

**20<sup>TH</sup> ASIA SECURITY SUMMIT**  
**THE SHANGRI-LA DIALOGUE**

**SECOND PLENARY SESSION – Q&A**  
**SATURDAY 3 JUNE 2023**

**CARLITO GALVEZ JR**

**SENIOR UNDERSECRETARY; OFFICER-IN-CHARGE,  
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE, PHILIPPINES**

**BEN WALLACE**

**SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE, UK**

**ANITA ANAND**

**MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE, CANADA**

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

We now turn to questions. I've got about nine or ten people on the list. What I intend to do this time is ask five or six of you to sequentially ask your questions and then I'll come back to the panellists and invite them to answer in rough proportion to the number of questions that might have been directed principally to them. If I can get more than five or six in, I will and then close the panel with their reflections. But could I please ask, from France, Valérie Niquet.

**Dr Valérie Niquet, Head, Asia Department, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique**

Thank you. It's a question to Secretary Carlito Galvez. You mentioned free and open Indo-Pacific under rule of law and this is something that Japan shares too. How do you see the role of Japan in the region considering the many constraints that Tokyo still faces in military action, including the export of arms to its partners or close allies? Thank you.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thank you very much. And from Germany but also IISS, Ben Schreer.

**Dr Ben Schreer, Executive Director, IISS–Europe; Head, European Security and Defence Programme, IISS–Europe**

Thank you, John. Also, two short questions for Secretary Galvez, if I may. Secretary, you mentioned that your president has instructed you to, quote, 'safeguard every inch of Philippine territory'. So, two questions there.

First, does that mean that the Philippines is moving from a hedging strategy between the US and China and towards a more close alignment with the United States as part of a balancing strategy against China?

And secondly, how can the Philippine Armed Forces accelerate the necessary development of more air and maritime capability, including unlocking more funding? Thank you

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thank you very much. And from Japan but also from the IISS, Yuka Koshino.

**Yuka Koshino, Research Fellow for Security and Technology Policy, IISS**

Thank you, John. I have a question to Defence Secretary Wallace since you touched on Japan. So, NATO–Japan engagement has been gaining momentum since Prime Minister Kishida's attendance at the Madrid Summit last year. And we've also seen reporting that NATO plans to open an office in – its first Asian office in Japan. The Hiroshima Accord signed during Sunak's visit to Japan last month also stated that the two countries will cooperate to deepen NATO–Japan cooperation.

So, from your perspective, where are the key areas that Japan can make a substantial contribution to supporting NATO's mission in Indo-Pacific and beyond? Thank you.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thank you very much. And from China, Yongsheng Tang

**Major General Tang Yongsheng, Former Deputy Commandant, National Security College, National Defense University, China**

Thank you very much for this opportunity, allowing me to raise my question. I just want to make a short comment regarding Madam Anita Anand's speech. So, after the Cold War, in Asia-Pacific region, basically, stability has been maintained. It is a result of combined efforts of all the countries in the region. That is why we're here discussing the stability and the balance in this region.

Just now, Madam Anita Anand said that China is a destructive force in the region. As a matter of fact, what we're doing is to the contrary to this. We have been making great efforts to maintain peace and the stability in the region. Most of the countries in the region have already become – or, to put it another way, China has become the biggest trading partner to most countries in the region. And in terms of security, we have also made great progress, be it from a bilateral-relationship point of view or multinational-relationship point of view.

So, Madam Minister, you said that China is a destructive force. Actually, what you said is destructive by itself. China's force has never been extended to anywhere near Canada for any operation. We are not monitoring or supervising any national leader's speech or dialogue.

In order to maintain the stability and the balance in the region, it is true that we need to explore more active measures instead of basing your speech on assumed orders to criticise others. Thank you very much.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Translation there for Minister Anand. I heard the word in English 'destructive'.

**Anita Anand, Minister of National Defence, Canada**

Disruptive.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

I think it might have been disruptive.

**Anita Anand, Minister of National Defence, Canada**

Yes.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

The word that might have been used by the minister. So, that might help to sort of lower the level of anxieties in the room and allow for the dialogue to continue on that basis.

Could I invite, from Singapore, Ravi Velloor?

**Ravi Velloor, Associate Editor and Senior Asia Columnist, *The Straits Times***

Yes. Thank you, John. This is to Secretary Galvez from the Philippines. Sir, earlier this morning, we heard Secretary Austin say that he's going to sit down with you and the defence ministers of Japan and Australia.

