



## Royal College of Defence Studies

37 Belgrave Square, Upper Belgrave St, London SW1X 8BJ  
The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor of London  
Alderman Vincent Keaveny

Good afternoon to you all.

Thank you very much for inviting me to speak to you today.

As you have probably guessed, I am not here to teach you military tactics or strategy. My background as a City of London lawyer has not equipped me to lead military operations, nor does being Lord Mayor give me the power to order troops into battle, although a few of my

predecessors from centuries ago did do a bit of that – which I will come back to in a moment.

I am the 693<sup>rd</sup> Lord Mayor to hold this position, which gives you an idea of just how far back the role goes. The first Lord Mayor, Henry Fitz-Ailwin, was elected in 1189.

The key thing which made this role significant historically was that the Lord Mayor has always been elected from within the City, by the people, rather than being appointed by the Monarch.

In fact, the liberties of the City of London were recognised in Magna Carta in 1215. And even before the office of Lord Mayor was created, the rights of the City were recognised by William the Conqueror in what became known as the ‘William Charter’.

And the City of London Corporation, the governing body of which I am the civic leader, is believed to be the oldest elected local government in the world.

As I alluded to earlier, the history of the City has not always been one of peace and harmony. One of my seventeenth-century predecessors, Richard Browne, had to retake St Paul's Cathedral from an armed band of Fifth Monarchist rebels.

One of my fourteenth-century predecessors, William Walworth, personally killed the rebel leader Wat Tyler during the Peasants' Revolt.

And not long after that, another Lord Mayor, Nicholas Brembre, was executed by order of the Lords Appellant during the rule of what was called the 'Merciless Parliament'. He demanded the right to trial by combat as a knight – which you may have seen in *Game of Thrones* – but this was refused.

Lord Mayors also used to have responsibility for the protection of merchant shipping from pirates – which is why I still have the title 'Admiral of the Port of London'.

I am pleased to say that the role of a Lord Mayor nowadays is much more focused on softer forms of power! The soft power which we have as the home of the UK's financial and professional services sector.

The City of London helped lay the foundations for modern banking, capital markets and insurance – which is how it has become a global business centre.

It is also the home of the English common law system - which is the most popular choice for international cross-border contracts.

So while the City Corporation provides local authority functions for the Square Mile – planning, street cleaning, social services, and so on...

And while it provides services across London and beyond, such as running schools, housing estates and open spaces – like Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest – crucially, it also works to ensure that London retains its crown as a leading global financial and business centre.

Which is why the role of Lord Mayor also involves acting as an ambassador for UK financial and professional services – a sector which is vital to the UK's economic success and its international influence.

The Government's *Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy* recognises the importance of the UK being a global leader in financial services, emphasising that 11.5% of all foreign-listed companies worldwide are listed on the London Stock Exchange.

It also links this to other areas of economic strength such as cyber security, R&D, and the digital sector, noting that the UK received a third of all European digital tech investment

All of this gives the UK an edge as a centre for innovation.

We know this prosperity depends on our security. In the past, this was visibly represented by things like the Guards unit who literally guarded the Bank of England's gold each night.

But our security now takes so many more forms.

We really rely on the Armed Forces to help defend the things which the City of London, as a global financial business centre, depends on, namely international trade, international law, international stability.

People often describe this as “the rules-based international system”. Which is accurate, but not the most catchy phrase!

As a solicitor by trade, I think I prefer “the international rule of law”. This underpins the freedoms on which our economic activity depends. The freedom of the skies is important for the movement of people. The freedom of the seas is important for the movement of goods – which of course we depend on as an island nation.

Now, we also have to consider the free and secure flow of data and communications across the globe.

Which is why this has become such an important field of work for the City Corporation and for the City of London Police, who are now the

national lead force for cyber-crime. But the City is about much more than preserving and protecting, it is also about projecting soft power.

I am aware this is a concept which is not always clearly defined, but I like the British Council's explanation of soft power as "*the cumulative, long-term bank of national assets - moral and cultural - which predispose people to listen to a country*".

