

Press release: Joint statement on the disappearance of Jamal Khashoggi by Foreign Ministers from the UK, France and Germany



Joint statement by Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian of France and Foreign Minister Heiko Maas of Germany:

Defending freedom of expression and a free press and ensuring the protection of journalists are key priorities for Germany, the United Kingdom and France. In this spirit, light must be shed on the disappearance of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, whose family has lost contact with him since October 2nd.

Germany, the United Kingdom and France share the grave concern expressed by others including HRVP Mogherini and UNSG Guterres, and are treating this incident with the utmost seriousness. There needs to be a credible investigation to establish the truth about what happened, and – if relevant – to identify those bearing responsibility for the disappearance of Jamal Khashoggi, and ensure that they are held to account.

We encourage joint Saudi-Turkish efforts in that regard, and expect the Saudi Government to provide a complete and detailed response. We have conveyed this message directly to the Saudi authorities.

Further information

Published 14 October 2018

Press release: Foreign Secretary urges EU to press ahead with listings under new chemical weapons sanctions regime

This follows extensive lobbying efforts from the UK and close partners.

The Foreign Secretary will be thanking eight Foreign Ministers today at Chevening for their support and determination in the global effort to end the use of chemical weapons for good.

Ministers from Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania will join the Foreign Secretary at his official residence, before heading to Luxembourg for meetings on Monday.

The Foreign Secretary will use this momentum to ensure specific individuals and entities responsible for the use and proliferation of chemical weapons across the world are listed under the new sanctions regime swiftly.

He will also tell counterparts at the FAC that discussions on a new cyber-related sanctions regime must now be accelerated.

The Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

For years there has been an international taboo on the use of chemical weapons but that is at risk now after Syria and Salisbury. We now need to redraw the red line that says that for anyone using these horrific weapons the price will always be too high.

These new sanctions are vital, but they are not the end of the story.

Further information

Press release: Leading tech companies support code to strengthen security of internet-connected devices

- Tech companies HP Inc. and Centrica Hive Ltd are the first companies to sign up to commit to the code.
- The code will ensure that businesses continue to strengthen the cyber

security of their products at the design stage.

- The UK is leading global efforts to strengthen the security of smart devices and products.

In a world first, government has published new measures to help manufacturers boost the security of internet-connected devices such as home alarm systems, fridges and toys.

There are expected to be more than 420 million internet connected devices in use across the UK within the next three years and poorly secured devices such as virtual assistants, toys and smartwatches can leave people exposed to security issues and even large scale cyber attacks.

To combat this, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) set out plans in a '[Secure by Design](#)' review to embed security in the design process of new technology rather than bolt it on as an afterthought.

As a result, a new [Code of Practice](#) has been developed with industry to improve the cyber security of devices, encourage innovation in new technologies and keep consumers safe.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, David Lidington said:

Our National Cyber Security Strategy sets out our ambitious proposals to defend our people, deter our adversaries and develop our capabilities to ensure the UK remains the safest place to live and do business online.

Tech companies like HP Inc. and Centrica Hive Ltd are helping us put in place the building blocks we need to transform the UK's cyber security.

I am proud to say the UK is leading the way internationally with our new Code of Practice, to deliver consumer devices and associated services that are Secure by Design.

Minister for Digital, Margot James, said:

From smartwatches to children's toys, internet-connected devices have positively impacted our lives but it is crucial they have the best possible security to keep us safe from invasions of privacy or cyber attacks.

The UK is taking the lead globally on product safety and shifting the burden away from consumers having to secure their devices.

The pledges by HP Inc. and Centrica Hive Ltd are a welcome first step but it is vital other manufacturers follow their lead to

ensure strong security measures are built into everyday technology from the moment it is designed.

Poorly secured devices can threaten individuals' privacy, compromise their network security, their personal safety and could be exploited as part of large-scale cyber attacks. Recent high-profile breaches putting people's data and security at risk include attacks on smart watches, CCTV cameras and childrens' toys.

To make sure consumers are protected when using internet-connected devices and while manufacturers implement stronger security measures, Government and NCSC have worked closely with consumer groups and industry to develop [guidance on smart devices in the home](#).

The new Code of Practice outlines thirteen guidelines that manufacturers of consumer devices should implement into their product's design to keep consumers safe.

This includes secure storage of personal data, regular software updates to make sure devices are protected against emerging security threats, no default passwords and making it easier for users to delete their personal data off the product.

Dr Ian Levy, the NCSC's Technical Director, said:

With the amount of connected devices we all use expanding, this world-leading Code of Practice couldn't come at a more important time.

The NCSC is committed to empowering consumers to make informed decisions about security whether they're buying a smartwatch, kettle or doll. We want retailers to only stock internet-connected devices that meet these principles, so that UK consumers can trust that the technology they bring into their homes will be properly supported throughout its lifetime.

The Government has also published a [mapping document](#) to make it easier for other manufacturers to follow in HP Inc.'s and Centrica Hive's footsteps. Further work is underway to develop regulation that will strengthen the security of internet-connected consumer products.

