

# **Defence & Security Lecture**

Egyptian Hall, Mansion House  
Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022  
The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor of London  
Alderman Vincent Keaveny

Your Excellency. Admiral Sir Tony. Fellow Aldermen. Sheriff.  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Hello and welcome to Mansion House.

For those who don't know me, I'm Alderman Vincent Keaveny...the 693<sup>rd</sup> Lord Mayor of the City of London.

In addition to heading up the City of London Corporation - the Square Mile's governing body - I'm an international ambassador for the UK's financial and professional services sector.

The Lord Mayor's Defence & Security Lecture is now in its tenth year...and has fast become a fixture in the City's calendar.

Admiral Sir Tony...I know this is not your first time at Mansion House...

...but I'm thrilled to have you here with us tonight, as you come to the end of your first year as Chief of Defence Staff.

You and I took up our posts at a similar time.

Our jobs are very different. But, we do have a few things in common...both being lawyers by training.

From the MoD to Mansion House...it is great to see the value of legal skills being recognised!

Ladies and gentlemen, the world has changed dramatically since Sir Tony and I took up our respective posts last November.

We have a new Government.

Inflation has risen to 10.1% - causing misery for millions.

Britain's longest-serving monarch has died, and we have a King for the first time in 70 years.

War has returned to the streets of Europe.

And...to quote you, Sir Tony, in your first speech in post: "our security outlook is far more complex and dangerous than at any time over the past thirty years".

The good ship Great Britain is in choppy seas.

To paraphrase Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson...we cannot command winds and weather.

But we can chart a different course...and steer ourselves to safer waters.

In times of change and challenge, we look to our Armed Forces as a source of stability and strength.

With no prejudice to any of the services...I'd liken the Armed Forces to skilled sailors doing the essential...often unseen...labour that's required to keep the ship seaworthy.

As Lord Mayor I'm honoured to serve as President of the City of London Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association...

...which supports London's reserve forces and cadets by raising awareness and developing relationships with communities, employers and veterans.

I'm pleased to have its chair, Captain Paul Hill, here with us tonight.

It's a fantastic organisation...with a real focus on people that I wholeheartedly support, having made "People and Purpose" the theme for my mayoral year.

We must thank the reserve forces and cadets for bringing us together tonight...

...as it was the RFCA that first proposed an annual lecture to increase awareness within the City of defence and security matters.

I'm glad to say that...in 2022...the discrete - but complementary - roles the City and Armed Forces play in maintaining Britain's way of life and place in the world have never been so evident.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is no exaggeration to say that my time as Lord Mayor has been defined by the life and death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

Her passing has deeply affected us all...and also, I think, provided a timely reminder of the importance of the British Armed Forces.

As you have noted, Sir Tony...the relationship between the Queen and the Armed Forces was "deeply personal".

She served in the Second World War...and was the wife, mother and grandmother of service personnel.

She occupied an equally special position in City life.

As dedicated patron of our livery companies...

And a tireless promoter of the UK's FPS sector on the world stage.

I was privileged to attend her funeral, just a few months after welcoming the Royal Family to the City to mark her life and service for the Platinum Jubilee.

And I was honoured – in a different way – to attend the Accession Council and oversee the City Proclamation for our new King.

The transition from one sovereign to another is something most of us have never experienced...

...and the Armed Forces' presence was felt throughout the public events marking the change.

Around 4,000 military personnel were on parade on the day of the funeral.

Carrying Her Majesty's coffin. Pulling the gun carriage. Playing in the band.

You were not just there to add to the spectacle...

But because of the *value* Her Majesty placed on her relationship with the military...

...and as an embodiment of the integral - often invisible - part you play in protecting our nation.

I know you will carry on performing that role in this new, Carolean era...

Giving British citizens - and this great City - the stability we seek.

It's that role that I'll focus on in the rest of my speech tonight.

