Project proposal and business plan

2012-15

open briefing
the civil society intelligence agency

First published 12 October 2012. This version 17 October 2014.

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Section I
Introduction

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Open Briefing is the world's first civil society intelligence agency.

We produce actionable and predictive intelligence on defence, security and foreign policy matters. We tell you what has happened and what is likely to happen next. Most importantly, we tell you why.

We do this so that:

- better informed citizens can more effectively engage in peace and security debates,
- civil society organisations can make the right advocacy choices, and
- together we can influence positive defence, security and foreign policy decisions by our governments.

Open Briefing is a bold and ambitious not-for-profit social enterprise. We are a unique collaboration of intelligence, military, law enforcement and government professionals from around the world.

Challenge the status quo, and take intelligence into your own hands with Open Briefing.

Principle activities
- Responding to **intelligence requests** from non-governmental organisations.
- Issuing regular **intelligence briefings** and **risk assessments** for the general public**.**
- Assessing and disseminating **open source intelligence.**
- Publishing policy-orientated **briefing papers** and **articles.**
- Providing expert **consultancy services** to the third sector.
- Developing **collaborations** within and beyond the traditional peace movement.

" The concept of this think tank – to collect, collate and interpret information on peace and security issues for NGOs and interested members of civil society – is most timely. Open Briefing potentially will be a great force for good in helping to make transparent areas of activity that are often shrouded in secrecy and where misinformation is common place. In the long term it could have an important impact on policy." **Bevis Gillett, trustee, Marmot Charitable Trust**

Open Briefing's niche

Open Briefing exists in order to ensure that it is not only those with power and money who have access to reliable, credible information on defence, security and foreign policy issues; every citizen should have that information. This is the core mandate of our intelligence unit.

While undertaking this role, we occasionally identify issues that are not receiving adequate attention or policies that are not working. Our role then becomes to explain these failings, propose evidence-based alternative strategies, and leverage our networks of influence to promote those alternatives to opinion-formers, policymakers and the general public. This is the core mandate of our think tank.

In this way, our intelligence unit directly informs the work of our think tank but advocacy is deliberately kept separate from analysis.

Open Briefing is transforming the field and challenging the status quo to distinguish itself in three important ways:

> **Open Briefing provides intelligence, not information.** We do not just tell people what is happening. We use analytical methods borrowed from the intelligence community to explain why it is happening and what is likely to happen next.

> **Open Briefing delivers the intelligence civil society needs.** We respond to the intelligence requirements of an international network of 100 aid agencies, charities and other civil society organisations and are guided in our work by an advisory board of civil society experts.

> **Open Briefing is strengthening the peace and security sector.** We encourage collaborations within and beyond the traditional peace movement and actively recruit analysts with intelligence, military, law enforcement and government backgrounds in order to harness those skillsets for the benefit of civil society.

Open Briefing also strives to make links with other NGOs and companies. We believe cooperation between similar organisations creates a stronger and more sustainable peace and security sector by driving the development and spread of best practice and encouraging groups to harness complementarities.

Rationale

If knowledge is power, why should only the privileged few in government and business have access to reliable information about what is happening in the world?

The manipulation of intelligence about Iraq's supposed weapons of mass destruction in 2003. The US embassy cables and other material leaked by Chelsea Manning to Wikileaks in 2011. The true nature and scope of NSA surveillance revealed by Edward Snowden in 2013-14. Such events have made it clear that only an aware and knowledgeable citizenry can ensure the proper meshing of intelligence and political action by their governments.

However, in the spheres of national and international security, key information is kept secret and held back from the public domain. This leaves the process open to political manipulation and creates a public unable to properly engage with these issues or hold policymakers to account.

Cut off from confidential information by this veil of secrecy, most people still get their news from the mainstream media. However, these sources do not just report the facts, they report the *story*: 'facts' woven together according to the dominant narrative or editorial line on a given issue or event. Those seeking alternative perspectives can take advantage of the online explosion of citizen journalism (such as blogs and social media), but those sources usually come with their own problems of bias and lack of fact-checking.

Some think tanks and other NGOs are often guilty of contributing to this confusion. The alternative policy options they propose to government are all-too-often based on ideology alone, with little evidence base to support their suggested course of action. Even the many that do employ rigorous research methods behind their advocacy tend to focus on policymakers at the expenses of reaching out to the wider public.

Concerned citizens and civil society organisations need an organisation that they can turn to for timely analyses of defence, security and foreign policy issues. They need an organisation that will employ rigorous and objective research methods. They need an organisation that will tell them what is happening and why. They need an organisation that is working for them.

That organisation is Open Briefing, the civil society intelligence agency.

**With its rational, thorough and transparent approach, Open Briefing has the potential to become an important corrective to often speculative media coverage."
Magnus Nome, editor-in-chief, openDemocracy**

Model of social change

Taking a step back reveals an even more fundamental challenge. The way most people think, act and speak about security can be characterised as a control paradigm. This approach is based on the false premise that insecurity can be controlled through military force or balance of power politics and containment. The hope is that the status quo can be maintained by containing insecurity 'over there'. Security policies based on this paradigm are self-defeating in the long term, as they simply create a pressure cooker effect. Eventually the lid blows off.

The most obvious recent example of this approach has been the so-called war on terror, which essentially aimed to keep the lid on al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism, without addressing the root causes in Western policy. Another example is the war on drugs, which attempts to keep the lid on the rising tide of cartel violence in Latin America without addressing the root causes of illicit drug consumption in North America.

Such approaches to national and international security are deeply flawed, and are distracting the world's politicians from developing realistic and sustainable solutions to the non-traditional threats facing the world. A new approach is needed.

However, there is not yet a realisation in policymaking circles that the control paradigm is failing. There is also currently not enough pressure from civil society to force policymakers to recognise this failure. This is in part because of the disconnect between people and information, and the traditional mediators of this information gap – the media and politicians – are all too often driven by a worldview that supports the status quo.

Open Briefing exists to interject in this process and provide timely, accurate and accessible intelligence and analysis, in order to promote a fact-based worldview and a shift in the way we think about security. This approach is based on a model of social change with three tenets:

1. **Kuhnian shift.** There will not be a fundamental change in the way we think about security until there is a new paradigm to replace the old thinking.

2. **Sustainable security.** This new paradigm should be based on an understanding of integrated security trends and the development of preventative responses.

3. **Taoist model.** Human psychology means progress will be achieved through inclusive dialogue not confrontation, and we should be prepared for advances to be slow and subtle.

Fig 1. The think tank section of the Open Briefing website.

The demand for Open Briefing

The civil society demand for Open Briefing is demonstrated by our strategic partnership with an international network of 100 aid agencies, charities and other civil society organisations. The busy advisers, analysts and researchers who volunteer their time freely to Open Briefing also clearly feel that there is an unmet need for such an organisation. The same can also be said of the funders and donors who are generously supporting the development of Open Briefing.

The public demand is evidenced by the average 2,000 unique visitors a month to our website and the over 2,500 subscribers we have gained in three years. Furthermore, in June 2011 Open Briefing was nominated for an Awwward (the award for design and innovation on the internet) and received a high public vote of 8.67 out of 10. We are rated four stars on Facebook and 4.3 on Google Play (both out of five stars).

"If information is power, Open Briefing has the potential to equip campaigners with the information they need to expose wrongdoing and to identify alternative solutions." **Gemma Mortensen, executive director, Crisis Action**

Feedback from users of our website

"Worthwhile and innovative project." Ricky T

"Open Briefing is a great source of reliable information for those who like to keep abreast of global challenges and dangers. I'm really thankful to these guys for keeping clear-eyed in the face of so much misinformation. Keep up the good work!" Jason H

"Some very good articles that seem unbiased. Well written and to the point. I like the broad range of issues covered in the topics." Stanislav K

"A concise way to keep people informed." Bill M

"Very nice website! Well-written, easily-readable articles on a nice variety of different topics from a good variety of sources!" Emily W

"I stumbled across Open Briefing a while ago, and I have been duly impressed by both the quality and quantity of analysis they produce." David J

"They appear to be on their way to being a great resource that could be used in a plethora of ways." Kathie H

"Excellent site, really informative and full of insight." David H

Feedback taken from reviews on Facebook, Web of Trust, Skills for Change and personal blogs.

To gain further insights, we ran a website user survey for six weeks from August to October 2012. It included the question: 'Do you think there is a need for an organisation like Open Briefing?' The results were very positive: a majority of respondents answered 'yes'. In the same survey, 72% of respondents rated Open Briefing 'good' or 'excellent' overall.

