

News story: Foreign Secretary's message for Rosh Hashanah

The Foreign Secretary said:

Every New Year is a time for reflection.

As we enter the Jewish Year 5778, I reflect on the Jewish community we have here in the UK: A community which contributes so much to our society, in every field.

I also reflect on what a good friend the UK has in Israel.

My own relationship with Israel goes back to when I worked on a Kibbutz as a young adult, and it was a privilege to work with many partners in Tel Aviv as Mayor of London as it is now as Foreign Secretary with the State of Israel.

I was delighted to see London host the Tel Aviv Festival earlier this month attended by Middle East Minister Alistair Burt. It affirmed the strong cultural ties between two of our respective countries' great cities.

In the coming year, there are two significant anniversaries in UK-Israel relations. November will mark the centenary of the Balfour Declaration and in May the 70th Anniversary of Israel's Independence.

Marking these anniversaries is an opportunity to show not only is our friend Israel here to stay, but that the UK and Israel are going to continue to work together, to grow together and to thrive together.

New Year is also a time to make resolutions, and I am going to share three of mine with you – bear down on the scourge of antisemitism, both at home and abroad, build the strongest ever relationship between the UK and Israel and celebrate the UK's Jewish community, a community that has made an enormous contribution to British society.

I wish Jewish friends in the UK and around the World a Shana Tova u-Metuka – a Happy and Sweet Jewish New Year!

Speech: PM speech to UNGA on modern slavery: 'behind these numbers are

real people.'

So, it's fitting that we gather here today, united in our determination to eliminate the scourge of forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking. Modern slavery exists in all our societies. It respects neither borders nor jurisdictions. Its victims are subject to the most appalling mistreatment and exploitation. And the scale of the challenge, which will be set out in more detail in new estimates from Alliance 8.7 in a moment, is sobering, and brings our task into sharp focus.

Behind these numbers are real people suffering terrible abuse, and if we're to meet our ambition to eradicate forced labour, and end modern slavery and human trafficking by 2030, we know we have a long way to go. And that's why I've invited you here today, as leaders who are committed to addressing these barbaric crimes, to champion this cause through a collective call to action. This is a statement of intent through which our shared vision and values can be realised. Its message is clear: we will not tolerate these crimes in our societies.

It is hard to bring out into the open and defeat something which has persisted for so many years in the shadows, but we have a duty as leaders to do so, and if we are to succeed, it will require our concerted efforts, our efforts at home, but also internationally, to drive and to deliver a coherent global response.

Now, all of you here today have demonstrated leadership on this issue, and I look forward to hearing more from you. But before that, I just wanted to offer some very brief words about what the UK is doing to address these crimes. In 2015, we introduced the world's first Modern Slavery Act, and we're now seeing the first convictions for the new offences it introduced.

But to address this insidious crime, I know that more needs to be done, so today, I'm pleased to announce a series of further measures that will be implemented in my country. We will train new specialist investigators and frontline police officers, and we will develop the expertise of prosecutors so that they can better handle complex cases and support traumatised victims.

But for a crime that has no respect for borders, we need a truly international response. We will therefore host an international summit of chief prosecutors next spring, and in addition, the UK will double its aid spending on modern slavery to £150 million, enabling more work in collaboration with source and transit countries. And this will also include £20 million of seed funding to the new Global Fund to End Modern Slavery. We're delighted to be contributing to this initiative which my US colleague, Deputy Secretary of State Sullivan, will say more about, and I wholeheartedly commend this initiative to you all.

The commitments we make here today through the call to action lay strong foundations for more effective action. The task is an urgent one, so we need swiftly to put our words into practice and hold ourselves to account for

progress. And I would like to open the floor to the Secretary General of the United Nations. And before I do so, can I just say, I would like to pay tribute to the commitment that he's personally shown to this agenda.

Press release: BIA & MHRA publish report 'Innovation in life sciences in a changing and dynamic environment'

The UK BioIndustry Association (BIA) and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) brought together experts from across the sector to discuss some hot topics and important developments that are having an impact on the changing and dynamic UK life sciences ecosystem. Through a series of presentations, panel discussions and Q and A, key topics were debated and analysed including the Accelerated Access Review and the Life Sciences Industrial Strategy, personalised medicines and companion diagnostics, the Priority Medicines (PRIME) scheme and the challenges posed to medicines regulation by Brexit.

The key note speakers for the seventh annual joint conference were Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health, Lord O'Shaughnessy who provided the UK Government's position to retain a close working partnership in respect of medicines regulation after the UK leaves the EU, in the interests of public health and safety, and Chief Executive of NHS England, Simon Stevens, who outlined the challenges faced by the NHS, the opportunities for industry in the NHS Five Year Forward View and the patient's role in promoting access to new medicines.

