



APPG ON CYBER SECURITY MEETING MINUTES 15th June at 11.00 a.m.

Title: The meeting will look at the opportunities for import / export of cyber security products and services, what the Dept for International Trade offers to UK firms and look at the particular examples of Bangladesh and the Uruguay.

Chairman's welcome – 11.00 a.m.

Present: Simon Fell MP, Alun Cairns MP, Dr Henry Pearson, HE The High Commissioner for Bangladesh, HE The Ambassador of the Uruguay, Prof Keith Mayes (Secretariat) and Andrew Henderson (Secretariat).

Apologies: Lord Mackenzie of Framwellgate

Speakers:

a) Dr Henry Pearson OBE, Former Cyber Security Ambassador, UK Defence and Security Exports, Department for International Trade

In spite of the challenges of Covid 19, this is an exciting time for the export of Cyber security products and services. Figures show a dramatic increase from £2.1 to £3.96 billion worth of exports and is on the back of a vibrant and growing UK market of over 1200 companies. That market has an annual value of £8.6bn. UK is rated as Number One as the most committed countries globally (to cyber security) in 2018 by the International Telecommunications Union and 3rd by the Harvard Belfer Center¹.

UK Govt recognised the importance of cyber security some time ago and has invested heavily. Importantly the NCSC in 2016 is recognised as a great success. UK Govt has and will continue to help other govts with their national cyber security strategies.

Market splits into commodity sales to Govt and private sector customer and sales of major systems into other Govts or quasi-governmental elements of nation states. The Cyber Security Ambassador role is connected to Defence and Security sector team in the DIT. Provide direct support to exporting companies of all sizes. Team of 4 in London with regional representatives in the US and the Gulf. Across the UK the DIT has a regional network of trade advisors across the country who are the first point of call for those thinking about exporting.

Once a company gets seriously involved in exporting, it can call on the support of the wider DIT network through UK embassies across the globe. Provide local intelligence, monitoring of tenders etc. for companies.

Supported by a team effort across Whitehall. There are teams to provide capacity building capability let by the FCDO with the help of the Home Office.

¹ [About | Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs](#)

Within the UK Defence and Security experts have been reviewing how to help SMEs. DIT, as part of its post Covid planning, is setting up a virtual export academy. Within that the Defence and Security exports sector team is setting up a faculty for cyber companies. That will give companies access to regional expertise. Will also offer courses on how to export, do business overseas, sources of funding, exhibitions and events.

Also creating a much more structured cross government approach to campaigns. Setting up a cyber campaign capability office centred on the DIT and pulling in key people from other Govt. departments.

b) His Excellency César Rodríguez Zavalla, Uruguayan Ambassador

Thanked the Group for their introduction.

During the last 12 years Uruguay has followed a path of digital transformation and needs to improve expansion of cyber security. Uruguay is the most advanced digital society in the region including children, digital health record, digital signatures for the entire population etc. Aim is to use technology to support people's rights. Well known for online services, electronic services etc.

2018 because first Latin American country to occupy a place on the Digital Nations Group of 10 member states. This has allowed the country to improve its position internationally. Investment based on Govt incentives and tax exemptions etc. has encouraged companies to set up and invest in the country. In 2008 launched a "one laptop per child" programme so every child has its own computer and this encourages many of them to enrol at University in computer based studies. Uruguay also offers a good environment in which to do business. Similar time zone with the US and also very European background makes it a great place to be a hub.

Oxford Insights positioned the country as the regional leader in AI. With a good IT infrastructure, human capacity and Govt support, led to the 2019 strategy on AI². Sets out the principles about its use. UN eGovt Survey 2020³ ranked Uruguay as the first in Latin America. Plan to increase this development.

Confidence and security in the use of digital technologies: Uruguay has a national cyber security framework to ensure the availability of critical information. US, Canada and Uruguay led the Americas on cyber security strategy. Globally 51 so would appreciate UK's help.

² [Estrategia de Inteligencia Artificial para el Gobierno Digital \(www.gub.uy\)](http://www.gub.uy)

³ [UN E-Government Survey 2020](#)

Uruguay has 1000+ software development companies. Regional leader in open Government and on its 4th open Government action plan⁴. First Latin American country to develop 5G technology and the highest ranked by the UN for electronic Government in the region. Uruguay is an open country and keen to work with the UK to further develop its cyber security business.

c) **Her Excellency Saida Muna Tasneem, High Commissioner of Bangladesh.**

Thanked the APPG.