The planned development of Open Briefing

Open Briefing was founded in May 2011 and publicly launched in October of that year. The planned development of the organisation is divided into three stages. Stage 1 (2011-12) was a hugely successful pilot project and proof of concept (summarised in **Appendix I**). Stage 2 (2012-15), detailed in this proposal, is moving the organisation on from the aspirational stage by developing and expanding our projects and services. And stage 3 (2015 onwards) will be one of real impact and influence.

Table 1. The planned development of Open Briefing.

Stage	Timeframe	Focus
1	2011-12 (start-up + Y1)	Pilot project and proof of concept
2	2012-15 (Y2-4)	Expansion of projects and services
3	2015 onwards (Y5+)	Focus on impact and influence

Section II
Strategic plan

Aims and objectives

Too many organisations start with a list of activities and then work backwards from that to give the appearance of strategy. In contrast, Open Briefing has been built on strategy from the beginning. We started with our vision of the change we wish to see in the world and filtered it through our model of social change in order to generate our aims and objectives. We developed our work plan and budget from that.

> **Mission**
>
> "Open Briefing will be the leading civil society provider of impartial intelligence assessments, alternative policy proposals and specialist consultancy services in the areas of defence, security and foreign affairs."

Vision: The ascendancy of evidence-based policymaking over ideology and assumption in national and international peace and security arenas.

Aims:

- To help **shape the 'ecosystem of security'** to privilege diplomacy and other non-military means to preventing, mitigating and adapting to threats to peace and security.
- To **support the development of a more robust civil society,** better able to hold policymakers to account for security decision-making.
- To **give citizens the knowledge and tools** needed to more effectively engage in peace and security debates and influence positive policy developments.

Objectives: We intend to achieve and hopefully exceed the following 10 objectives during stage 2. These objectives are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) and are based around ambitious targets, many **at least 50% higher** than those achieved during stage 1.

Impact:

1. Respond to **100** intelligence requests from civil society organisations.
2. Publish **90** Open Briefing publications.
3. Make **six** significant interventions in key peace and security debates.
4. Receive **12** media mentions.

Influence:

5. Attain **3,000** subscribers in total.
6. Attract **4,000** unique visitors a month to the Open Briefing website.
7. Achieve an average online influence score of **60/100.**

Development:

8. Expand the team to **35** members in total.
9. Raise **£190,000.**
10. Generate **8%** of income from sources other than trusts and foundations.

During 2012-13, we had the additional objective of filing 1,000 open source intelligence items under our intelligence desks. However, the November 2013 switch to only publishing our own original material on our website rendered this objective obsolete. Until October 2014, the target for income from non-grant sources was 9.5%, but this was reduced once the unrealistic target for venture philanthropy was dropped.

" **Open Briefing is an excellent project with great possibilities for empowering the peace movement and wider civil society. It is typical of Chris Abbott that he should develop it. Moreover, he is one of those rare people who could take it forward and realise its considerable potential."**
Paul Rogers, professor of peace studies, University of Bradford

Evaluation

Evaluating the impact of projects of this nature can be notoriously difficult. However, measuring progress in achieving the specific objectives above gives us a way of evaluating success. This progress will be constantly monitored in relation to various key performance indicators and other available evidence. This includes:

- Website metrics (including number of unique visitors).
- A basket of metrics to measure online influence and relative website importance.
- The number of subscribers to our weekly e-bulletin and social networks.
- User ratings on Facebook, Google Play and iTunes.

Funders and other interested parties can monitor this progress though publically available quarterly evaluation reports. Open Briefing is committed to full disclosure, transparency and accountability. All our project proposals, budgets and internal evaluations are published online in full. This includes these quarterly evaluation reports, which anyone can read and hold us to account with.

At the end of stage 2, a thorough evaluation will be carried out based on the above data and additional qualitative information from:

- Feedback from the advisory board members.
- A survey of subscribers and website visitors.
- Testimonials from thought leaders and opinion formers.
- Feedback from funders.

This evaluation will be used to develop the objectives for stage 3, as well as ensure that sufficient quality control is being achieved so that Open Briefing's outputs and activities remain useful and effective.

Section III
Work plan

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Open Briefing's activity is divided into four interlinked departments, summarised below: **intelligence unit, think tank, consultancy** and **community.**

Intelligence unit	Think tank	Consultancy	Community
✓ Intelligence desks ✓ Weekly briefings ✓ Remote-control warfare monthly briefings ✓ Intelligence sponsor programme	✓ Publications ✓ Research themes ✓ Special projects	✓ Research and advisory ✓ Support services ✓ Training and capacity building	✓ Social networks ✓ e-Bulletin, blog, podcast and apps ✓ Crowdfunding ✓ Volunteers ✓ Social media and community team ✓ Press office

Intelligence unit

Open Briefing's unique intelligence unit provides in-depth intelligence briefings and risk assessments to civil society organisations and concerned citizens. This is our core activity, the outputs from which are available for free on our website and disseminated through our e-bulletin, podcast, social networks and mobile app. Recent issues covered by our intelligence briefs include:

- Political and security risk assessments for Greece
- Russia's new Arctic brigades
- Alternative South Sudan oil pipeline routes
- Turkish policy towards Sudan
- The prospects of a Sudanese Arab Spring
- Turkish policy towards Syria
- Nuclear developments at the Parchin military complex in Iran

The Open Briefing intelligence unit is organised around six **regional desks:**

- Europe
- Asia and Pacific
- Middle East
- Africa
- Americas
- Polar regions

These are complemented by five crosscutting **issue desks:**

- Resource security and climate change
- Political violence and dissent
- Nuclear issues
- UK national security
- Conflict and diplomacy

The issue desks are based around the key areas identified by the sustainable security framework and are of particular interest to those wishing to influence British policymakers and their allies in Europe and the United States. Please see **Appendix II** for more information on our different desks. Once fully operational, each desk consists of at least two analysts and a researcher, though we aim to expand this to three analysts, two researchers and an adviser.

The activity of these desks is driven by an adapted **intelligence cycle:** a logical process of direction, planning, collection, processing, analysis and dissemination.
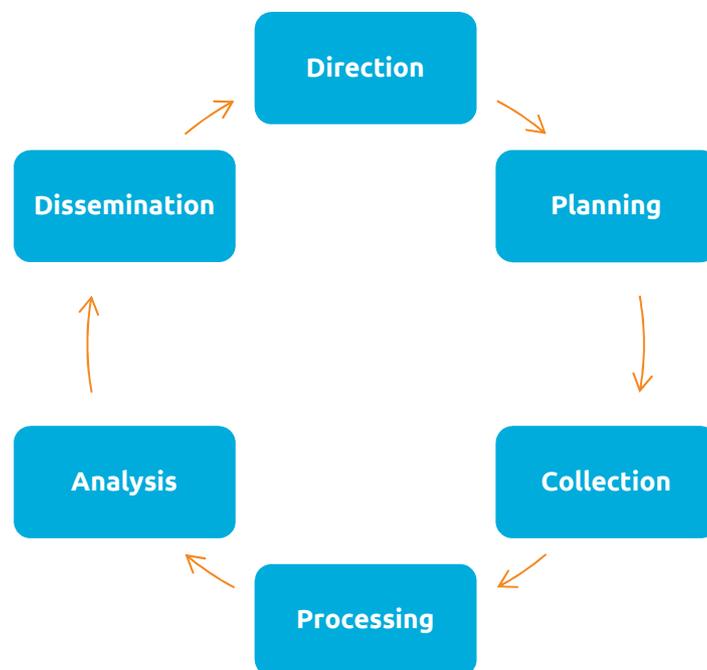
Fig 2. The Open Briefing intelligence cycle

In this closed circuit, intelligence requirements are generated by a decision maker and, at the end of the cycle, they provide feedback and issue new or revised requirements. We use this process to turn data (raw facts and figures) and information (context, meaning and structure) into intelligence (analysis, insight and relevance) by using various analytical methods borrowed from the intelligence community.

❝ Open Briefing provides clear analysis and intelligence that can add real value to the work of civil society networks. Their political analysis has been particularly useful to Crisis Action's campaign strategies."
Mariam Kemple, campaigns & advocacy manager, Crisis Action

The Open Briefing intelligence cycle

Direction: Our intelligence manager has careful discussions with the client to develop a specific intelligence request or series of requests that address their needs. Each request usually takes the form of a question that provides clear direction from the client.

