

Press release: UK and Japan forge new alliance to shape 21st Century

The UK and Japan will announce an ambitious programme – and £30m of initial funding – for cutting-edge technology to boost innovation, create high-skilled jobs and improve people’s quality of life.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will today (Thu 10 Jan) meet Prime Minister Theresa May for their first talks in Downing Street, following her successful visit to Tokyo and Kyoto last year.

For the first time British and Japanese researchers and industry experts will work side by side on projects to tackle the Grand Challenges identified by the UK’s modern Industrial Strategy and Japan’s Society 5.0.

These include designing robotic systems to allow our ageing populations to live independently in their home for longer, finding new treatments for chronic conditions like dementia and heart failure, and new forms of greener transport and energy storing to ensure a cleaner world for future generations.

Figures show wider adoption of such technology could create 175,000 new jobs and boost the UK manufacturing sector by £455bn over the next decade.

The UK and Japan will also explore how businesses and innovators can use big data legally, ethically and safely in the future.

In their talks, the leaders will discuss the economic opportunities that exist for both nations as the UK leaves the European Union.

Following positive discussions at the G20 in Buenos Aires, Prime Minister Abe will reiterate Japan’s commitment to an ambitious bilateral arrangement with the UK, building on the agreement between Japan and the EU. This will give businesses stability, support jobs, and ensure greater choice and lower prices for consumers.

Japan will also scrap the existing export ban on British beef and lamb, in place since 1996, worth £127 million to British farmers over five years.

Ahead of today’s visit, Prime Minister Theresa May said:

The UK and Japan are natural partners. We face many of the same challenges. But also the same immense opportunities. By agreeing to forge a new, dynamic partnership, we not only back some of the most cutting-edge sectors in our economy, but will also improve people’s lives and shape the 21st Century for the better. This is our modern Industrial Strategy in action.

As the UK prepares to leave the EU, we raise our horizons towards

the rest of the world. Our relationship with Japan is stronger than ever, and this visit will enhance co-operation in a wide range of areas. From trade and investment, to science and innovation, and our unwavering commitment to defence and security – the close bond between our nations will help us achieve our shared goals.

Prime Minister Abe will receive a military Guard of Honour for the first time ahead of bilateral talks in Downing Street. The two leaders will also attend a briefing chaired by Security Minister Ben Wallace where senior representatives from emergency services will share the UK's experience of hosting large international events ahead of this year's Rugby World Cup and 2020 Olympics in Japan.

The UK and Japan will also agree to:

- Build on last year's Joint Declaration that stepped up our defence and security partnership. The UK will increase the number of combined exercises between our defence forces and strengthen maritime co-operation.
- Deploy HMS Montrose to Japan in early 2019, to enforce sanctions against the DPRK as part of our joint determination to a peaceful resolution to tension in the region and the complete denuclearisation of North Korea.
- Collaborate on new defence technologies, including co-operation on future combat aircraft, missile development and autonomous systems that will ensure our forces remain an effective deterrent, as well as supporting high-skilled jobs.

Strengthen cultural ties, with the National Gallery sending a major exhibition of its masterpieces to Japan – including the famous 'Sunflowers' by Vincent Van Gogh – as part of a year-long UK-Japan Season of Culture starting next September.

Press release: Greyhound welfare boosted through multi-million pound deal with gambling industry

Thousands of racing greyhounds are to be better cared for as a result of a new deal worth an estimated £3 million this year, to be paid for by some of Britain's biggest bookmakers.

The Minister for Sport Mims Davies has announced that the funding will contribute towards new tailored training for veterinary staff, the expansion of an injury recovery scheme to ensure more greyhounds can enjoy a full and active life following racing, and the provision of more homes for dogs as

they enter retirement, through increased funding for the Greyhound Trust.

The extra money will also go towards improving safety across the nation's 21 licenced racetracks, kennel improvements and the provision of air-conditioning for trainers' vehicles to improve welfare standards.

The voluntary commitment from Betfred, William Hill, Sky Betting and Gaming, and Paddy Power Betfair, was reached following discussions chaired by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which called for a fair return to the greyhound industry from bookmakers' profits on the sport.

This follows major operators Ladbrokes-Coral, Bet 365 and Jennings Bet who have previously made commitments on the same basis.

The move will be underpinned by the 'Greyhound Commitment' – a long-term strategic plan from the Greyhound Board of Great Britain, which will ensure animal welfare and the integrity of greyhound racing remain paramount in the sport.

Gambling Minister, Mims Davies, said:

"I am delighted to have reached an agreement with leading operators to ensure the welfare of our greyhounds is protected and improved through this fund.

"As the sixth most watched sport in Britain, it is clear that the welfare and care of all racing greyhounds, from registration to retirement, must be a fundamental part of its successful future.

"I strongly urge all remaining bookmakers that take bets on greyhound racing who have not signed up to this agreement to follow suit and support the sport.

"Any greyhounds put to sleep due to medical treatment being too expensive, or a poor prognosis is one too many – we must stop this."

