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The militarisation of UK security politics

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In recent years, UK security policy has exhibited a shift toward militarised approaches, in line with broader trends among other Western states. The government's commitment to increasing defence spending, as well as the framing of the 2025 National Security Strategy, reflects a growing prioritisation of military threats—particularly from Russia and other so-called 'hostile states'. This reorientation has often come at the expense of addressing non-military challenges, such as the climate crisis or economic inequality and has been accompanied by substantive budget cuts to aid and development. Official rhetoric has increasingly invoked a language of deterrence and military power, a shift that is mirrored in segments of the media which amplify narratives of geopolitical confrontation and the necessity of military preparedness. This panel will explore the political, cultural, and institutional drivers behind the UK's turn toward militarism, its implications for global security and what alternative security paradigms remain.

Track Classification: Security Policy and Practice