Planning: The intelligence manager assembles a team of analysts, researchers and support staff with the appropriate skill set to answer those questions. The appointed team leader develops a collection plan in conjunction with the intelligence manager, which sets out the sources to be drawn upon, the methods to be used, the resources required and the project deadlines.

Collection: The team collects data from a variety of carefully vetted OSINT (open source intelligence) and HUMINT (human intelligence) sources. Such sources might include satellite imagery, country-specific search engines, deep web search engines, social media, database mining, national news agencies, professional associations, civil society networks and our own contacts on the ground.

Processing: The collected data is processed so as to make to usable by the analytical team. This will include an assessment of its relevance and credibility and other processes such as translation, tabulation or mapping.

Analysis: The analytical team establishes the significance and implications of the processed intelligence. They create new knowledge using a variety of techniques borrowed from the intelligence community in order to respond to the client's intelligence request(s). Such methods include analysis of competing hypotheses, cone of plausibility, linchpin analysis and alternative futures analysis.

Dissemination: Our final analysis is sent to the client in the agreed format, usually a written report. We then follow this up with a conference call, during which the client will provide feedback and issue new or revised requirements if appropriate. Our work is further disseminated through our website, blog, podcast, e-bulletin, social networks and mobile app.

The client in this context might usually be a government, military or law enforcement decision maker. However, our 'client' is civil society. The majority of our work is therefore in response to the events and issues that our own network's collective experience and expertise suggests warrant attention from Open Briefing.

We are also developing partnerships with leading NGOs and civil society networks in order to provide some of our direction. The first of these is with **Crisis Action,** a behind-the-scenes network of 100 well-known civil society organisations and peace and security NGOs. Surveying its international network, Crisis Action generates occasional intelligence requirements in support of their advocacy around key international peace and security issues. Open Briefing then processes these through the rest of the intelligence cycle, and Crisis Action then provide feedback and issues new or revised intelligence requirements if appropriate. We also provide intelligence in support of emergency response, as well as produce ad hoc pieces of analysis and maintain several watching briefs on potential conflicts.

This approach allows us to meet the specific needs and priorities of a diverse section of civil society. It makes Open Briefing unique in the peace and security sector: a true civil society intelligence agency.

The What? So what? Now what? protocol

All our intelligence briefs draw upon the What? So what? Now what? protocol to link intelligence and policy and provide a comprehensive, strategic analysis of an event or issue:

> **What?** The who, what, where, when, why and how of the event or issue (the 5W1H maxim).

> **So what?** The micro- and macro-environmental ramifications of this event or issue (taking into consideration the PESTLE factors: political, economic, socio-cultural, technological, legal and environmental).

> **Now what?** Consequences of the event or issue and recommended responses (considering the 4Ps framework of national interest: power, peace, prosperity and principles).

We are increasing the capacity of our intelligence unit through our **intelligence sponsor programme,** which involves intelligence and capacity-sharing agreements with carefully vetted private intelligence and risk consultancies. We believe this is a unique arrangement in the peace and security sector. Our first sponsor is Bradburys Global Risk Partners, and with them we are producing **The Weekly Briefing,** a free political and security risk update assessing relevant international developments. We intend to expand this programme to a dozen partners eventually.

Since April 2014, our intelligence unit has also produced a series of **monthly briefings on developments in remote-control warfare** commissioned by the Remote Control project. These briefings focus on five key areas of remote-control warfare: special operations forces; private military and security companies; unmanned vehicles and autonomous weapons systems; cyber warfare; and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. See p.11 for more information on remote-control warfare.

With the help of former intelligence officers, we are also currently drafting the Open Briefing **intelligence analysis handbook** as a guide to analytical techniques and words of estimative probability. This is intended primarily for our own analysts but will be published as a useful resource for academics, journalists and researchers from other NGOs.

Words of estimative probability

Within our intelligence briefs, likelihood/probability is communicated through the following specific words of estimative probability:

> Almost certain (>90%)

> Highly likely (75-85%)

> Likely (55-70%)

> Possible (25-50%)

> Unlikely (15-20%)

> Highly unlikely (<10%)

Think tank

Through the activity of our intelligence unit we occasionally identify issues that are not receiving adequate attention or policies that are not working. Our task then becomes to explain such failings, propose evidence-based alternative policies, and leverage our networks of influence to promote those alternatives to opinion-formers and policymakers. This is the purview of our think tank.

As part of this, Open Briefing publishes a number of policy-orientated publications, which are informed by rigorous research and subject to peer review. These publications aim to be comprehensive, contextual and condensed. In other words, they cover the different elements of and perspectives on an issue and provide the background to and circumstances of an event, while at the same time remaining concise and succinct. They are guided by the long-standing and near-universal concerns of progressive civil society: promoting human rights, maintaining human security and protecting the environment.

These are published in various formats depending on the intended readership. Books provide an in-depth examination of an issue of wider importance. Briefing papers offer a fresh perspective on an issue of significant importance, and usually include a summary for policymakers. Articles provide comment from Open Briefing analysts and are usually published in partnership with other outlets, such as openDemocracy, in order to reach a wider readership and raise the profile of Open Briefing.

Recent issues covered by our publications include:

- Russia's airborne forces
- The forthcoming succession of the Supreme Leader in Iran
- Improving the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty
- India's role in Afghanistan
- Forecasting conflict in West, Central and Southern Africa
- Education and violent extremism in Nigeria
- US drone strikes in Pakistan
- Iran's outreach to Afghanistan and Tajikistan
- The Iranian nuclear programme
- Egypt's political and economic challenges
- The need for assertive Israeli diplomacy
- Economic crisis and political instability in Sudan
- Domestic drivers of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands confrontation

The activities of our think tank are organised around several **research themes,** including but not limited to:

- Sustainable security
- Remote-control warfare
- Israel-Iran conflict
- Southeast Asian insurgencies
- Predicting conflict in Africa

There is a particular focus within our think tank on sustainable security and remote-control warfare. Sustainable security is a framework for thinking about security based on *understanding integrated security trends* and *developing preventative responses*. The central premise of sustainable security is that you cannot successfully control all the consequences of insecurity, but must work to resolve the causes. Remote-control warfare, on the other hand, is a paradigm that has emerged since the war on terror that enables warfare to be actioned at a distance by relying on 'smart' technologies and light-footprint deployments, such as armed drones and special forces. The problem is that it allows actions to be approved that would never be considered using conventional military means; yet the consequences and risks of those actions are not being adequately considered.

The Open Briefing think tank acts as a research centre for our analysts, through which they can seek external funding to undertake occasional **special projects** in response to a need to drive policy change in a particular area or raise awareness of a crucial emerging issue. These cutting edge projects are defined by research, collaboration and advocacy, and go to the very heart of the way we think about and attempt to ensure our security. The first of these projects secured funding from the Remote Control project to produce the ongoing series of monthly intelligence briefings mentioned earlier.

Consultancy

Open Briefing launched its consultancy at the end of 2012. As a social enterprise, the activities we undertake through our consultancy are not simply income generating but are related to our core mandate. This means that any resources diverted to our consultancy work will still be supporting our strategic plan. As part of this, we offer subsidised or pro bono consultancy to non-profits on limited budgets.

We specialise in providing **actionable and predictive intelligence,** not just information. An intelligence brief from Open Briefing answers specific questions drawn up to help the client take the decisions needed to progress their project. All contracts begin with the preparation of a detailed collection plan for the client, covering every stage of the intelligence cycle, and end with a follow-up conference call to ensure that they have everything that they need.

Our clients have included **KPMG,** the **Remote Control** project and **Savannah Wisdom,** plus the pro bono intelligence work we undertake for **Crisis Action.** Issues we have worked on include:

- The use of barrel bombs by the Syrian armed forces
- Qatari aid and financial assistance to Sudan
- Unmanned combat aerial vehicles in Russia, China, Iran, Israel, Turkey and India
- Corruption in the pharmaceutical supply chain to the developing world
- Special operations forces
- Private military and security companies

The activities of our consultancy can be divided into three broad areas: **research and advisory, support services** and **training and capacity building.**

Our international network of analysts and researchers contains a vast amount of combined expertise and experience, which enables us to offer exceptional research and advisory services to the public, private and third sectors:

- Open source intelligence gathering and analysis
- Political and security risk advisory
- Issue monitoring services
- Travel and security advice
- Order of battle/force structure analysis
- Imagery analysis

We are also able to offer an extensive range of services to support organisations and projects, including translation, editing and research assistance. Open Briefing will also be developing open source intelligence training courses for journalists, researchers and other business and civil society actors who need to develop their analytical skills.