Now, where do you see these discussions leading to? And given that you're meeting three of the Quad defence ministers and you bought cruise missiles from the fourth that is missing in this room today, what is your attitude to Quad and would you be open to a closer working relationship with Quad? Thank you.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thank you very much. And from the United States, Elbridge Colby.

**Elbridge Colby, Principal, The Marathon Initiative**

Thank you, John. This is a question for Minister Anand. I was impressed by the ambition and scope of your agenda and aims in the Indo-Pacific. Given Canada's commitment and strong rhetoric about the

Ukraine conflict and European security as well, do you commit to spending your NATO obligation of 2% per year?

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thank you very much. No minister of national defence ever is allowed to escape that question. Bill Emmott from the United Kingdom and chair of the Board of Trustees of the IISS.

**Bill Emmott, Former Editor in Chief, *The Economist*; Chairman of the Trustees; Member of the Advisory Council, IISS**

Thank you, John. It was striking – this excellent panel, in their presentations, talked about such a wide range not just of geography but also of topics as under the heading of stability and balance in Asia-Pacific. So therefore, I feel I'm not at risk of lowering the tone by mentioning economics, and in particular economic security.

Last week in Japan, Deputy Prime Minister Lawrence Wong gave a very striking lecture warning of the risks that de-risking, the de-risking strategies of economic security, may be going too far and potentially leading to a fragmented economic system, as well as political system, in the region.

I wonder if the panel could comment on where do they feel that their countries' economic security policies are, as it were, running up against or having contradictions with their diplomacy and their broader economic and foreign-affairs positions.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

And could I now proceed to your neighbour, Bastian Giegerich, from Germany but also the IISS?

**Dr Bastian Giegerich, Director of Defence and Military Analysis, IISS**

John, thank you very much. I'll take it back to defence, I'm afraid.

My question is for Secretary Wallace. So, Secretary, you said that UK interests lie as much here in this region as they do in Europe. And I wonder whether you could say a bit how that insight translates into choices in the Defence Command Paper that we will see soon? Thank you very much.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thank you. And I'll take perhaps one more from the Executive Director of IISS-Asia, who's done so much to make this Dialogue a success already, James Crabtree.

**James Crabtree, Executive Director, IISS-Asia**

Thank you very much, John. This is a question for Minister Anand. Could you tell us a little bit more about Canada's unilateral engagement strategy in this region? So, you outlined some details of the Indo-Pacific strategy of July last year but Canada is not presently part of some of the new family of unilateral organisations.

Recently, you made some comments about a potential ambition to join the non-nuclear component of the AUKUS agreement in the technological domain or at least to participate in that given you're sitting next to Secretary Wallace. Perhaps you could come up with a small agreement to participate or tell us if you'd like to.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thank you very much. What I think I'll do now is return to the panel in the reverse order in which they initially spoke, giving them each a couple of minutes to address the questions principally directed to them. I will have time, I think, for a second round. I've got five or six people here and we'll be able to

return to you. So, that's excellent. For Minister Anand there was disruption; there was defence spend; there was unilateralism.

**Anita Anand, Minister of National Defence, Canada**

Well, thank you so much for the questions; excellent questions, as usual.

Let me start with the questions regarding China. I want to be clear that Canada believes that we need to coexist with partners and allies and all countries. But at the same time, we must call a spade a spade, and we have seen increased militarisation by China in the South China Sea, including in the region surrounding Taiwan. And that is concerning. And it is really indicative of the need for an approach to be eyes wide open on China, to cooperate with China where we must but also to challenge China where its conduct is increasing instability and disruption in the Indo-Pacific region.

And therefore, in response to the question as to what conduct in particular I am referring to, I am referring to recent conduct by Chinese aircraft and intercepts regarding our Royal Canadian Air Force members who are simply monitoring UN sanctions under *Operation Neon*, in accordance with international law in international airspace.

And by and large, those interceptions have been undertaken in a safe and professional manner. But there have been some that have been deemed to be unsafe. We are always going to stand up for the safety of our aircrews and we are addressing this appropriately. And so, that is just one example.

And as I said, Canada will continue to ensure that we are working on open lines of communication and recognising the need to coexist responsibly. But when it comes to the safety of our aircrew, we must address the issue that is presented. And that includes the one that I outlined.

Now, I will move to discuss the 2% question that arose. First and foremost, Canada is a founding member of NATO. We have continuously stepped up in many tangible ways to indicate our undying commitment to this multilateral organisation.

