

Press release: PM statement on the anniversary of the Salisbury incident

Today is an important milestone for Salisbury as it emerges from the shadow cast by the use of chemical weapons on the streets of our country.

Now, 12 months on, we see this historic city, welcoming thousands of visitors and tourists as it plans for a positive and prosperous future.

The fact Salisbury and the wider region has fought back so well from such a devastating and reckless incident is testament to the resolve, forbearance and positivity of the community.

My thoughts today are very much with the victims, their friends and families, both in Salisbury, Amesbury and further afield. They have shown remarkable strength, resilience and fortitude in the last year and I have no doubt will continue to do so.

Today is also an opportunity to reflect on the work of so many people who have played a part in the recovery effort, from all of the dedicated emergency service workers, council staff and public servants, to the skilful and brave men and women of our armed forces who have led the unprecedented clean-up operation.

And today is a chance to acknowledge the spirit of the people of this city and I offer my thanks to every single one of them.

I hope they can be encouraged by the announcement on Friday that the clean-up operation in South Wiltshire is now complete, and that moving forward Salisbury will once again be known for being a beautiful, welcoming English city and not for the events of 4 March 2018.

Press release: PM call with Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel: 3 March 2019

The Prime Minister spoke to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel this afternoon.

The leaders discussed the UK's decision to proscribe Hizballah in full.

They also spoke about antisemitism and agreed on the importance of continuing

to condemn hatred in all its forms.

The Prime Ministers welcomed the trade continuity agreement signed between the UK and Israel last month and committed to build on our bilateral relationship, including in the areas of trade and technology.

Press release: PM call with Prime Minister Imran Khan of Pakistan: 3 March 2019

The Prime Minister spoke to Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan today.

She welcomed his commitment to reducing tensions with India, and the return of Wing Commander Abhinandan.

The leaders discussed the need to address the causes of this conflict. The Prime Minister emphasised the importance of Pakistan taking action against all terrorist groups, in support of global efforts to combat terrorism.

Both leaders reiterated their commitment to the UK-Pakistan bilateral relationship.

Press release: Foreign Secretary visits Yemen to bolster support for UN peace process

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt visited Aden today on the first visit to Yemen by a Western foreign minister since the start of the conflict in 2015, and the first by a UK Foreign Secretary since 1996.

In a display of the UK's support to the Government of Yemen and for UN efforts to secure peace, the Foreign Secretary met Yemeni Deputy Prime Minister Salem Ahmed Saeed Al Khanbashi and Foreign Minister Khaled Al Yamani.

In the previous 48 hours, in Riyadh and Muscat respectively, Mr Hunt met Yemeni President Hadi and Houthi Spokesman Mohamed Abdel Salem.

While visiting the port of Aden Mr Hunt saw humanitarian aid being delivered and met aid workers, including representatives of the Aden Office of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), to discuss the humanitarian response.

Mr Hunt's visit to Aden was part of a Yemen-focussed Gulf tour during which he also engaged regional leaders including Sultan Qaboos in Oman, Foreign Minister al Assaf in Saudi Arabia, and Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed in UAE, as part of a sustained UK diplomatic campaign to support the UN-led peace process. The Foreign Secretary previously attended the UN's Stockholm talks in December, and Quad (Saudi, UAE, US, UK) ministerial discussions in Warsaw in February.

Speaking from Aden the Foreign Secretary said:

We are now in the last chance saloon for the Stockholm peace process. The port of Hodeidah was supposed to be cleared of militia and left under neutral control by the beginning of January. The process could be dead within weeks if we do not see both sides sticking to their commitments in Stockholm.

People in Yemen are on the brink of starvation and none of the parties really want a return to hostilities – so now is the time to take a deep breath, put aside the anger and mistrust after four years of terrible fighting and take the risks that are always necessary at the start of any peace process.

The UK is the largest Western contributor of aid to the Yemen crisis. The additional £200million of aid announced by the Prime Minister on 25 February will support basic needs for over 3.8 million people, treat 20,000 vulnerable children for malnutrition and provide 2 million people with improved water supply and basic sanitation. This brings the UK's total humanitarian contribution to the Yemen crisis to £770m since 2015.

Images of the visit will be available via Reuters.

[News story: Defence Secretary announces £11million boost to chemical defences](#)

The range of measures announced by the Defence Secretary include:

- Developing plans to deploy drones and robots into potentially hazardous

- areas, putting personnel in less danger and identifying threats faster.
- Boosting the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory's ability to analyse substances, by investing in new technical capabilities.
 - Keeping the UK at the forefront of medical advances to combat the effects of chemical agents.

The decision means the UK will remain a global leader in Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) defence. Around the world, there is evidence of these threats increasing and it is vital the UK can meet them.

Last year, the Syrian regime launched chemical attacks on its own people, which led to the UK striking several weapons facilities alongside American and French partners. At home, the UK has seen the longest chemical clean-up in living memory, in Salisbury and Amesbury.

Unmanned vehicles will conduct more testing and identification, decreasing the risk posed to humans through contact with nerve agents. This capability will be developed over the coming years.

The funding will increase the speed and accuracy with which the potential origins of substances can be analysed, helping the authorities identifying attackers faster and improving public safety.

It will also allow faster decontamination and recovery of vehicles and assets, as well as improvements to counter radiological and nuclear threats.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

After the Novichok attack in Salisbury a year ago, the nation turned to the Armed Forces and expert scientists. From the investigation to the clean-up, the military and everyone involved in the operation have worked tirelessly to decontaminate the streets of Salisbury.

Britain and its allies have also demonstrated that they will take a stand against the use of chemical weapons, from the sanctions enforced on Russia following the reckless use of Novichok to the strikes against the chemicals used by Syrian regime.

We recognise we need resilience to face evolving threats which is why we have invested £11million into ensuring we have a world-leading capability.

Standing Joint Commander (UK) Lieutenant General Tyrone Urch said

The decontamination work in Salisbury and Amesbury over the last 12 months has been a complex and daunting challenge for the Armed

Forces.

All of the personnel involved demonstrated adaptability, professionalism, resilience and courage; they have been absolutely first-class and lived up to their world-leading reputation. This investment will allow us to further improve our expertise and, most importantly, keep the public safe.

This funding will be available in the new financial year and invested straight into programmes that will benefit DSTL scientists and the Armed Forces. It is in addition to the £48million announced by the Defence Secretary last year to develop a new Chemical Weapons Defence Centre.