"Open Briefing provided an invaluable service to us, conducting high-quality research in an extremely tight timeframe and with a limited budget. The unique and wide-ranging pool of expertise available ensured that our very specific requests were met with the utmost precision."
Caroline Donnellan, manager, Remote Control project

Community

Open Briefing looks beyond the policy wonks of the Westminster bubble or Washington beltway in order to reach out to wider civil society and concerned citizens. We are putting considerable effort into developing the communities of people interested in or linked to Open Briefing, including establishing a **social media and community team** in July 2013.

We believe users should be able to access our material how they want, when they want. So we have developed numerous ways for people to keep up-to-date with world events and read our comment and analysis, wherever they are. All the outputs from our activities are freely available through:

- **Website,** www.openbriefing.org
- The Weekly Briefing **e-bulletin**
- The Briefing Room **blog**
- The Open Briefing **podcast**
- A **mobile app** for Android smart phones and tablets (with an iOS app in development)
- **Social networks** on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and Google+
- Numerous **RSS feeds**

However, this is not limited to a one-way flow of information. Visitors to our website can comment on and share all the items filed by our desks, and engage in online discussions about the issues raised with members of Open Briefing and other visitors to our site.

We actively encourage members of the community to support our work by promoting Open Briefing to their contacts and asking them to join our **10x10x10***funding* crowdfunding campaign (see Section V for more details).

Members of the community can become even more involved in our work by volunteering for us. There are four different types of volunteer at Open Briefing: contributing analysts, associate researchers, executive associates and microvolunteers. Together they make up the international network that is the Open Briefing team. These different roles are outlined in more detail in the following section.

Finally, our **press office** is managed under this department as a point of contact for journalists and provides a list of Open Briefing experts available for interview.

Fig 3. The Open Briefing app on an iPhone and iPad.

" Issues of security and defence are often the least transparent to the public. Open Briefing is an important contribution to ensuring democratic oversight of governments and armies." **John Feffer, co-director, Foreign Policy in Focus**

Section IV
Organisational plan

Structure

Open Briefing Ltd is a registered **non-profit company limited by guarantee** (No. 07649656). It is run as a social enterprise, applying business strategies to achieve financial stability in support of its core aims. The executive director is currently exploring the pros and cons of alternative not-for-profit structures, including charity or Community Interest Company.

Open Briefing uses a radically different organisational model: we are a **virtual think tank,** staffed nearly entirely by volunteers. This model encourages the development of a decentralised organisation, which takes advantage of the internet, cloud computing and new communication technologies to carry out activities in a more cost-effective and environmentally friendly way. Having a virtual office allows for far lower overheads (projected at only 5% over the next three years), and frees the organisation from a specific locality. It means Open Briefing can start small and develop organically, while being able to adapt rapidly to future challenges.

The team

Open Briefing is run by our **executive director,** who is aided by an honorary **advisory board.** Research and analysis provided by our international network of **analysts,** supported by **associate researchers.** Additional management and administration capacity comes from **executive associates, microvolunteers** and occasional **freelancers.** Please see **Appendix III** for biographies of all team members.

During stage 2 or 3, we intend to recruit an **intelligence manager** to coordinate the intelligence unit if funding allows.

Executive Director

The founder and executive director of Open Briefing is Chris Abbott, an influential writer and consultant in the areas of defence, security and international relations. Chris is an honorary visiting research fellow in the School of Social and International Studies at the University of Bradford and an adviser to the sustainable security programme at Oxford Research Group, a leading foreign affairs think tank of which he was deputy director until 2009. He is the author of two popular books on security and politics, as well as numerous influential reports and articles. Chris is perhaps best known as a co-founder and key architect of the sustainable security framework. A full biography and list of media appearances and publications can be found at **www.chrisabbott.info.**

Advisory board

The executive director is supported by an honorary advisory board, whose members have a wealth of experience in environmental and security policymaking circles. The board provides ongoing strategic guidance and feedback. The current members are:

- **Hamit Dardagan,** co-director, Iraq Body Count
- **Ian Davis,** founding director, NATO Watch
- **Isabel Hilton,** founder and editor, China Dialogue
- **Nick Mabey,** chief executive and founder director, E3G
- **Martin Quadroy,** former senior adviser to the Australian government
- **Paul Rogers,** professor of peace studies, University of Bradford
- **John Sloboda,** co-founder, Every Casualty

Senior analysts/contributing analysts

Our intelligence activities are carried out by an international network of experts and thought leaders. Our analysts have excellent research and analytical skills and considerable knowledge and experience in one or more of our regional or issue desk areas. Crucially, unlike many other peace and security NGOs, this international network consists of people with professional backgrounds in intelligence, the military, law enforcement, government and business risk, as well as researchers with academic or think tank backgrounds.

Our current senior analysts and contributing analysts are:

- **Shazad Ali,** journalist and academic (Pakistan)
- **Arman Baisuanov,** former diplomat (Kazakhstan)
- **Nick Branson,** expert in African politics, governance and the rule of law (United Kingdom)
- **Steve Hathorn,** former military and law enforcement intelligence officer and intelligence analyst for the United Nations and International Criminal Court (United Kingdom)
- **Scott Hickie,** political adviser and lawyer (Australia)
- **Kevjn Lim,** humanitarian professional and former military intelligence officer (Singapore)
- **Rob O'Gorman,** former intelligence operator and Mission Support Officer (Canada)
- **Marc van Oudheusden**, senior political adviser to government and NATO (The Netherlands)

Analysts are assigned to a primary regional desk and many are assigned to a secondary issue desk. Ad hoc teams are also bought together for specific publications and analysts with particular skill sets are often temporarily seconded to other desks.

Associate researchers

Our analysts are supported by associate researchers, who provide research and fact-checking support to our intelligence desks. The current associate researchers are:

- **Gustavo Plácido dos Santos,** researcher, Portuguese Institute of International Relations (Portugal)
- **Kirsten Winterman,** projects officer, Beyond Borders Scotland (United Kingdom)
- **Raphaël Zaffran,** political scientist and PhD candidate (Switzerland)

Executive associates

There are a host of activities that go on behind the scenes in support of our core research and advocacy work. We are recruiting various executive associates to support these management and administrative functions, which include media work, fundraising, editing and community management. Our current executive researchers are:

- **Erin Decker,** marketing coordinator, TMK IPSCO (United States)
- **Kirthi Jayakumar,** human rights lawyer (India)

Microvolunteers

Open Briefing partners with **Skills for Change** to facilitate people microvolunteering for us. Microvolunteering is convenient, bite-sized and crowdsourced and allows Open Briefing to get considerable extra input on specific tasks, including marketing, social media and project evaluation. Please see **sparked.com/nonprofit/25a7cdf24** for more information.

Freelancers

Open Briefing occasionally relies on trusted freelancers, including an accountant, graphic designer and web developer.
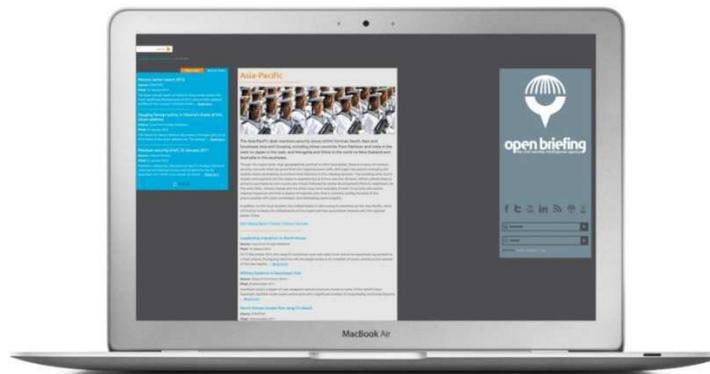
Fig 4. The Asia and Pacific desk on the Open Briefing website.

Section V

Financial plan

Leveraging a network of volunteers enables us to achieve an impact and influence far beyond what our size and budget would suggest possible, and fully maximises donor's financial input. By also using a virtual office and keeping overheads to an absolute minimum (budgeted at only 5% for 2012-15), the majority of our income can be spent directly on our peace and security work.