Cyber Security is an important part of the national vision. Bangladesh was the first South Asian country to declare a digital vision back in 2009⁵. Rapidly transforming and is the digital surprise of Asia. Received a number of IT awards for bridging the digital divide. Bangladesh is now in the middle income group of countries. Her Excellency detailed a number of facts about Bangladesh:

- Large market of 170M people, 8th largest digital market in the world with 67% internet penetration, 50m Facebook users and 100% mobile coverage.
- 50th anniversary of Independence which is being celebrated. UK was supportive.
- In 2017 GDP rose by 7% and was on an upward trajectory. Post Covid Bangladesh has one of the highest growth rates, projects to be 6.1% this year. Highest per capita income figure⁶ ever has been hit this year.
- 65% of the population are young.
- PM is supporting a green recovery.
- Wall St Journal called Bangladesh “transformed”⁷
- Centre for Economics and Business Research estimates that Bangladesh will be the 25th largest economy in the world by 2025.
- 85% service coverage is the current aim.
- A number of UK firms have already established local companies in Bangladesh. FB, YouTube, Alibaba are also setting up in Bangladesh.
- UK is 3rd largest trading partner and destination of IT services.

Cyber security landscape

- Governance has gone from 73rd to 56th according to NCSC. Has been identified as one of the most vulnerable countries in cyber space.
- Seen a gradual increase from 377 in 2016 in 2020 1154 incidents. 50% are intrusion attempts into data. 35% from malicious code

⁴ [Uruguay Action-Plan 2018-2020 EN.pdf \(opengovpartnership.org\)](#)

⁵ [Digital Bangladesh Concept Note Final.pdf \(portal.gov.bd\)](#)

⁶ [Bangladesh's Per Capita Income Now More Than India - Goodreturns](#)

⁷ [Bangladesh Turns 50 - WSJ](#)

- Expansion of wireless network has increased threat so making security an integral part of organisations is key. 80% of users have been subject to hacking.
- 2016 central bank heist which has led to a big increase in security.
- Central Bank is preparing to release new guidelines for cyber security.
- Digital Security Act 2018 provides for identification, suppression and trial of offences. It provides for regional and national co-operation.
- CERT team has been established under the Act. Has signed a bilateral with India, Poland, US, Sri Lanka, Cyber Wales UK and Nordic Countries.
- Working with NCSC on CERT intelligence.
- 2015 Banking Act covers 50 institutions. Huge opportunity for UK firms to work on this sector. US\$2BN ecommerce market to reach US\$3bn by 2023. Cyber security threat so there is an ample opportunity for UK FIRMS to team up with Bangladeshi ones.

Business opportunities with the UK

- Energy, construction, banking sectors are all key areas for the UK firms.
- Expects huge growth in cyber security market due to increase in cyber attacks.
- Govt policy is to bring data back into Bangladesh for storage. Keen to sign an MOU between our two Governments.
- Aviation and maritime security are other areas for co-operation.
- Teaming up with BCS and TechUK for education.
- Ample opportunities for selling British cyber security products. Also audit services as well.
- Encourage UK firms to find a local partner, High Commission can help with this via the website⁸.

In conclusion you will have heard of Bkash⁹ with 30M users, we are looking towards a cyber security structure into which UK firms can invest. Shanghai Stock Exchange has purchased 25% of the Dhaka Exchange. Another potential partner.

HSBC and Standard Chartered are active. Plenty of match making opportunities. Keen to work with the UK and the APPG.

Open questions and discussion

- a) SF – PM at the NATO summit spoke about global recovery and security co-operation with a highlight on cyber security. He spoke about Health care systems in particular. What are your views on how co-operative we can be?

⁸ [Bangladesh IT Connect](#)

⁹ [bKash | It's that simple](#)

Ambassador – Uruguayan health system is digitalized just like almost every sector. As long as IT and tech are used, the risk of interference will grow. Uruguay has a well developed IT sector but not many companies include cyber security, it is more reactive than proactive. Budget tends to be the main reason for this. Risks are getting worse and worse daily. Big opportunity to work together with the UK on this.

High Commissioner – We need co-operation as cyber space has no borders or boundaries. As regards healthcare this is a central part of every country's existence. Huge amount of data so it needs to be protected. In sync with PM Boris Johnson. Vaccine and health care data mapping is key, looks forward to working through bilateral and cross-lateral means. Furthermore, capacity training, business case development will be key to building collective security.

Ambassador – in Uruguay we have many exchange programmes with UK universities. Very important for us, want to include cyber security exchange programmes.

High Commissioner – Bangladesh has a programme with the University of Cambridge. Working on healthcare and immigration systems and wants to work with more UK universities.

HP – UK Govt has recognised that cyber threats are equal to other types of high impact threat. In the early days of developing strategies of the pandemic we saw sustained efforts to hack into vaccine manufacturers to steal critical data. More broadly HMG has put a lot of money and effort into improving the cyber health of the medical sector.

