UK spies seek help from tech firms against cyber threats

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Britain's spies must give up some of their deep-rooted secrecy and seek help from tech firms to combat fast-moving cyber threats, the head of the U.K's foreign intelligence agency says.

MI6 chief Richard Moore says the agency has to "become more open to

stay secret" in a world of destabilizing [technological changes](#). Moore plans to set out his view of current threats Tuesday in his first public speech since becoming head of the Secret Intelligence Service, also known as MI6, in October 2020.

According to extracts released in advance by the government, Moore will say the disruptive potential of [artificial intelligence](#) and other rapidly developing technologies "is a white-hot focus for MI6."

"According to some assessments, we may experience more [technological progress](#) in the next 10 years than in the last century, with a disruptive impact equal to the industrial revolution," he plans to say. "As a society, we have yet to internalize this stark fact and its potential impact on global geopolitics."

"Our adversaries are pouring money and ambition into mastering artificial intelligence, quantum computing and [synthetic biology](#), because they know that mastering these technologies will give them leverage," Moore will say.

To keep up, British spies "are now pursuing partnerships with the tech community to help develop world-class technologies to solve our biggest mission problems."

"Unlike Q in the Bond movies, we cannot do it all in-house," Moore added, referring to the fictional MI6 gadget-maker in the James Bond 007 thrillers.

Moore says working with the [private sector](#) is a "sea change" for an organization enmeshed in secrecy. Until 1992, Britain's government refused even to confirm the existence of MI6. The organization has gradually become more open in recent years, even allowing publication of an authorized history—though it only goes up to 1949.

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