Financial management is supported by Community Accounting Services Kernow, who provide reduced cost specialist accounting services and advice to charities and other non-profits. Banking is provided by the Co-operative Bank, a British ethical bank.

Budget

Table 2. Budget breakdown by department and year.

Department	Year 1 (2012-13)		Year 2 (2013-14)		Year 3 (2014-15)		Total
	£	%	£	%	£	%	
Intelligence unit	£18,650	36%	£25,034	38%	£26,389	39%	£70,028
Think tank	£9,850	19%	£15,719	23%	£16,068	23%	£41,637
Consultancy	£3,460	7%	£2,393	4%	£2,449	3%	£8,302
Community	£6,275	12%	£7,216	11%	£7,321	11%	£20,812
Core costs	£13,405	26%	£16,145	24%	£16,374	24%	£45,924
Total	**£51,595**		**£66,508**		**£68,600**		**£186,703**
Raised to date	£35,799		£35,621		£15,970		£87,390

A detailed budget breakdown is available on request. Please note, years 2 and 3 incorporate inflation at 3.3% (the 2008-12 UK average) where applicable. Year starts 1 October.

> " There is no shortage of interesting comment being published. The problem is finding the useful material in the daily deluge. What is needed are trusted mediators, to select, contextualise, and make it easily accessible in one place. Open Briefing has the potential to add very considerable value for hard-pressed progressive organisations and individuals at very modest cost."
> **John Sloboda, co-founder, Every Casualty and Iraq Body Count**

Funding

It is anticipated that the vast majority of our funding during stage 2 will come from grantmakers.

Table 3. Funding target by source for stage 2.

Source	Target	Raised to date	% of target
Grantmakers	£175,000	£80,450	46%
Social enterprise	£12,000	£6,440	53.7%
Crowdfunding	£3,000	£500	16.7%
Venture philanthropy	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	**£190,000**	**£87,390**	**46%**

However, to ensure Open Briefing's sustainability and reduce demand on the limited funding available for peace and security initiatives, we will be developing various other income streams during stage 2, with a view to steadily decreasing our reliance on grant income over time.

Table 4. Funding targets by source for each planned stage.

Source	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Grantmakers	98.75%	**92.1%**	85%
Social enterprise	n/a	**6.3%**	10%
Crowdfunding	1.25%	**1.6%**	3%
Venture philanthropy	n/a	**n/a**	2%
Total non-grant income	**1.25%**	**7.9%**	**15%**

Our activities are guided by the principles set out in our ethical, environmental and equal opportunities statement. As part of this, we never accept funding from individuals or groups who might jeopardise the independence or integrity of the organisation. Please see **Appendix IV** for our company policies, which include our ethical, environmental and equal opportunities statement and our business continuity plan.

Grantmakers

Open Briefings strategic and work plans meet the funding criteria for various British charitable trusts and foundations. Funding applications have been submitted to those trusts or will be during the next suitable funding rounds. We currently have a **65% success rate with applications.**

Open Briefing is also looking outside the UK peace and security funding sector and approaching government funders and foreign foundations, as well as funders of open access, freedom of information, open source and other related fields.

Our fundraising target from grantmakers is **£175,000.** As of October 2014, we have raised **£80,450** (including a £7,000 surplus from stage 1).

Table 5. Successful applications to UK trusts for funding for stage 2.

Trust	Applied	Amount
Network for Social Change	September 2012	£12,500
Marmot Charitable Trust	November 2012	£5,000
Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation	February 2013	£30,000
The Philamonic Trust	October 2013	£1,000
Marmot Charitable Trust	November 2013	£3,000
Network for Social Change	March 2014	£12,000
Remote Control project	March 2014	£3,980
Remote Control project	October 2014	£5,970

In addition to our unique nature and strategic goals, there are three important financial reasons that make funding our work attractive for grantmakers:

1. **Resource magnification:** Funding for only one paid member of staff enables the work of 21 volunteer analysts, researchers, associates and advisers.

2. **Impact magnification:** Open Briefing uses some of its funding to provide subsidised and pro bono consultancy to civil society organisations on limited budgets.

3. **Reach magnification:** Open Briefing's work is distributed directly to over 2,500 subscribers and 2,000 website visitors a month.

Social enterprise

Over the medium to long term, Open Briefing intends to be at least partly self-financing as a successful social enterprise. This means developing a sustainable business model from the very beginning. For it to be sustainable, the model must be based on a realistic plan for generating a meaningful percentage of our income from non-grant sources without diverting too many resources away from our core research and advocacy activities.

Achieving this will involve developing multiple and diverse income streams from products and services related to Open Briefing's core activities. The main focus during stage 2 will be further developing the activities of the consultancy detailed in Section III, including research and advisory, support services and training and capacity building. At a later stage we may consider website monestisation (including paid-for content and advertising) and a premium mobile app.

Please note, although Open Briefing is a not-for-profit organisation that does not mean we cannot seek to generate income from commercial activities, simply that any financial surplus each year will be invested back into the organisation and its core peace and security activities.

We aim to generate at least **£12,000** from social enterprise during stage 2. As of October 2014, our social enterprise has a turnover of **£6,440** (with a 13.3% profit margin).

Crowdfunding

While trusts and foundations the principal route for funding peace and security initiatives in the United Kingdom, a novel decentralised model is emerging that is ideal for newer organisations: crowdfunding.

Open Briefing has embraced this approach with its **10x10x10 _funding_** campaign. This asks those who would like to support our work to commit to donating £10 a month for at least 10 months, and to ask 10 of their friends to consider doing the same. Supporters can also make one-off donations through our website or through their bank. We are also exploring the use of crowdfunding websites to help fill any temporary funding gaps.

Our crowdfunding target for stage 2 is **£3,000.** As of October 2014, we have raised **£500** from donations.

Venture philanthropy

Modern organisational success should be measured against a triple bottom line: financial, social and environmental (or profit, people and planet – the 'three Ps'). While businesses usually focus exclusively on financial profit (often to the detriment of the other two), Open Briefing seeks instead to create social and environmental benefits. Donors to Open Briefing are therefore actually investors hoping to see positive returns for people and planet.

Given that many of Open Briefing's objectives for stage 2 are based on targets at least 50% higher than those achieved during stage 1, donors are essentially investing with an expectation of a **50% social impact return over three years.** As such, we do not view specific project outcomes as merely 'desirable' but see accountability for achieving these outcomes as the essential core of the funding relationship. In this way, grants and donations are not treated as gifts but rather as investments that come with certain obligations on our part: chiefly, to achieve the specific objectives listed in Section II of this proposal.

Extending this approach, we are exploring ways of accessing results-based financing, including philanthropic capital, impact investment, corporate sponsorship and other forms of private investment in our aims and objectives. All our work in this area will be guided by our ethical policy to ensure we retain our independence and integrity.

As part of this, Open Briefing is examining social impact bonds – a range of innovative, market-based approaches to funding. This new breed of investment products transfers risk away from grantmakers and to the private sector: when an organisation fails to meet its impact objectives, the grantmaker withholds funds and the private investor carries the costs. If the impacts are successfully achieved, the grantmaker releases the funds, which include a small percentage return for the private investors. Such products focus on impacts rather than organisations and link the disbursement of funds to a schedule dependent on the achievement of specific objectives.

This is a novel and untried funding stream, and so we no longer have a fixed target for income from venture philanthropy sources during stage 2.

Appendices

Further information

Appendix I

Review of stage 1

Stage 1 was a pilot project consisting of a start-up phase from May 2011, when the organisation was registered, until 10 October 2011, when the organisation was publicly launched, followed by the first 12 months of operation, which served as a 'proof of concept'.

Stage 1 had seven objectives, progress achieved against each of which is summarised below.

Table 6. Summary of stage 1 objectives.

Objective	Status	% of target
Attract at least 500 visitors a month from around the world to the organisation's website.	Surpassed	400%
Collect, assess and distribute at least 90 open source intelligence items.	Surpassed	280%
Sign up at least 300 subscribers to the organisation's e-bulletin and social networks.	Surpassed	230%
Publish at least 15 analyses, 3 dossiers and 2 briefings.	Surpassed	170%
Establish the think tank and associated online presence.	Achieved	100%
Carry out a thorough evaluation of the organisation's effectiveness and value.	Achieved	100%
Secure longer-term funding for stage 2 of the project.	In progress	46%

For an organisation of its size and budget, Open Briefing achieved a very high level of activity and output during stage 1. This included one book, two briefing papers, four dossiers, 11 articles and 16 analyses and intelligence briefs, covering a diverse range of security and foreign policy issues. Please see **openbriefing.org/thinktank/publications** for a full list of Open Briefing publications.