Strongly supports the view internationally around what is acceptable behaviour, how nation states behave across the Internet, Internet governance etc.

b) Abdus Hamid – thanked SF for chairing the APPG and the guests for their insights. Works for a UK company and has been involved in countering cyber threats. Should the UK Govt be doing more to allow the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure and the NCSC to work more closely with the private sector? Thinks that this would allow us to react more quickly to attacks. How could we promote this in the UK and replicate it for Commonwealth partners?

HP – good points. When the NCSC was formed it was realized that a key task to do was to make it much more approachable and to engage with industry in a better way. A scheme, the Industry 100 scheme, was set up to second individuals to work with colleagues in the NCSC.

Also looking at how to share threat intelligence in a more real time way. Have been talking to fellow Governments worldwide about adopting a similar approach. All comes down to resource.

726 major incidents for the NCSC to manage for instance last year, there are only so many experts to go round. The need is understood strategically but resource dependent.

c) Babita Evans Kumar – touch free biometric access will be a big market. Are these elements being taken into account and how can we enable better security globally?

HP – Yes, convergence of all these aspects is very important. Some issues require deep research. CESG recognised that it needed to improve the linkage between the UK Govt and academic research and build industry into that. Specific research institutes and academic centres of excellence have been funded. That has led to the creation of a community for cyber security research and a sense of community has been developed. Find an existing initiative rather than creating one from scratch. If you think that there is a piece of integration that is not happening then lobby for this.

Each research institute was created with different topics in mind:

Sociotechnical Cyber Security: looks at soft aspects of cyber security and how that works with cyber security e.g. passwords;

The second looks at Verified Trustworthy Software Systems;

The third is Trustworthy Interconnected Cyber-physical Systems and covers the practical applications of SCADA technology and the fourth one (Secure Hardware and Embedded Systems) was the newest one is looking at hardware aspects of cyber security.

BEK – very useful, right now a lot of technologies are causing a lot of digital regret time such as lengthy log-ins, biometrics will become more relevant as it is both safe and easy to use. What kind of innovation, standards etc. can the Government offer?

HP – some of what you said fits in with the first research institute. Cyber security will not work if it blocks people from doing business, they will find their way around these. DCMS leads on standards. There is a Whitehall digital standards board which brings together experts and is all powerful.

d) Prof Keith Mayes – one of the academic centres of excellence mentioned by HP. Much of the work around cyber security has a national flavour.

Firstly, when listening to the Uruguayan ambassador has the impression that Uruguay is advanced. Involved in the International Cyber Security Centre of Excellence. There is no Latin American representative, maybe an area to explore?

Secondly Royal Holloway gets lots of Indian post graduate students but not heard of Bangladeshi students, worth a follow up discussion.

In the post-EU world, is there funding available to encourage a UK Institution to work with one in the Uruguay or Bangladesh?

Ambassador – would like to keep in touch with you, AH to share contact details.

High Commissioner - correct, not too many post-graduate students in the UK but keen to develop numbers of students coming to the UK to study.

Big Bangladeshi community in the UK which sends money to Bangladesh. This is another link

e) Faheem – from the international trade perspective how do we ensure that cyber security is considered in every decision made on collaboration between potential trading partners?

Ambassador – everyone has to be aware that we all have to work together to ensure that security issues have to be avoided. Most international trade tries to develop as much as possible in a way that avoids risk. Matter of working in collaboration together.

High Commissioner – WTO deals with the rules. Cyber security does come into these rules. Doing it on a multilateral basis. As a Commonwealth country, the Commonwealth has a cyber security agenda. UK Government mentions cyber security co-operation with Indo-Pacific countries as a key area.

HP – from a UK perspective specifically, there is an export licencing regime to control to whom we sell.

f) Roy Isbell – University of Warwick, picked up on Prof Mayes comments, also an academic centre of excellence. Research the non areas of cyber security and looking at the cyber supply chain. Wonders how the impact of the supply chain is working for them?

HP – difficult to do justice to this.

High Commissioner – international supply chains effect Bangladesh through banks who process financial documents for trade. Does not know what type of cyber security is used, regulated by the Central Bank which keeps the key to cyber security. Ecommerce is also important. Facebook is used by 50m people to run their businesses, mostly small entrepreneurs. Needs some focus.

g) Abdus Hamid – what kind of consideration is the UK giving to collaborative work with global Cloud providers? How are we working with the likes of Azure, AWS to overcome data security issues?

HP – NCSC has been doing work for some years on standards for Cloud security. Has been done with industry. High on the UK agenda.

Ambassador – Cloud information is a sensitive issue. Uruguayan Govt is taking good care of this, for example Google announced investment in the Uruguay recently. Development of this sector is important.

High Commissioner – top priority of the Bangladesh Government. Developing a policy on data protection and protecting data centres, look forward to working with the UK on this.

Conclusions: The Chair thanked the speakers for their time and thoughts. Contact details will be shared as requested.

Next meeting – 13th July – Protecting the electricity network.