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UK Underprepared for War as Security Chiefs Sound Alarm Over National Safety

July 19, 2025

— Categories: *Defence & Security*



Senior UK officials and defence experts have warned that the British people are not safe and that the country is significantly underprepared for potential war. Reports from military leaders and parliamentary committees point to serious gaps in readiness, ranging from personnel and equipment shortages to outdated civil defence infrastructure, raising

urgent concerns about the nation's ability to deter or respond to a major conflict.

A recent parliamentary report painted a stark picture of the UK's defence posture, describing the armed forces as "hollowed out" due to persistent delays and cancellations in key military programmes. These include warships, submarines, and logistics fleet renewals. The Human Security Centre (HSC) has echoed warnings that the UK lacks the capability for large-scale warfare. Shortages in ammunition, air defence systems, and strategic mobility assets further weaken Britain's deterrence position, particularly in the face of threats posed by Russia and China.

The House of Commons Defence Committee added that the UK military is not adequately prepared for high-intensity conflict. It cited difficulties in recruitment and retention, with more personnel leaving the services than joining. Moreover, while recent spending pledges have been welcomed, the committee stressed that funds are not being channelled quickly enough to replenish critical capabilities.

Former Armed Forces Minister James Heappey criticised the government's lack of long-term strategic planning, arguing that too many assumptions are still based on post-Cold War peace rather than modern threats. Retired General Sir Richard Barrons warned that decades of underinvestment have left foundational military functions stripped back to dangerous levels.

General Sir Patrick Sanders, former Chief of the General Staff, suggested that Britain will need to consider forming a volunteer "citizen army" to supplement regular forces. Current force strength is no longer sufficient to respond to a peer-on-peer conflict, particularly if drawn out over time.

Civil defence measures, many of which date back to the Cold War, are now being reviewed. Contingency plans involving rationing, government relocation, and secret bunkers have not kept pace with modern threats, including cyberattacks, missile strikes, and infrastructure sabotage.

From a centre-right standpoint, these warnings reinforce the urgent need to reinvest in national defence. A credible deterrent requires clear commitment to stable funding, industrial resilience, and updated civil defence mechanisms. Without meaningful action, the UK risks falling behind its adversaries and leaving its citizens vulnerable in an increasingly volatile geopolitical landscape.