And one example is our presence on NATO's eastern flank, where we have led the enhanced Forward Presence (eHP) battlegroup in Latvia for over five years, the most diverse battlegroup on NATO's eastern flank, consisting of 11 countries. We are currently moving to brigade level, committing more and more resources, and ensuring we are doing our part in a tangible way. So, there are many ways to measure commitments to an organisation. That is one.

But on the question of the 2% itself, our defence spending is on an upward trajectory. It is increasing by 70% in the nine-year period beginning in 2017. In addition, we committed \$8 billion in budget 2022 to defence spending and almost \$40bn to North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) modernisation and continental defence in June 2022.

So, our defence spending is on an upward trajectory and we will continue to ensure that we are making meaningful contributions to NATO and to all of our multilateral alliances.

And then finally, the question that came to me related to, what was it, John?

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Well, there's a question about ...

**Anita Anand, Minister of National Defence, Canada**

AUKUS.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Yes.

**Anita Anand, Minister of National Defence, Canada**

I think it was on AUKUS. So, as I have continually said, our relationships with our Five Eyes allies are strong. And indeed, I'm sitting beside my good friend Ben Wallace, which is indicative of our continued and ongoing conversations and discussions and collaboration on all matters relating to peace and security.

In terms of AUKUS itself, Canada has deep strengths in the areas of quantum, artificial intelligence and technological capabilities writ large. And we will continue to collaborate with all of our allies on bilateral and multilateral bases so that we can continue to contribute in meaningful ways, as we have been doing. Thank you.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thank you very much. Ben Wallace on Japan, UK tilt to the Indo-Pacific, perhaps a bit of de-risking as well.

**Ben Wallace, Secretary of State for Defence, UK**

Yes. Well, look, we could be mistaken if we thought it was just about the Pacific and China and no mention of Russia here. I mean, Russia has Pacific interests. And if you're in Japan, obviously, you're very aware of Russia's behaviour, sometimes towards Japan but certainly in that part of the Pacific. And so, of course, NATO having an office here is in the interest of NATO.

And also, the importance of sharing lessons – both from Ukraine but also across the sort of NATO disposition in Europe – into this, probably, well, Japan, an open liberal democracy with our shared values, trading, important trading partner with us, important technological partner with Europe and the United Kingdom. And therefore, having a NATO office there is important for a number of issues.

Let's not forget, Russia has been quite aggressive in this region and will continue to be so. The Ukrainian war has significantly damaged Russia's land army but it still maintains a fleet, quite a large naval fleet, the Northern Fleet, and indeed, Black Sea and indeed over in Vladivostok and around this side of the Pacific. And we see evidence already of Japan moving some of its capabilities to this part of the region. That poses a threat to all of us.

The Russians have the [...] programme. That is the programme designed to look at, disrupt or damage, potentially, undersea cables, undersea energy. All of those capabilities are coming into the Pacific and we should realise what that means for our vulnerabilities. And we are all vulnerable to global cable threat, whether that is from espionage or indeed just disruption or energy.

Energy warfare is growing, sadly. We neighbour with Norway. Norway now supplies 40% of Europe's gas. It's not just Norway's obligation to protect that; it is – all European countries have a duty to protect that vulnerability. And that won't be any different here in the Pacific for some of our dependency on cables.

So, Singapore, for example, finance sector, protecting its critical national infrastructure, really important. One of the world leaders in disrupting that critical infrastructure, who not only has the capability but has the intent and does attack critical national infrastructure, as we're seeing in Ukraine, against all international law, against the Geneva Conventions, is Russia.

So, I think it's important NATO is in Japan to do a number of things. One is to share the knowledge of the threat. And remember, the High North is a future, a place where both Russia and China have an interest of different trade routes. And therefore, for all of us, again, in Europe, that is a direct connection to this part of the world. But also, obviously, the common standards of NATO equipment – we would say, as NATO members, NATO equipment is some of the best in the world. And if you are a member here who spent a lot of money on Russian equipment, I'd be taking it back to the shop given what I've seen happen in Ukraine. I would be encouraging you not to waste your money on Russian equipment. It doesn't seem to work very well.

And I would secondly say that that common standard that has been often used – the base of Australia and New Zealand and others in their equipment programme – is a good and open standard that allows inter-operability and integration.