Our first briefing paper, **As the dust settles: Avoiding the mistakes of Oslo and Utøya in future media coverage of suspected terrorist attacks,** was published on 5 August 2011. This media briefing explored the factors that contributed to failures in the reporting immediately after the 2011 Norway attacks that led to Islamic extremists being wrongly blamed and proposed ways of avoiding these failures in future. The briefing was well received and was highlighted and quoted from in live reporting by the *Guardian* of the December 2011 grenade attacks in Liège, Belgium.

Summary of key achievements during stage 1

1. From a single founder, Open Briefing expanded to become an international team of 25 staff, analysts, associates and advisers.

2. Open Briefing published 34 original publications during stage 1: one book, two briefing papers, four dossiers, 11 articles and 16 analyses and intelligence briefs.

3. The Open Briefing website received an average 2,000 unique visitors a month by the end of stage 1.

4. There were 700 subscribers to Open Briefing's e-bulletin, podcast and other outputs by the end of stage 1.

5. 72% of respondents to a user survey on the Open Briefing website rated the organisation 'good' or 'excellent' overall.

6. Open Briefing raised £41,330 and finished stage 1 with a £7,000 surplus, which was carried forward for use during stage 2.

7. In December 2011, Open Briefing's first briefing paper, *As the dust settles: Avoiding the mistakes of Oslo and Utøya in future media coverage of suspected terrorist attacks*, was highlighted and quoted from in live reporting by the *Guardian* of the grenade attacks in Liège, Belgium.

8. In June 2012, Open Briefing was nominated for an Awwward (the award for design and innovation on the internet) and received an honourable mention and a public vote of 8.67 out of 10.

9. In September 2012, Open Briefing reached an agreement to meet the intelligence requirements of a network of 100 civil society organisations – truly making the organisation the world's first civil society intelligence agency.

10. In October 2012, Open Briefing's first commissioned intelligence brief, an analysis of a YouTube video purportedly showing missing US freelance journalist Austin Tice, conclusively identified the prisoner in the video as Tice but also identified several irregularities that indicated it might not be a genuine jihadist video.

Our first briefing paper, **As the dust settles: Avoiding the mistakes of Oslo and Utøya in future media coverage of suspected terrorist attacks,** was published on 5 August 2011. This media briefing explored the factors that contributed to failures in the reporting immediately after the 2011 Norway attacks that led to Islamic extremists being wrongly blamed and proposed ways of avoiding these failures in future. The briefing was well received and was highlighted and quoted from in live reporting by the *Guardian* of the December 2011 grenade attacks in Liège, Belgium.

Our second briefing paper, **Rehabilitating the war on drugs: Central America and the legalisation debate,** was published in English and Spanish on 4 April 2012, ten days before the Sixth Summit of the Americas, where, for the first time, alternatives to prohibition were discussed by American leaders, led by Guatemalan President Otto Perez Molina.

This white paper outlined a sustainable security alternative strategy to the failed war on drugs. The paper was read by President Molina, and co-author Joel Vargas followed up with several meetings and conversations with senior Guatemalan policymakers, including the President of Congress. *Prospect* also commissioned a letter on the issue from co-author Chris Abbott, published in the June 2012 edition of the magazine.

Our principal public face during stage 1 was our website, **openbriefing.org,** which received an average 2,000 unique visitors a month from around the world. Our website features a bold, modern design that breaks the traditional think tank mould. This was recognised in June 2011 when it was nominated for an **Awwward,** the award for design and innovation on the internet, and received an honourable mention and an excellent public vote of 8.67 out of 10. We have also embraced social media and have a presence on all the major social networks, with nearly 700 subscribers to our services at the end of stage 1. Since February 2012, Open Briefing has been a featured non-profit on **Twylah** (a Twitter service), together with organisations of the calibre of Human Rights Watch, WWF, Save the Children and Amnesty International.

One of the key successes of Open Briefing during stage 1 was to reach out beyond the peace sector to those in politics and business and others with more mainstream backgrounds, without alienating that traditional support base. This has also meant we have been able to attract an unusual mix of people as analysts, with many coming from military, intelligence, law enforcement, government or business risk backgrounds.

All of this was achieved with only one paid staff member and a budget of around £40,000, which included the cost of setting up the organisation. Overall, our fundraising for stage 1 was very effective, with an 80% success rate on grant applications. We raised more funds than our target and that, together with tight budgetary control, left us with a £7,000 surplus, which was carried forward for use during stage 2.

Table 7. Summary of stage 1 income.

Income source	Amount
Marmot Charitable Trust	£9,600
Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation	£14,000
Network for Social Change (fast track)	£5,500
Network for Social Change (peace pool)	£12,000
Donations	£230
Total	**£41,330**

Appendix II

Intelligence desks

Regional desks

Europe

The focus of the Europe desk extends beyond the political boundaries of the European Union to include all those countries that lie between the Nordic countries in the north and Greece and Italy in the south, and Spain and Portugal in the west to Russia and the Balkans in the east.

The political and economic integration of much of this region is matched by shared security concerns around the economic crisis and resulting austerity measures and government spending cuts; a cluster of issues around immigration and integration; and the instability caused by organised crime, particularly the illicit drugs trade and people trafficking.

Furthermore, many of the countries in the region face the threat of terrorist attacks from separatist movements, as well as an ongoing risk posed by radical Islamist paramilitary groups and those they inspire. In terms of state-based conflict, a particular concern is the widening gulf between Russia and the EU and NATO.

Asia and Pacific

The Asia and Pacific desk monitors security issues within Central, South, East and Southeast Asia and Oceania, including those countries from Pakistan and India in the west to Japan in the east, and Mongolia and China in the north to New Zealand and Australia in the southeast.

Although the region lacks clear geographical, political or ethnic boundaries, there is a nexus of common security concerns that has grown from the regional power shift, with major new powers emerging and smaller states attempting to protect their interests in this changing dynamic. The resulting arms race is largely unrecognised, but the region is experiencing an action-reaction dynamic: military advancements and arms purchases by one country are closely followed by similar developments from its neighbours. At the same time, climate change and the other long-term emerging threats to security will require regional responses and thus a degree of regional unity that is currently lacking because of the preoccupation with state sovereignty and maintaining state integrity.

In addition to this local dynamic, the United States is refocusing its attention on the Asia-Pacific, which may further increase the militarisation of the region and exacerbate tensions with the regional power, China.

Middle East

The Middle East desk uses a broad definition of the region, which encompasses a diverse area of Southwest Asia that stretches from Egypt in the west to Afghanistan in the east, and Turkey in the north to Yemen in the south.

Principal security concerns in the region include conflict and occupation (including Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and Israel-Palestine), resource mismanagement, and marginalisation and social exclusion. While there have been many attempts to address these matters, there are other deeply entrenched issues that make change slow and difficult, including the Arab-Israeli conflict, al-Qaeda and other violent movements, and ongoing external interference in the region.

While Western efforts to reshape the Middle East through the war on terror were disastrous, the Arab Spring that followed brought about the fall of long-standing dictators and hinted at the region's potential future. The civil wars and surge in radical Islamist terrorism that have then emerged present new challenges and the real risk of proxy conflicts involving regional and global powers.

Africa

The Africa desk focusses on security issues of concern for the 54 countries spread across the continent, from Libya and the other countries of the Maghreb in the north to South Africa in the south, and Senegal, Gambia and others in the west to Somalia and the rest of the Horn of Africa in the east.

Many of the problems the continent faces are legacies of its colonial past and the manner in which this has shaped the nature of the modern African state, together with the legacies of more recent war and militarism. This has left a region that is not only deeply impoverished and globally marginalised but is flooded with small arms and light weapons, with war economies largely sustained through proceeds generated from the control of mineral resources.

Added to this mix in North Africa and the Horn of Africa, in particular (though extending into West and East Africa), is the instability created by al-Qaeda-inspired groups and militant Islamist insurgencies.

Americas

The Americas desk covers security issues across North, Central and South America and the Caribbean, from Canada and the United States in the north to Chile and Argentina in the south.

This diverse region has been shaped by the legacies of European colonialism and, in modern times, the Cold War and the political, economic and military dominance of the United States. Today, there are security issues of common concern across much of the region, including the illicit drug trade and narcoterrorism (and the militarised government responses), socio-economic divisions and corruption, and environmental and energy insecurities.

