

Press release: Jeremy Hunt appoints roving Human Rights Ambassador to champion human rights across the globe

The newly created role is the first of its kind across government and demonstrates the UK's commitment to defending human rights globally.

Ambassador French will support UK's ongoing work through the UN Human Rights Council, led by the UK's Permanent Representative in Geneva, Julian Braithwaite, calling for action and accountability against countries who violate human rights. She will also work with countries across the globe to make sure they meet their human rights commitments to help ensure real change for people across the world.

Ambassador French will also promote UK objectives and key campaigns around the world including media freedom, modern slavery and freedom of religion or belief.

Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt said:

As the UK enters a new chapter in its history I will work to ensure that our values are at the heart of all we do. Ambassador French's new role will be central to our work in defending human rights across the globe. Standing up for human rights is not only the right thing – it helps to create a stable, more prosperous world.

Ambassador for Human Rights, Rita French said:

Human rights are the essential foundations for a fair, open and transparent society. It is tragic that in too many countries these rights are violated and abused. I will speak up for human rights, providing a voice on the international stage for those who are not being represented. I also wish to form stronger partnerships with States, supporting their efforts to fulfil their human rights obligations.

The UK's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Other International Organisations in Geneva, Julian Braithwaite, said:

Ambassador French's appointment will strengthen the UK's role in the multilateral human rights system in Geneva and help it deliver tangible improvements for people around the world, including by giving states the support they need to turn their commitments on human rights into practice.

Based in Geneva, the Ambassador for Human Rights will travel around the world and form new alliances to help countries strengthen their voice at the UN and Human Rights Council. She will also act as the Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other International Organisations in Geneva and will represent the UK's interests deputising for the Permanent Representative, Ambassador Julian Braithwaite.

Ambassador French will work with Lord Tariq Ahmad, the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict and Special Envoy on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the UN and Special Envoy for Gender Equality, Joanna Roper; and Special Envoy for Media Freedom, Amal Clooney, to champion and advance human rights on the world stage.

Further information