Mark Bird, Managing Director of the Greyhound Board of Great Britain, said:

"The Greyhound Board are extremely grateful for the conclusion of the mediation and the commitment of the major bookmakers to contribute additional funds from their on-line businesses.

"The GBGB has outlined clear ambitions, within our 'Greyhound Commitment' as to where this new income will be spent, with the majority supporting greyhound welfare standards and initiatives, both throughout their racing careers but also as part their homing process following retirement from the sport."

Joe Scanlon, Chairman of the British Greyhound Racing Fund, said:

"With this deal the BGRF will be close to full support from all the major retail and online operators and it will provide a firm basis for delivering the enhanced welfare and integrity provision the sport of greyhound racing expects.

“This agreement would not have been possible without the support of the Minister and her team at DCMS, Lord Lipsey who has worked tirelessly to improve the welfare of greyhounds over many years and of course the major bookmakers for their continued support of the Fund.”

The agreement took effect from 1 January 2019 and is expected to increase the income to the British Greyhound Racing Fund to around £10 million a year.

Notes to editors:

For further information contact the DCMS press office on: 0207 211 2210

Under the terms of the agreement, operators will contribute 0.6% of their online turnover on bets placed on British greyhound racing, in addition to their current contributions from their betting shops business, with effect from 1 January 2019. For betting exchanges, an equivalent rate based on sportsbook gross gambling revenue will be applied to the commission on UK greyhound bets.

Ladbrokes-Coral, long-term retail contributors, started online payments on the same basis from 1 January 2018 and Bet365 is also a long-time contributor. Land-based operator JenningsBet also agreed to commence contributions from 1 January 2018.

The Greyhound Board of Great Britain (GBGB) is responsible for the governance, regulation and management of the sport of licensed greyhound racing in England, Scotland and Wales. It receives funds through the British Greyhound Racing Fund in the form of voluntary contributions from bookmakers on their turnover from bets placed on licensed British greyhound racing.

The GBGB's spending on welfare has been protected in recent years and has remained consistent at around £3 million per year.

The Greyhound Trust rehomes over 4,000 greyhounds each year.

The Government introduced regulations to protect the welfare of racing greyhounds at race tracks in England in 2010 (the 'Welfare of Racing Greyhounds Regulations 2010').

Defra reviewed the 2010 Regulations in 2016 and found that while they appeared to have been successful judged against their original objectives, the industry needed to do more to tackle issues of transparency and standards at trainers' kennels.

The main industry regulator, the Greyhound Board of Great Britain (GBGB) agreed to take forward several self-regulatory reforms, which they are currently in the process of delivering. GBGB are delivering on what they have promised, but Defra is monitoring their progress closely.

In 2017, 370 greyhounds were put to sleep due to medical treatment being too expensive, or a poor prognosis.

Speech: Addressing starvation and the humanitarian crisis in Yemen

Thank you very much Mr President. Thank you for scheduling this session. Thank you to Martin and his team and to Mark and all the humanitarians.

I think it's very good that the Council has been able to be united on this very important issue and it's very good that we can have a timely update on implementation of Stockholm but also wider implementation of Security Council Resolution 2451, so thank you for that.

I think it is very important that the parties accelerate efforts to implement the important steps they agreed to in Stockholm. Martin set out what those were. I just want to reiterate our full support for Martin's efforts. We look to the parties to continue constructive engagement with him, and that includes a commitment to attend the next round of talks when Martin has finished his preparatory work. And we look to the parties to facilitate the UN's work to stand up a team in Hodeidah to support their efforts.

For our part Mr President, as penholder, we will take forward work on a short technical resolution to mandate the new UN team to support implementation of the Hodeidah agreement. We will hear a bit more on that in consultations from Martin, Mark and General Cammaert, and of course the Council will need to continue to follow progress on the ground very closely.

On the humanitarian side, I think Mark's last words that, although all this progress on the political track is absolutely vital, it doesn't help us feed starving children. I think we all need to have that the forefront of our minds. That 80 percent of Yemenis need assistance is quite a shocking figure, but we mustn't let up any of the pressure to try and help Mark and the humanitarians deliver aid and commercial supplies.

I want to just specify very clearly today Mr President how important the access issue is. This is access to the Red Sea mills, as Mark set out, but it's also access through the ports and into all those areas of Yemen where people need assistance. And the numbers involved are vast, so there isn't a day to lose in terms of that access. And we call on all the parties to address the issues Mark has mentioned, particularly in terms of things like notice. The notice period should go down, back down to 48 hours. Access should be unhindered; commercial supplies should be got through.

We have had some good news on visas and fuel imports, but that good news needs to be extended Mr. President, right the way across the commercial and humanitarian supplies needed.

I've kept my remarks short as I know lots people want to speak and we have a session to follow. But it's just to repeat, it's very good news that the

Council has been united so far. We hope that the Council can stay united as we follow progress on both the humanitarian and political tracks.

[News story: Revolutionary satellite made of 'the stuff of science fiction' leaves the UK](#)

Up until now, telecommunications satellites were largely fixed, one off, custom machines designed for a specific use or market.

