXS due for release around 2020 never materialised under Priti Patel's tenure as Boris Johnson's Home Secretary, while the [BSBT fund was axed](#) on her watch also.

II. Government issues partial suspension of arms export licenses to Israel - representing their fear of complicity with international law violations

- After weeks of [speculation](#), following the outcome of an internal review on Israel's compliance with international humanitarian law, the British government [suspended a small proportion](#) - 30 out of 350 - of export licenses to Israel.

This was done on the basis that the review identified 'a clear risk that items exported to

Israel under these 30 licences might be used in serious violations of [international humanitarian law]’.

- The move represents the concern of the new government, in light of [mounting legal rulings](#) against Israel and international complicity with it, to maintain its firm support of Israel without risking being made liable under international law violations.

The fact that the overriding concerns of the government were purely legal, rather than political - let alone moral - were evident from their [almost apologetic press release](#) around it, which emphasised their ongoing “support [for] Israel’s right to self-defence”, and the fact that the meagre suspensions were balanced with sanctions against members of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps unit.

- Despite how restrained the move was, British Zionist organisations responded predictably.

The Board of Deputies of British Jews [expressed their alarm](#) that the suspensions ‘ending a dangerous message to Hamas and other adversaries of the UK’ while UK Lawyers for Israel [threatened legal action](#) against the government, arguing their belief that the suspension was ‘unlawful’.

III. Labour initiates Defence review, poised to reverse personnel cuts to Army and bolster Britain’s increasingly militaristic posture

- In July the Prime Minister initiated a [‘root and branch’ Defence review](#), which will ‘consider the threats Britain faces, the capabilities needed to meet them, the state of UK armed forces and the resources available’.

It is due to report back in 2025.

- This review comes in a context over controversies over [cuts to Britain’s troop numbers](#) that Labour criticised in opposition - and the US also [weighed in on](#) - a military [recruitment crisis](#), as well as calls from figures within the British military world for reintroducing [conscription](#) or a [‘citizen’s army’](#) to fight Russia in the near future.

The review is distinct from the [Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy](#) launched under the previous government in 2021, and [updated in 2023](#) - that review represented a more thoroughgoing reorientation of British foreign policy, while this Defence review is more about strategic posture, priorities and resource deployment.

- In that regard, the Defence review will remain locked in to the objectives established by the Integrated Review and the foreign policy orientation of the Conservative governments, [including that Britain will:](#)
 - maintain a ‘total commitment to the independent UK nuclear deterrent’;
 - that ‘NATO will remain the cornerstone of UK Defence’;
 - that ‘support for Ukraine is steadfast and will endure for as long as it takes for Ukraine to succeed’; and
 - ‘maintain[ing] the UK’s defence ties to the Indo Pacific region, the Gulf and the Middle East