

SNP to meet military bosses tomorrow

The Scottish National Party, Plaid Cymru and the Democratic Unionist Party are set to meet the UK's senior military commanders tomorrow to discuss the impact of the Strategic Defence Review (SDSR) on the Nations and Regions of the UK.

Westminster SNP Leader Angus Robertson who described the meeting as "a historic first" will meet with the Chief of the Defence Staff – General Sir David Richards, Chief of Naval Staff – Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, Assistant Chief of General Staff – Major General James Everard and Chief of the Air Staff – Air Chief Marshall Sir Stephen Dalton. He will be joined at the meeting by Westminster Plaid Cymru Leader Elfyn Llwyd MP PC and Ian Paisley MP of the Democratic Unionist Party.

Speaking ahead of the meeting Westminster SNP Leader and Defence spokesman Angus Robertson MP said:

"It is a historic first for the UK's senior military commanders to meet with the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish parties at Westminster in this format. We are very grateful for the opportunity to highlight the impact of the Strategic Defence and Security Review on the nations and regions of the UK.

"All of our parties have a long track record of representing service communities, servicemen and servicewomen and we officially mark our respects to the fallen at the Cenotaph every year on Remembrance Sunday.

"This is the first time a formal meeting of this kind has been arranged at the Ministry of Defence for the senior commanders to hear our perspectives from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and we welcome the opportunity.

“With only weeks to go until announcements by the MOD on basing decisions, we understand that we will not learn definitive plans at the meeting, but there a wide range of issues we are keen to highlight. I will be repeating the SNP view that there should be no further conventional military base closures given recent disproportionate defence cuts in Scotland.

“RAF Lossiemouth, RAF Leuchars, RM Condor, Fort George and other barracks as well as 2ndDivision at Craigiehall should all remain.”