Implementing the Code of Practice can help organisations make sure that smart devices that process personal data are compliant with the stronger data protection laws which came into force in May. Failure to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) means firms could risk fines of up to £17 million or 4 percent of global turnover, for the most serious data breaches.

Seb Chakraborty, Centrica Hive's Chief Technology Officer, said:

Meeting the privacy and data protection expectations of our valued customers is a priority.

We invest heavily in the security of our products and we are delighted to support Government in this global step forward, building strong security measures into devices at the point of design.

George Brasher, HP Inc. UK managing director, said:

Cyber-crime has become an industry and IoT 'endpoint' devices increasingly constitute the frontline of cybersecurity. At HP, we are reinventing the state of the art in device security to address modern threats.

Today we design our commercial products with security built-in not bolted on, not only designed to protect, but also to detect and self-heal from cyber-attacks. We are delighted to be joining forces with the UK Government in our shared ambition to raise the bar broadly in consumer IoT device security, starting with the connected printers we are all used to at home.

Alex Neill, Which? Managing Director of Home Products and Services, said:

Which? tests many internet-connected products and has already improved security on devices in more than 1 million UK homes including TVs, voice-activated assistants, smart thermostats, and wireless routers.

We welcome the Government taking a lead in tackling the growing issue of security in internet-connected products. Manufacturers of these smart devices must now show they are taking security seriously and sign up to the Code to better protect consumers who use their products every day.

Teg Dosanjh, Director of IOT, MDE & SmartThings, SAMSUNG, said:

As a global leader in connected technology, Samsung understands that privacy and security are of great importance to consumer trust in connected devices. We build market-leading cyber security into all our products and warmly welcome the Government's desire to make connected devices as safe and secure as possible. We will continue to work with Government to develop these proposals and ensure the transformative potential of the Internet of Things is delivered safely for everyone.

This initiative is a key part of the Government's five-year, £1.9 billion National Cyber Security Strategy which is making the UK the most secure place in the world to live and do business online.

Notes to editors

The Code of Practice for Consumer IoT Security was developed by DCMS in conjunction with the National Cyber Security Centre and with support from other Government departments, industry and academic partners. The project has been informed by an expert advisory group which included subject matter experts from industry, consumer organisations and academia.

The Government's Digital Strategy includes the aspiration for the UK to remain an international leader in the development and uptake of IoT. The Government's actions include the funding of research and innovation in IoT, including through three-year £30 million IoT UK Programme.

The Government's Digital Charter is a rolling programme of work to agree norms and rules for the online world and put them into practice. In some cases this will be through shifting expectations of behaviour; in some we will need to agree new standards; and in others we may need to update our laws and regulations. Our starting point will be that we will have the same rights and expect the same behaviour online as we do offline.

Domestically, Her Majesty's Government Procurement, via Crown Commercial Service, will be adjusted to ensure future negotiations with suppliers of IoT products used by government departments will employ the Code to ensure the safety of such devices

HP Inc. creates technology that makes life better for everyone, everywhere. Through our portfolio of printers, PCs, mobile devices, solutions, and services, we engineer experiences that amaze. More information about HP Inc. is available at <http://www.hp.com/UK>.

Centrica Hive commits to ensure that all new devices, those designed and manufactured from 1st January 2021, will adhere to the 13 guidelines set out in the Code of Practice for Security in Consumer IoT Products.

Centrica Hive began back in 2013 with their customers telling them they wanted comfort and convenience, and a thermostat they could control that was easy and simple to use. Today, with £500 million investment from parent company Centrica plc, the Hive range of connected products has grown its range and geographical market, into North America, Canada, UK, Ireland and most recently Italy, with more opportunities for global expansion.

Hive focuses on making everyday life a little easier, freeing people up to spend time doing the things they love. The range of Hive products and services now incorporates a suite of products (including motion sensors, plugs, light bulbs and cameras) all controlled from a central home hub that Hive call their ecosystem. Designed to work together, to offer affordable, easy to use solutions and make a difference in people's lives. The total number of Hive connected home customers has reached one million worldwide

with over two million products sold.

[Code of Practice](#)

To make sure consumers are protected when using internet-connected devices and while manufacturers implement stronger security measures, Government and NCSC have worked closely with Information Commissioner's Office, Get Safe Online, consumer groups, the British Retail Consortium and industry experts to develop [consumer guidance on smart devices in the home](#). This work supports efforts by Action Fraud who highlight that consumers can report fraud or cyber crime to their organisation.

The guidance Centrica Hive currently provides, advises consumers on how they can correctly set-up and configure their devices securely.

[Press release: Communities Secretary signals end to unfair leasehold practices](#)

- Majority of new-build houses to be sold as freehold and new leases to be capped at just £10 – ending unscrupulous practice of unnecessary leaseholds.
- New measures to make it easier for leaseholders to get tenant associations formally recognised and protect consumer interests.
- Builds on action underway to make property market fairer including crackdown on rogue landlords and ending unfair charges for tenants.

