



Ministry
of Defence

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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THE EARL OF MINTO
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS

MSU/4/8/1/1/is

23rd March 2024

Dear Karan,

During the AUKUS debate on Thursday 29th February, you highlighted the opportunity for greater collaboration with higher education institutions across the AUKUS partnership, and increased defence spending in the UK.

Our national security benefits every day from insights provided by our world-leading industry, university and researchers. AUKUS draws on, and will strengthen, the UK's world-leading defence industrial base, alongside our world-leading science and tech sectors. I am pleased that the team delivering Pillar One of AUKUS have been working closely with the Nuclear Skills Taskforce, being led by Sir Simon Bollom. One of their recommendations is to develop a partnership with Centres of Doctoral Training across the AUKUS partners; we will explore opportunities to do this over the coming months and consider whether there is scope to extend this to Pillar Two capabilities too. I would also anticipate that some of our academics, together with established private sector companies, will want to be involved in the AUKUS Innovation Challenges, the first of which will be launched soon.

On your second point, we will look to increase defence spending when fiscal and economic conditions allow.

I will place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Yours sincerely

THE EARL OF MINTO

The Lord Billimoria CBE DL
House of Lords
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