On the other areas about the EU, the balance between Europe and the Pacific tilt of the United Kingdom, first of all, it's not an either/or, right? Let's balance this. The British defence budget will top out over £50bn this year or next. We'll be heading towards 2.3% of GDP and then getting up towards 2.5% as a pledge. That does give us some headroom after some of our NATO obligations. And I think that allows the UK to play to its strengths in this region.

One of our strengths is knowledge, the knowledge of our men and women, our armed forces; training; capacity-building with our friends and allies in the region, wherever that may be. We obviously have a garrison in Brunei, for example, and that is an important capability in effectively improving deterrence and, indeed, capacity of our friends and allies in the region. But also, deployments of our naval assets and being able to convene our partners and friends from Europe who also have interest here.

When we came with our carrier group last year, I was delighted all the way through that our deployment, we were accompanied by a Dutch frigate, the Netherlands. And in Europe, countries like Portugal and the Netherlands – in our DNA is freedom of navigation, in our trade. It's in our history. It's in, essentially, our economic model. And so, it's inevitable that when we come to the Pacific, together, we will come with our friends throughout the next few years. And that's an important thing not only for the United Kingdom, the flag of the United Kingdom and the flag of Europe, the flag of partners from that side of the world.

So, I don't think it's an either/or. And as long as we can fulfil our commitment to NATO, which is important, then we also have to, I think, contribute as a P5 nation to underpinning our obligation as a P5 to uphold those rules and law.

And finally, on economic resilience, the question, absolutely right. Britain doesn't think the solution to economic vulnerability or sovereignty is to pull up the drawbridge; we believe it's to diversify your supply chain, have choices, so if one avenue closes off, you can work with somebody else in order to achieve what you need for your equipment or your capabilities.

And by doing that, not only do you manage to protect yourselves but you also collaborate and strengthen partnerships. AUKUS is a collaboration, but we actually collaborate with many countries in this room in cyber, in other capacities. And that collaboration is really key to security and defence partnerships. That's how you build alliances. And so, pulling up the drawbridge will not help anyone, in my view, protect themselves unless they are a huge economy – very few economies on Earth that can effectively pull up the drawbridge and do everything from scratch. And even when those economies try, you often find they have to rely on external technology – either acquired, bought or, in some cases, stolen.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thank you very much. Just before I turn to the Philippines, I want to be a sort of equal opportunity as interrogator. I asked your colleague from Netherlands last year this question. So, I'm going to ask you the very same question.

In 2021, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands jointly did a freedom-of-navigation patrol in the Black Sea. It was in order to assess the importance of keeping a free and open Black Sea. And some people in this region might question whether Westerners are truly committed to a free and open Indo-Pacific when there's been such difficulty ensuring a free and open Black Sea. We're now relying on an agreement that is permanently tentative between the United Nations, Turkey, Ukraine and Russia that permits a percentage of fertilisers and food coming out of the Black Sea. The biggest importer of Ukrainian wheat in the world was Egypt; the number two is Indonesia, a G20 power.

Given the poverty and the quality of Russian equipment, should we not take a little bit of a risk and look to see ways in which we do a freedom-of-navigation patrol in the Black Sea in order to assist the food security of this part of the world?

**Ben Wallace, Secretary of State for Defence, UK**

Well, I think, unlike the Pacific, the Black Sea is governed, obviously, by the Montreux Declaration, which limits not only – even when it's allowing people to come in, it limits the number of foreign warships in the Black Sea at any one time. So, it is, in a sense, a controlled sea, unlike, obviously, the openness and freedom of the Pacific.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

A reflagging operation wouldn't be possible, for a push, for the state of Romania?

**Ben Wallace, Secretary of State for Defence, UK**

Look, I mean, the actual Black Sea nations have the freedom to do what they like. We've noticed, for many years, Russia has abused exercise boxes. They've declared vast swathes of ocean no-go by just declaring it's a live-firing area, even when they don't do any live firing. They have intimidated Georgia and any other body who seeks to think it's not just a Russian sea.

Look, there's a plus side at the moment in the Montreux Declaration being upheld by Turkey. Russia can't resupply its fleet. Russia is currently using its fleet in the Black Sea to obliterate civilian areas of Ukraine. I mean, when these missiles are being fired, they are fired from *Kilo* submarines, for example, aimed at everything from human populations and critical national infrastructure. And if Turkey were to allow it to be open, then the first thing you would see is a significant naval reinforcement from other parts of the Russian fleet. And that isn't in Ukraine's interest or ours.