The vast majority of new-build houses are to be sold as freehold in a move to tackle unfair practices in the leasehold sector and put cash back into the pockets of over-stretched house buyers.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP will tomorrow (15 October 2018) launch a consultation on plans to improve the leaseholder sector for would-be home owners, which will bring an end to the unjustified selling of new houses as leasehold.

The consultation will also propose that ground rents for new leases will be capped at just £10. On average leaseholders pay over £300 ground rent each year, with some paying as much as £700.

These measures will build upon comprehensive action by the government to make the housing market fairer for everyone.

This includes cracking down on rogue landlords so tenants have the quality of home they deserve, helping existing leaseholders who want to buy their freehold by working with the Law Society to make this process faster, fairer and cheaper, and ensuring tenants are not hit by unfair rental costs.

The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, Secretary of State for Communities, said:

The government is committed to making the economy work for everyone by helping people with the cost of living.

Unfair ground rents can turn a homeowner's dream into a nightmare by hitting them in the back pocket, and making their property harder to sell.

That's why I'm taking concrete action to protect homeowners and end those unscrupulous leasehold practices that can cost tenants hundreds of pounds.

While leasehold generally applies to flats with shared spaces, a number of developers have been increasingly selling houses on these terms – placing further financial burdens on those looking to buy a house of their own through unnecessary surcharges like ground rent.

This can also mean selling their home is more expensive and take longer than selling a freehold property.

Under the government's proposals, which are subject to consultation, the majority of new houses will be sold as freehold and future ground rents will be reduced to a nominal sum.

The consultation will also seek views on what are the appropriate and fair exemptions, such as shared ownership properties and community led housing to ensure consumers' best interests are at the heart of the property market.

To further support leaseholders, ministers have also made it easier for them to form recognised tenant associations by reducing the minimum membership required. This will further empower those in leasehold homes to enforce their collective rights and hold landlords to account.

At present, leaseholders face significant barriers in getting tenants' associations recognised. While many landlords are happy to engage with residents' associations in their building, there is no legal requirement for them to do so unless the association is formally recognised.

Under the new rules, landlords will be required to provide contact information of eligible leaseholders to the secretary of the residents' association within 4 months of the request, providing that leaseholders have expressly consented to their details being shared.

The move will help leaseholders act together to represent common interests and raise complaints with their landlords and agents for things such as service charges and management practices.

See more information on [recognised tenant associations](#).

MHCLG statistics estimate there were 4.2 million residential leasehold properties in England in 2015 to 2016, of which 2.9 million – or around two-thirds – were flats.

The [‘Fixing our broken housing market’ white paper](#) was published in February 2017.

The [‘Tackling unfair practices in the leasehold market’ consultation](#) took place between July and September 2017 and received over 6,000 replies, with the vast majority in favour of widespread reform.

Following the consultation, the government announced reforms to the leasehold system in England in December 2017.

The technical consultation on these reforms opens tomorrow (15 October 2018) and will run for 6 weeks. It is open to all including: leaseholders, freeholders, landlords, solicitors/ conveyancers, management companies, developers, local authorities, estate agents, investors/lenders.

Respondents will be able to respond by online survey form, email or written response.

The department will provide a response to the consultation following its conclusion.

[News story: New £50 note will ensure cash is fit for the future](#)

- Treasury confirms £50 note will continue to be part of the UK currency
- Bank of England announces it will make a new modern polymer note
- more secure note will help clamp down on crime

Modern money will help prevent crime, the Exchequer Secretary declared today (13 October 2018), as plans were unveiled for a new, more secure £50 note.

Following a public consultation, the government has confirmed that the current mix of coins and notes will remain. The move will give people more flexibility over how they spend and manage their money, while making it harder for criminals to counterfeit the note for illegal activity.

Originally introduced in 1981, there are currently 330 million £50 notes in

circulation – with a combined value of £16.5 billion – with Bank of England evidence showing that demand for the note is continuing to rise.

The Bank of England is also confirming today that a new £50 polymer note will be printed in the UK to accompany the existing £5, £10 and upcoming £20 notes. This will ensure the UK's currency continues to be one of the securest in the world as these modern notes are more durable and harder to forge.

The Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, Robert Jenrick, said:

Our coins and notes are respected and recognised the world over and are a key part of the UK's heritage and identity. People should have as much choice as possible when it comes to their money and we're making sure that cash is here to stay.

Our money needs to be secure and this new note will help prevent crime. This modern £50 note follows the popular new pound coin, which is the most secure of its kind in the world.

The Bank of England's Chief Cashier, Sarah John, said:

I'm very excited to be starting the process of introducing a new £50 note. At the Bank, we are committed to providing the public with high quality notes they can use with confidence. Moving the £50 note onto polymer is an important next step to ensure that we can continue to do that.

The Treasury recently held a call for evidence to better understand the role of cash and digital payments in the new economy, ensuring it keeps pace with the changes in the way we pay for goods and services. More detail on the findings and government's proposals will be set out at Budget.