Although much of the region fell largely outside the scope of war on terror, terrorism is obviously an issue of central importance in North America.

Polar regions

The polar regions desk is concerned with the security issues arising in the areas surrounding the North and South Poles in the Arctic Ocean and Antarctica and the Southern Ocean respectively. It also covers the unresolved dispute between Argentina and the United Kingdom over ownership of the Falkland Islands/ Islas Malvinas, which resulted in armed conflict in 1982.

The United States, Canada, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden and Russia all have claims to Arctic regions, so developments in the area will undoubtedly have important ramifications for international relations, international law, international climate change policy and international trade. In particular, the prospects of exploiting the Arctic's natural resources and gaining access to new shipping routes as sea ice melts is leading to increased economic, political and military interest in the region.

In contrast, Antarctica has no permanent human habitation and no government. Though various countries claim sovereignty over certain areas (some of them overlapping), the Antarctic Treaty prohibits any military activity in region. Of particular interest here, though, are the devastating and irreversible effects of climate change.

Issue desks

Resource security and climate change

The resource security and climate change desk monitors a host of resource and environmental issues and their implications for national and international security.

Of particular concern are the three vital and interrelated resources of food, water and energy, which are essential to both human and state security. Insecurity in these resources is being exacerbated by climate change, the issue that is the primary concern of this desk.

It is essential to understand the role such issues may play in igniting or sustaining conflict and disorder, including civil unrest, intercommunal violence and international instability. A greater appreciation of the processes that could lead from resource scarcity and environmental changes to socio-economic impacts and security risks is essential to the development of effective prevention, mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Political violence and dissent

The political violence and dissent desk monitors the underlying causes of dissent, the different expressions of resistance, and government attempts at suppression.

This covers a huge range of issues and degrees of violence, including the democratic right to protest, far-right extremism, revolutions and the Arab Spring, insurgencies, domestic and international terrorism and al-Qaeda and the war on terror. In all this, a particular concern is the feedback loop often present whereby draconian or violent government responses feed back into the underlying causes of dissent and exacerbate an already fractious situation.

Furthermore, political violence and dissent is not generated in a vacuum: it is a response borne out of frustration and anger at a perceived or actual injustice. Even when it finds its most extreme expression in terrorism, there remain underlying causes – often relating to nationalism and occupation – that need to be understood if counterterrorism strategies are to be effective.

Nuclear issues

The nuclear issues desk monitors developments in the Siamese twins of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons.

Although the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty allows for the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the inherent dilemma is that nuclear energy and nuclear weapons are two sides of the same coin: a country cannot have one without at least the potential to develop the other. The recent reconnaissance in the development of civilian nuclear power programmes therefore presents serious security risks in addition to the obvious environmental and economic ones. (These risks must be weighed against those of uncontrolled climate change and contrasted with the advantages of renewable energy programmes.)

In contrast, there have been some limited successes on the nuclear weapons front: they have not been used in anger for nearly 70 years; their spread beyond the original five nuclear-weapon states has been limited, with some states voluntarily renouncing their weapons programmes; nuclear weapons testing is largely a thing of the past; and just over half the Earth's land area is covered by nuclear-weapons-free zones. However, the biggest stumbling block remains: the hypocrisy of the nuclear-weapon states demanding that other countries refrain from developing nuclear weapons programmes while refusing to engage in meaningful disarmament themselves.

UK national security

The UK national security desk monitors those security threats that impact directly on the defence and security of the United Kingdom, as well as wider issues concerning its alliances within NATO and the European Union.

This encompasses a range of risks identified by the UK government National Security Risk Assessment and National Security Strategy, including domestic and international terrorism, cyber attacks and cybercrime, natural hazards and disasters, and international military crises. It also includes UK defence policy and the future of the British armed forces.

Within this, it is important to examine the wider issues of what 'national security' means in an interconnected world, how state security relates to human security, and what underlying assumptions the government has about how best to achieve security (assumptions that often emphasise the military over other elements of the security apparatus, including diplomacy).

Conflict and diplomacy

The conflict and diplomacy desk monitors emerging and ongoing armed conflicts and the attempts to prevent or resolve them.

This includes armed conflict between two or more states (international armed conflict), civil wars between government armed forces and separatist or terrorist armed groups, or between such groups only (non-international armed conflict), and civil wars in which the armed forces of a foreign power have intervened (internationalised non-international armed conflicts). This also includes so-called proxy wars.

The factors that can exacerbate such conflicts – including civilian casualties, the political manipulation of sectarianism or the involvement of external powers – warrant particular attention. Importantly, so do efforts within international law and diplomacy to reduce or resolve conflicts and hold those responsible for war crimes to account.

Appendix III
Team biographies

Staff and volunteers

Chris Abbott is the founder and **executive director** of Open Briefing. He is an honorary visiting research fellow in the School of Social and International Studies at the University of Bradford, and an adviser to the sustainable security programme at Oxford Research Group, a leading foreign affairs think tank of which he was deputy director until 2009. He is also an international security consultant, and the author of two popular books on security and politics. Chris has a degree in psychology and a master's degree in social anthropology.

Shazad Ali is a **contributing analyst** at Open Briefing. He is a journalist and researcher with nearly 20 years' experience in print and online journalism. He has been the assistant editor of the Vienna-based journal *Perspectives on Terrorism* and now serves as a member of its editorial board. His research focusses on religious extremism and terrorism in Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Middle East. Shazad has a master's degree in international relations and is pursuing a PhD in European studies at the University of Karachi.
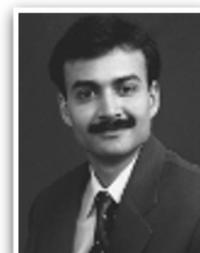
Arman Baisuanov is a **contributing analyst** at Open Briefing. As a Kazakhstani diplomat, he has had a wide-ranging diplomatic career over nearly 20 years, which included three years as a liaison officer to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and contributing to drafting the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone treaty. Most recently, he was a counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Arman is fluent in English, Russian and Kazakh.

Nick Branson is a **contributing analyst** at Open Briefing. He is an expert in African politics, governance and the rule of law. He has advised governments, political parties, legislatures and civil society organisations across Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone Africa. He is currently a senior researcher at the Africa Research Institute and a deployable civilian expert for the UK Stabilisation Unit. Nick holds a master's degree in international studies and diplomacy from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

Erin Decker is an **executive associate** at Open Briefing. She is also a marketing coordinator at TMK IPSCO. Between 2009 and 2013, she worked as a translator, marketing associate and editor for various multinational consulting firms and financial institutions in Russia, including PricewaterhouseCoopers. She is a member of the US National Language Service Corps. Erin has a bachelor's degree in political science and international studies (global security) from the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

Steve Hathorn is a **contributing analyst** at Open Briefing. He is an intelligence analyst with nearly 20 years' experience encompassing the British Army, Defence Intelligence Staff, National Criminal Intelligence Service, UN, International Criminal Court and the Competition and Markets Authority. He has worked on projects covering terrorism, human rights abuses, international organised crime and threats to humanitarian operations. Steve has recently completed a master's degree in international politics and security.

Scott Hickie is a **senior analyst** at Open Briefing. He is a lawyer and former political adviser in the New South Wales Parliament, with a background in environmental law, natural resource governance and climate change. He has also worked in the Australian non-governmental sector on international trade and corporate social responsibility. His research focus is on political risk in resource management regimes across Southeast Asia. Scott has recently worked on climate change adaptation for the City of Toronto.

Kirthi Jayakumar is an **executive associate** at Open Briefing. She is a lawyer, specialising in public international law and human rights. She has worked as a UN volunteer and extensively with grassroots organisations that focus on women's rights. She is also the co-founder and editor of A38, an international law journal and consultancy. Kirthi's main interests lie in international law, international relations, peace and conflict studies and human rights.

Kevjn Lim is a **contributing analyst** at Open Briefing. He is a humanitarian professional and independent writer and analyst. From 2007 to 2011, he served as delegate for the International Committee of the Red Cross in the Palestinian territories, Sudan, Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan, specialising in civilian protection and political and security needs analysis. He is also a former intelligence officer in the Singapore Armed Forces. Kevjn is fluent in a number of languages including Arabic, Hebrew and Persian.