[The report summarises the presentations and perspectives](#) from senior experts and leading speakers from MHRA, government, NHS England, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), the life science industry, academia, research charities and patient organisations.

Commenting on the publication of the report, Alan Morrison, Chairman, BIA Regulatory Affairs Advisory Committee and Vice President, International Regulatory Affairs, MSD, said:

It is important not to lose sight of innovation when navigating this dynamic and changing environment. As the government continues with the Brexit negotiations this event provides an important forum for industry, regulators and all relevant stakeholders to come together to talk about the practicalities, challenges and opportunities around Brexit.

It was particularly encouraging to have the minister at the

conference and to offer a clear message to the life sciences sector.

Dr Ian Hudson, Chief Executive of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, said:

It is a priority of the MHRA to support innovation across industry, SMEs, academia and healthcare, providing help to develop novel medicines, devices and manufacturing processes, through mechanisms such as the Early Access to Medicines Scheme and the MHRA Innovation Office.

This annual conference is a fantastic opportunity for continuous dialogue and engagement between regulators, government and stakeholders across the life sciences ecosystem.

View [the full report on the BIA website](#) and you can also find the [full programme and slide presentations for this year on the conference website](#).

Read the [full text of the speech given by Lord O'Shaughnessy](#) on Brexit and medicines regulation at the BIA/MHRA Conference.

Press release: PM statement: Mexico earthquake

My thoughts and sympathies are with all of those affected by the terrible earthquake in Mexico.

The UK government is in close contact with the relevant authorities and we are ready to provide support in any way that we can. We are working to identify and support any affected British nationals as the recovery effort continues.

Press release: London turns the tide on an 8 year surge of gonorrhoea

A new report released by Public Health England (PHE) shows new cases of

gonorrhoea in Londoners dropped by 19% in 2016 compared with figures from the year before.

Gonorrhoea had been increasing year-on-year in the capital since 2009, and this reduction may be an encouraging sign that Londoners are getting tested for STIs more frequently and are practicing safe sex by using condoms.

Overall sexually transmitted infections (STIs) fell by 5% in London last year with decreases seen among most of the 5 major STIs. New cases of genital warts fell by 5% and cases of genital herpes dropped by 2%. But the data also comes with a note of caution as the number of syphilis diagnoses reported rose by 2% in 2016, double the number reported in 2012. Cases of chlamydia meanwhile, the most common STI, increased by 1%.

STIs remain an important public health problem in London, with the capital having the highest rate of new diagnoses in England, 79% higher than any other part of the country. Of the top 20 local authorities in England with the highest rates of new STI diagnoses, 17 were in London.

Overall in 2016, there were 117,600 new STIs diagnosed in London residents compared with more than 123,800 diagnosed in 2015.

Dr Yvonne Doyle, Regional Director for PHE London, said:

London has turned the tide on an 8 year surge of gonorrhoea with overall rates of STIs decreasing.

This encouraging news could show that work to promote frequent testing together with safe sex practices is paying off. This means people are using condoms and are regularly being tested.

However, the data comes with a note of caution. Poor sexual health remains a public health problem in London and STIs are still too high compared to other parts of the country, with rates of syphilis and chlamydia actually increasing.

Tackling poor sexual health remains high on the agenda for PHE London and we will continue to work with our partners to deliver effective public health interventions to improve sexual health outcomes across the capital.

To reduce the number of STIs, it is important that Londoners are familiar with PHE's recommendations for safe sexual health. These include getting tested every year and when changing sexual partner, as well as getting re-tested after a positive chlamydia diagnosis (within 3 months of the diagnosis).

The [annual epidemiological spotlight on sexually transmitted infections in London \(2016 data\)](#) is available online.

You can view local data on sexual health via PHE's [Sexual Reproductive Health](#)

[Profiles](#) online.

PHE published [annual data on STI diagnoses](#) in June 2017 and these are available online.

For safe sex, PHE recommends:

- prevention should focus on groups at highest risk, including young adults, men who have sex with men (MSM) and black ethnic minorities
- consistent and correct use of condoms can significantly reduce risk of infection
- regular testing for HIV and STIs is essential for good sexual health:
- anyone under 25 who is sexually active should be screened for chlamydia annually, and on change of sexual partner
- MSM should test annually for HIV and STIs and every 3 months if having condomless sex with new or casual partners

The London HIV Prevention Programme, a London-wide sexual health promotion initiative funded by London local authorities, delivers the 'Do It London' sexual health campaigns aimed at promoting safer sex to all residents in the capital including reducing risk of STIs.

The [London annual data spotlight report](#), presenting annual epidemiological data for HIV in London, is available online.

Rates of selected STIs per 100,000 population by London borough of residence: 2016 is available.

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