# Rishi Sunak warns of implications of Keir Starmer's defence spending stance on UK's relations with Russia and North Korea



Prime Minister Rishi Sunak cautioned that Keir Starmer’s election could send a detrimental signal to Russia and North Korea regarding UK defense policies. Sunak expressed concerns over Starmer's decision not to match the Conservative government's pledge to spend 2.5% of the GDP on defense. Sunak emphasized that decreasing defense spending would be ill-timed, citing an "axis of authoritarian states" including Russia, Iran, North Korea, and China. This statement followed Russian President Vladimir Putin’s visit to North Korea, where he signed a mutual assistance pact with Kim Jong-un. Putin’s visit was speculated to be an attempt to secure further military support from North Korea for the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.