Rob O'Gorman is a **senior analyst** at Open Briefing. He is a former Canadian Forces intelligence operator and officer with over 20 years' experience providing tactical, operational and strategic assessments. As a mission support officer, he was also involved in arms control verification operations in select regions of the world. More recently, Rob has supported Canada's counterinsurgency efforts in Afghanistan, together with the government's Canada First strategy in the high Arctic.

Marc van Oudheusden is a **contributing analyst** at Open Briefing. He is a senior adviser to the Dutch government, with the security, international crisis management and public order portfolio. He is also a senior adviser to NATO, advising on civil-military cooperation, civil emergency planning and multilateral crisis management. Marc's special interest is political and security threat analysis for the Middle East. He has a master's degree in Arabic language and culture, and he serves as strategic adviser to the Arab-West Report in Cairo.

Gustavo Plácido dos Santos is an **associate researcher** at Open Briefing. He is also a researcher at the Portuguese Institute of International Relations and Security. He is the founder of an African affairs blog called East & South, and contributes to the online magazine *Think Africa Press*. Gustavo holds a bachelor's degree in international relations from the Universidade Católica Portuguesa in Lisbon and a master's degree in international conflict from Kingston University in the United Kingdom.

Kirsten Winterman is an **associate researcher** at Open Briefing. She is also a projects officer at Beyond Borders Scotland. She has worked alongside a number of NGOs, businesses and government departments, including the John Smith Memorial Trust, the Consortium for Street Children and the D Academy, an international development organisation. Kirsten has a master's degree in conflict resolution from the University of Bradford and a bachelor's degree in politics from the University of Liverpool.

Dr Mary Young is a **contributing analyst** at Open Briefing. She is a lecturer in law and a researcher of transnational organised crime and financial crime at the Bristol Law School at UWE. After completing her PhD, she was made a research fellow at Aberystwyth University, and carried out research into organised crime in Jamaica. She subsequently taught international finance in Aberystwyth's School of Management and Business. Mary also has a fellowship at the Lauterpacht Centre for International Crime Research at Cambridge University.

Raphaël Zaffran is an **associate researcher** at Open Briefing. He is a Geneva-based analyst and political scientist researching and teaching international security issues. His research focuses on conflict and diplomacy, security institutions and peace operations, political communication, exit strategies and security sector governance and reform. Raphaël is currently pursuing a PhD at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, focusing on the design of exit strategies in multilateral foreign interventions.

Advisory board

Hamit Dardagan is the co-founder and principal researcher at Iraq Body Count and the co-director of Every Casualty. He was the co-director of the Every Casualty programme at Oxford Research Group until 2014, where he has been the consultant on civilian casualties in war since 2007. Hamit was previously the chair of Kalayaan, a human rights campaign for overseas domestic workers in the United Kingdom.

Dr Ian Davis is the founding director of NATO Watch, a not-for-profit virtual think tank that examines the role of NATO in public life. He is also an independent human security and arms control consultant and writer. Between 2001 and 2007 he was the executive director of the British American Security Information Council (BASIC) and before that programme manager at Saferworld. Ian is an adviser to the UN Association-UK and ISIS Europe.

Isabel Hilton is the founder and editor of China Dialogue, the world's first English-Chinese bilingual website devoted to the environment. She is an international journalist and broadcaster and has worked for Scottish Television, the *Daily Express*, the *Sunday Times*, the *Independent*, the *New Yorker* and the BBC. Since 2001 she has been a presenter of the BBC Radio 3 cultural programme, Night Waves. Isabel has authored and co-authored several books.

Dr Nick Mabey is the chief executive and a founder director of E3G, an international non-profit dedicated to accelerating the transition to sustainable development. In addition to his management role, Nick leads E3G's work on climate security and European climate change policy. Nick was previously a senior adviser in the UK Prime Minister's Strategy Unit and, before joining government, head of economics and development at WWF-UK.

Martin Quadroy served as an intelligence officer in the Australian Defence Force, as assistant director for terrorism and transnational issues in the Defence Intelligence Organisation, and as a senior adviser to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Martin left public service in 2006, and currently works in law enforcement intelligence. He is a former contributing analyst at Open Briefing.

Professor Paul Rogers is professor of peace studies at the University of Bradford and global security consultant to Oxford Research Group. He has worked in the field of international security, arms control and political violence for over 30 years. He is the international security editor of openDemocracy, and has written or edited 26 books. Paul is also a regular commentator on global security issues in the national and international media.

Dr John Sloboda is co-director of Every Casualty and co-founder of Iraq Body Count. From 2004 to 2009, he was the executive director of Oxford Research Group, and from 2009 to 2014 he was co-director of the organisation's Every Casualty programme. John is also emeritus professor of psychology at the University of Keele and an honorary professor in the School of Politics and International Relations at Royal Holloway, University of London.

Appendix IV
Organisational policies

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Business continuity plan

A STEEPLE analysis (considering socio-cultural, technological, economic, environmental, political, legal and ethical factors) and SWOT analysis (evaluating strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) helped inform a risk assessment (assessing the likelihood and impact of potential threats) at the beginning of stage 1, which has been reviewed and updated for stage 2. Three areas of potential threat to Open Briefing's ongoing activities have been identified: the loss of IT equipment or data, the loss or illness of key staff, and reduced income and funding gaps. The following procedures have been developed to mitigate each of these three risks.

Loss of IT equipment or data

Open Briefing's considerable online presence and high reliance on IT means a loss of equipment or data represents a serious risk to the organisation. To mitigate this risk, Open Briefing uses a remote back-up and sync service, which maintains a 30-day version history of files backed-up off-site. Open Briefing staff use computers with surge-protected power supplies, up-to-date operating systems, firewalls and regularly updated anti-virus software. The organisational budget includes an IT line to cover repairs or replacement of computer equipment as necessary. Any temporary failures in internet connection can be overcome through the use of mobile broadband.

Loss or illness of key staff

The executive director is the driving force of the organisation and his illness or incapacity could render the organisation temporarily impotent. To mitigate this risk, the executive director maintains a business continuity manual, which – together with this regularly updated project proposal – contains all of the information needed to enable an individual appointed by the advisory board to take over and run the organisation in the event of the executive director being unable to do so. A member of the advisory board has access to these documents and the Open Briefing files and is responsible for overseeing continuity if the need ever arises.

Reduced income and funding gaps

Any organisation reliant on grants faces the potential of reduced income and funding gaps. To mitigate this risk, Open Briefing will work towards achieving multiple and diverse income streams, with careful record keeping and financial monitoring identifying any likely funding difficulties ahead of time. Open Briefing maintains the minimum of financial and contractual commitments, allowing activities and spending to contract in response to any funding shortages. The executive director is also committed to working unpaid or at reduced rates if necessary in order to maintain a level of operations during any funding gaps. Over time, a financial reserve will be built up in order to further insulate the organisation from temporary financial difficulties.

Equal opportunities policy

Open Briefing is committed to carrying out its activities in a manner that does not exclude anyone on the basis of skin colour, national origin, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation or religious affiliation, and pledges to abide by all relevant legislation.

Open Briefing recognises and is working towards addressing the gender imbalance in its team by considering ways to encourage more applications from female candidates.

Open Briefing also recognises that as an organisation with a considerable online presence it may need to address issues arising from the digital divide, as well as consider design issues that might affect visually impaired users of its website.

Environmental policy

Open Briefing recognises that its activities have an impact on the environment and, as such, is committed to working in an environmentally responsible manner.

Efforts are focussed on three key areas: waste, energy and travel. First, efficient recycling procedures have been developed and recycled and recyclable materials are used wherever possible, while every effort is made to keep printing and paper use low. Second, procedures are in place to keep energy use down and the Open Briefing office space relies on renewable energy and biomass heating. Third, staff travel and commuting are kept to a minimum, relying wherever possible on online meetings and teleconferencing.

For all other areas, our purchasing and contracting policy gives preference to Fairtrade, organic and other products and services that cause the least harm to people and planet.

Ethical policy

Open Briefing is committed to an ethical approach in all its activities and procedures. Specifically, it does not knowingly make use of suppliers or services that invest in or have any links to unethical industries, including the arms trade and extractive industries.

As individuals, we strive to reflect the ethical values of the organisation in the manner in which we work. We apply the principles of trust, openness and dialogue in all our dealings, both among ourselves and with others with whom we work.

Open Briefing guards its independence and believes in the principle of speaking truth to power. We therefore avoid sources of funding that may jeopardise the independence or integrity of the organisation.