But you make an interesting point about grain. There are efforts by Russia in places like Africa to blame high food prices and everything else on everyone from, well, Britain – I think we were described as the eternal enemy the other day – the West, everybody else that's there, it's our fault that the grain prices in Africa ...

The reason grain prices are high, it's because Russia illegally invaded Ukraine, end of story. No other reason; wouldn't have happened; they've caused it.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Philippines, you had a couple of questions on Japan and your tilt towards the United States and how that balances with your approach also to China.



**Carlito Galvez Jr, Senior Undersecretary; Officer-in-Charge, Department of National Defense, Philippines**

Yes. Japan is a very important ally. All alliances that we have are very important, especially Japan. Japan helped us in three aspects.

One is the peace process in Mindanao. They rehabilitated most of the battle-ridden areas in Mindanao, especially during the Battle of Marawi. They donated \$200 million for the rehabilitation.

Second is also for the modernisation of our coastguard. They provided multi-role vehicles/vessels. And also, for the armed forces, they donated 5bn spare parts for our helicopters.

Japan is very important also in our Build, Build, Build programme because they provided a lot of funds. During our visit in Japan this year, the prime minister, Japan government, assured the Philippines of its support to achieve the high medium-level income country and provided much support of ¥600bn and also the construction of the first subway in Metro Manila. So, Japan, we are looking forward for having some sort of a reciprocal access agreement.

And also, we are jointly having some meetings with the security and defence department on how we could include Australia and US in our talk. The Philippines has only two visiting-forces agreements – with Australia and also with the US. So, Australia provided us a very intensive training for counter-terrorism. They provided people-to-people skills training to our soldiers. And also, Australia provided meaningful strategic education.

I came from Australian education; I learned the Australian way. So, with that, I think that's what we are looking, the support of the different countries, like-minded countries in achieving a prosperous Indo-Pacific. We are, the Philippines, also with that.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thank you very much. What I think I'm going to do is I'm going to take three questions to ensure three different regions of the Indo-Pacific are included and then give each of our panellists one minute to send their final messages to this gathering. So, first, from Indonesia, Fitriani, please.

**Dr Fitriani, Research Consultant, International Relations, Centre for Strategic and International Studies**

Thank you. My question is, I would like to know – aside from Minister Anand, that mentioned the achievement on women, peace and security – I would like to know the commitment of the countries in terms of supporting the advancement of the women, peace and security agenda not only in quantity but in quality, including increasing access in terms of leadership and command positions for women in the armed forces, peacekeeping, as well as leadership in new technology, such as cyber and artificial intelligence. Thank you.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thank you very much. And from the Republic of Korea, Bo Ram Kwon.

**Dr Kwon Bo Ram, Associate Research Fellow, Korea Institute for Defense Analyses**

Thank you. I have another minilateral question for our Canadian Defence Minister. In March, Canada offered to lead a new quad including Korea, Japan and the US. I'm wondering if that has gained any traction and what would the agenda be.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thanks very much. I think I can actually squeeze in two more. So, Gregory Poling from the United States.

**Gregory Poling, Senior Fellow and Director, Southeast Asia Program and Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, Center for Strategic and International Studies**

Thank you very much. My question is for Secretary Galvez. We've heard quite a bit about collaboration with the United States, Japan and Australia to enhance deterrence and inter-operability, but I wonder if you could speak to what kind of role the Philippines would like to see the US, Japan and Australia play in peacetime to help push back on the grey-zone coercion that your forces face day in and day out?

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

So, that's on the grey zone and how you can cooperate in peace. I'll take one more and then come to the panel in the order that they originally spoke in, so Philippines, UK, Canada. Robert Ward.

**Robert Ward, IISS Japan Chair; Director of Geo-economics and Strategy, IISS**

Thank you, John. A question for Secretary Wallace. The Hiroshima Accord is a welcome statement of intent for continued deepening of UK-Japan relations. The accord notes the UK's role in upholding the strategic values of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) after its succession to the bloc. Given the important geopolitical element to the CPTPP, what do you think the priorities for the UK should be in upholding these values?

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thank you very much. So, first, the Philippines, US/Australia was an important point; then the UK; and we'll close with Anita Anand from Canada.

**Carlito Galvez Jr, Senior Undersecretary; Officer-in-Charge, Department of National Defense, Philippines**

During our meeting with Secretary Blinken and also Secretary Austin, we really see the security alliance that we have, that we have to expand it to a more expanded alliance, which includes economics. That's why, during our meeting, we pushed for some economic packages so that we can be free from certain economic coercion in the future.