Bank being a very apt metaphor!

The City Corporation works with DIT, the Board of Trade and the FCDO on the UK's economic diplomacy, most notably through business delegations led by the Lord Mayor.

These are aimed at strengthening links with overseas markets and promoting investment into the UK – and I look forward to going to Spain and Portugal on my first overseas trip as Lord Mayor later this week.

This is part of a programme of visits which – Covid permitting – will include the Americas, the Gulf, Africa, the Far East and Australia.

We also have representative offices in Brussels, Mumbai, Beijing and Shanghai, building bridges with these important markets. And the City Corporation also has partnership agreements with other cities across the world – such as the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, who I held a roundtable with earlier today.

We also host many inward visits, including supporting state visits – with heads of state often receiving a banquet at Guildhall.

The City does not just offer tradition and ceremony for these occasions, but also the opportunity for investors to connect to a leading global financial centre.

The fact we have so many global firms based in the City gives us a truly global reach. That creates great convening power for the UK, which was evident during the recent COP26 summit.



The City of London has been at the forefront of tackling climate change, by addressing the crucial element of finance – and this year's summit was recognised as the 'Finance COP'.

We have been involved in green finance from the start, helping to launch the Green Finance Institute to support sustainable finance solutions around the world.

And the London Stock Exchange has a global sustainable investment centre which issued the world's first certified green bonds.

So this year, the City Corporation worked with the Green Finance Institute to hold the Green Horizon Summit at COP26 - a series of events to mobilise private finance for the transition to Net Zero.

Government funding will not be enough – it is recognised that we need both private and public finance to transform our economy.

We were able to bring together financial services leaders from across the world – while the political leaders were also gathering.

While COP26 didn't reach every high expectation, there is now momentum behind crucial Climate Finance initiatives which will make immediate real-world impacts across the global economy.

Through the Global Financial Alliance for Net Zero, a huge international group of firms, we have assembled a massive £130 billion war-chest for financing green projects.

To make sure this money makes it to where it is needed, in emerging and developing economies, people recognised the importance of public and private collaboration, and of having blended finance solutions to ensure capital is mobilised to the right areas.

Multilateral development banks and philanthropy will be important, taking on the risks that the private sector cannot take and helping develop pipelines of bankable projects.

Similarly, the insurance sector can also develop innovative solutions to reduce the risks for private finance. Standardised models and contracting structures can also help to accelerate the process.

We have also made strong progress towards a global green playbook and a global carbon price, so companies can work consistently and smoothly across borders.

Key themes throughout the discussions were the need for collaboration, for standardisation, and above all for real action.

We will continue to work to mobilise global private finance through the rest of the UK COP Presidency in 2022. COP is a good stepping-stone along the path, but not by any means the end of the path we need to take.

The City - with its record of innovation, its financial resources and its convening power - will continue to be at the forefront of development of the frameworks and models needed to support the global transition.

And we will work closely with the Government to implement its plan for the UK to have the “first ever net-zero aligned global financial sector”.

We are well on the way to this – the City of London’s own Climate Action Strategy commits us to achieving Net Zero in the Square Mile and across our investment portfolio by 2040.

The Integrated Review lists climate change as the leading ‘transnational challenge’ which we face, one where – because of our leadership in finance – the UK will continue to have a crucial role and duty.

I started off by drawing the distinction between hard and soft power, but of course the two go hand in hand – one cannot succeed without the other.

It is the UK’s combination of the two that is so valuable, and which will be important as we tackle climate change and other new international threats and global disruptions.

The City of London is one of the UK's great strengths for which we are recognised around the world, as are our Armed Forces, and it is a crucial element of the UK's soft power.

Perhaps a good symbol of this combination is that the City of London is affiliated with HMS Queen Elizabeth, and there are plans for a Board of Trade visit to coincide with one of the ship's overseas postings.

My predecessor as Lord Mayor was quite keen on the idea of landing on the ship on an F35 fighter - until he found out it was a single-seater plane, and unfortunately, he was not a pilot, so it would not have been a very comfortable trip.

Thank you.