Ladies and gentlemen, our Armed Forces are critical to protect the physical safety of the Square Mile's workers, residents and visitors...that goes without saying.

But, we also need the Armed Forces to safeguard the things on which the City - as a thriving global financial centre - depends:

International laws, international trade, and international stability.

Until 1973, the Bank of England was guarded at night by soldiers from the Brigade of Guards, who were given their dinner and a pint of beer for their trouble.

Today, security takes so *many* more forms.

The freedom of the seas is critical for the movement of goods and facilitates international trade.

The freedom of the skies is critical for the movement of people - and, therefore, business' access to talent.

And the FPS sector relies on the free and secure global flow of communications and data - including protection against cyber crime.

As the world has become more open, more connected...the City has never needed a strong Armed Forces so much.

But ours is not a one-way relationship. Far from it.

The City Corporation's primary aims are to support a thriving economy...and contribute to a flourishing society where people *are* safe and *feel* safe.

A little-known figure named Sir Winston Churchill once said of private enterprise:

“Some people regard it as a predatory tiger to be shot...

“Others look on it as a cow they can milk...

“Not enough people see it as a healthy horse, pulling a sturdy wagon.”

Our FPS sector is the “healthy horse” on which the UK economy relies....

...generating a trade surplus of £59 billion in 2019...and supporting over two million jobs.

Thanks to fundamentals such as respect for the rule of law, people see the UK as a safe, reliable place to do business.

We have a huge bank of expertise and experience which means that, when the City talks...the world listens.

And, in 2022, financial force speaks just as loudly – maybe louder – than military might.

Whether experienced lawyers working overseas...

Or skilled soldiers training local forces...

Members of the FPS sector and the Armed Forces are often the *face* of the UK on the world stage.

Working together, we protect British interests, while promoting British values.

This symbiotic relationship is embodied in our support for Ukraine.

US President Dwight Eisenhower said that “the clearest way to show what the rule of law means to us in everyday life is to recall what has happened when there is no rule of law.”

Over these past weeks, we have seen Moscow launch indiscriminate strikes on civilian areas in Ukrainian cities.

A children’s cancer doctor - who had just dropped her five-year-old son at nursery - was one of those killed in the attacks.

Some eight months since the war began...and the UK’s support for Ukraine and her people has not waned.

President Zelenskyy was the first foreign leader Liz Truss spoke to as Prime Minister.

British troops are training 10,000 Ukrainian soldiers for the frontline every 120 days.

And, last week, the government announced that the UK will give Ukraine a number of powerful “AMRAAM” missiles to defend against Russian airstrikes.

The City has been proud to complement the Armed Forces and government's work by implementing sanctions against Russia...

...and, together with City institutions, we've donated almost £1 million to humanitarian relief efforts.

In May, I visited Poland to see the huge effort that country was making to accommodate Ukrainian refugees.

And last month, I met with the Ukrainian Ambassador - who I'm very pleased is with us tonight - to discuss how the City can help in his country's economic reconstruction...

...including by offering expertise in insurance...and capital for infrastructure.

The conflict in Ukraine is foremost in our minds...but, of course, there are a wider range of other threats and risks to the UK in 2022.

At the City Corporation, we rely on the Government to set the direction for our engagement.

Balancing our role and responsibilities as a permanent member of the UN Security Council with the need to grow our economy...

Compete globally...

And tackle universal challenges like climate change.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We remain in choppy waters...but there are signs the tide is turning.

Russia is running short of friends and munitions.

Despite recent economic turmoil, our financial institutions and infrastructure remain robust.

And, while we have lost our beloved Queen...we have gained a new, progressive King.

Friends, this year has reinforced the significance of the Armed Forces to British life.

As we face the challenges ahead, I hope – and I *believe* - the Armed Forces and the City can continue to work together to *secure* the UK's safety and success.

Now, I am very pleased to introduce the Chief of Defence Staff, Sir Tony Radakin.