And Japan and US are very helpful on this. That's why President Biden has promised that he will send peace economics into the Philippines. And we have seen already the presence of USA, providing some assistance especially during disasters.

And I really agree that our future is really to have a close relation with Australia, Japan, Canada, the UK and the other countries so that we can really look forward in accelerating the modernisation of our armed forces and also to push for the rule of law based in the Indo-Pacific region.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thank you very much. Just before I move to Ben Wallace, you mentioned the visiting-forces agreements that you have with the United States and Australia. There's been a lot of talk of a potential visiting-forces agreement between Philippines and Japan that would work within the constitutions of each country. Can you announce any progress on that kind of discussion?

**Carlito Galvez Jr, Senior Undersecretary; Officer-in-Charge, Department of National Defense, Philippines**

We are in the process of discussions. And actually, in the *Balikatan* (shoulder-to-shoulder) exercises, we really explore on possibly expanding the bilateral *Balikatan* exercises into multilateral exercises. So, in

that exercise, we already included, for the first time, 101 Australian soldiers. And in the near future, we might be expanding it with the other allied nations.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Thank you very much. Ben Wallace.

**Ben Wallace, Secretary of State for Defence, UK**

Well, thank you. Obviously, I'm the defence secretary, not the trade secretary, but I think CPTPP is really important because the principles we have to uphold is, as I said in my speech, that the acceptance for common standard of the rule of law, of freedom, openness and transparency, as Defence Secretary Austin said. It's important that we engage in our trade in a transparent way but also that the United Kingdom, I think one of the most important things is the openness to competition, the openness to free trade. That's what it's about.

You don't have to tell me, in this region, the success that free trade has given many of these countries over the last 30 years. If you look at the progress and the growth of GDP that is driven out of effectively free trade and openness, that has benefitted millions, potentially billions of people in this region. And I think that is the real success of it.

And there's no half signing up, is how I would say. You're either in it or you're not. And we're in it and we'll do everything we can to make sure we live up to the spirit of that.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Anita Anand.

**Anita Anand, Minister of National Defence, Canada**

Well, thank you. Two questions came to me there, the first on women, peace and security. And let me just say that we all have an obligation to advance progressive values including ensuring equality and non-discrimination of women in whatever institution we're participating in.

And for the other women defence ministers in the room, from the Netherlands and Portugal and myself and other women around the NATO table and beyond, that is something we are working on every day internally, in our own military institutions, but also externally, in our partnerships and our cooperative arrangements with other countries.

And certainly in our Indo-Pacific strategy – the externally focused document that I discussed in my speech – women, peace and security, ensuring that we are imparting and discussing and ensuring collaboration on these important progressive and, I would say, values that ensure modernisation of military institutions are absolutely central.

But it's not just external; it's also internal. What are we doing in our own military institutions, in our own armed forces, to ensure that women have those leadership roles, they're able to ascend to those leadership roles and are doing so in a way that is not beset with sexual harassment, sexual misconduct or discrimination of any sort?

And in Canada's case, we are taking a very deliberate and explicit approach to ensuring that women are able to advance in a way that respects their dignity, empowers them and protects them every single day when they're putting on a uniform in service of our country. And I'm happy to provide more detail offline about those many reforms and initiatives that we are continuing to implement.

In terms of leading a new quad, I just want to reiterate the point that Canada will always stand up and contribute to our alliances, to our partners, to our allies. One of the messages that I am trying to drive home here today is that in this region in particular, you will see more of Canada, whether it's in terms of the bilateral or multilateral partnerships and alliances, whether it is in terms of a third frigate, whether it's in terms of military cooperation and exercises with our partners.

The goal is to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific that is stable, as the name of this panel suggests. We all have a role to play in ensuring stability. And Canada will be here to ensure that we are playing our part to build a free and open Pacific as a Pacific country ourselves. Thank you.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Well, thank you very much. Let me, again, invite the audience to do two things. First, we're going to finish this session exactly two minutes early at 10.58. So, I would hope that all of you return two minutes early at 11.28 to ensure the ministerial lunch will be able to begin smartly at 1300 hours and we have a really excellent third plenary to look forward to.

And then secondly, as the clock strikes 10.58, could you please enthusiastically thank our three speakers for their presentations.