Commissioned by [Eutelsat](#) and built in Britain by [Airbus](#) and [Surrey Satellite Technology](#) (SSTL) in Portsmouth and Guildford, EUTELSAT QUANTUM will be able to adapt to new demands in coverage, bandwidth, power and frequency, enabling it to operate from any orbital slot depending on changing market conditions.

The development of the core technologies integrated into EUTELSAT QUANTUM is supported by the UK Space Agency and the [European Space Agency](#) (ESA) within the framework of a Public-Private Partnership.

Dr Graham Turnock, CEO UK Space Agency said:

Communications satellites like EUTELSAT QUANTUM that can be reprogrammed to adapt coverage and connectivity in orbit could until recently be considered the stuff of science fiction.

Through our €480m development funding in the European Space Agency's ARTES programme, the government's Industrial Strategy and partnering with industry leaders such as Airbus, we are helping UK businesses transform 'the stuff of science fiction' into commercial advantage, resulting in jobs, growth and innovation.

[EUTELSAT QUANTUM Platform build at SSTL](#)

Today the satellite platform was on view to invited guests at a special event to mark the handover to Airbus who will complete the satellite assembly and testing in Toulouse.

Sarah Parker, Managing Director of SSTL said:

The completion of our work on the Eutelsat Quantum satellite platform is an important milestone for SSTL as it represents our first venture into the global commercial telecoms satellite market. The design and assembly of this innovative spacecraft has enabled

us to advance the knowledge and skills required to develop highly capable satellite products for the evolving telecoms market, where we are now actively engaged in seeking new opportunities.

The contract to build this EUTELSAT QUANTUM satellite was agreed in 2015. [In November last year](#), Eutelsat and Airbus signed a new contract worth hundreds of millions of pounds that will see components and parts for two further communications satellites assembled in the UK. This means that 6 out of 7 of the company's next satellites will be partially built in Britain.

[EUTELSAT QUANTUM – Revolutionising telecoms market](#)

Yohann Leroy, Deputy CEO and CTO at Eutelsat said:

EUTELSAT QUANTUM is a world first and the culmination of many years of research by Eutelsat. Its premium capacity will enable us to offer game-changing optionality and flexibility to our customers in the government, mobility and data markets, who will be able to operate and optimize capacity to adjust coverages in real time, and to do so autonomously. We are delighted to co-operate with our long-standing partners, the ESA, the UK Space Agency and Airbus, and to be able to rely on the world-leading expertise within the UK space industry.

Colin Paynter, Managing Director, Airbus Defence and Space UK, said:

Combining the payload expertise from Airbus in Portsmouth, and SSTL's new geostationary platform provides a very sophisticated package for Eutelsat. The satellite is a world first, fully reprogrammable in orbit, and we're looking forward to seeing it fly.

The UK Space Agency is the largest funder of ESA's programme of [Advanced Research in Telecommunications Systems](#), (ARTES) which transforms R&D investment into successful commercial products and services by offering varying degrees of support to projects with different levels of operational and commercial maturity.

Magali Vaissiere, ESA Director of Telecommunications and Integrated Applications, said:

Eutelsat Quantum is an important programme for both the UK and ESA and a typical example of the success of the ARTES public-private partnership model. Above all, our priority is our industry's health and readiness for the future market challenges, and partnerships like these that improve the competitiveness, competence and business prospects of the companies we support are what we dedicate

our efforts to.

[News story: Scottish yard awarded HMS Queen Elizabeth contract](#)

A Scottish dockyard has been awarded a contract to carry out the first planned dry-dock maintenance of Britain's largest warship, HMS Queen Elizabeth, Defence Minister Stuart Andrew has announced.

The £5 million contract, won by defence company Babcock, will allow the 65,000-tonne carrier to undergo a routine, planned hull survey and maintenance of her underwater systems over a six-week period at the company's Rosyth site.

The work will sustain 100 jobs at its peak and be carried out in the summer.

Defence Minister Stuart Andrew said:

After a phenomenal year of trials off the East Coast of the US, this dry-docking contract is an important step for HMS Queen Elizabeth as she gears up for operations.

The largest ship in our Royal Navy's history, which was assembled in Rosyth, will now return for this multi-million-pound routine maintenance work as she gets set to represent Britain across the world for decades to come.

The dry-docking period will mark the cutting-edge carrier's return to the shipyard where she was built.

Her sister ship, HMS Prince of Wales, is currently undergoing the final stages of construction at the Rosyth yard and was powered up for the first time in November.

She is due to be handed over to the Royal Navy later this year.

Russell Brown, Director Ships Support at Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S), said:

The teams at Defence Equipment and Support are committed to bringing the national flagships into operational service and this

dry docking is a crucial step on that journey.

This significant national enterprise is built upon the excellent relationships across defence and the unparalleled skills within UK industry.

HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales are the largest ships ever built for the Royal Navy.

HMS Queen Elizabeth will resume aviation trials later this year with British-owned F-35s. She is expected to enter operational service in 2020, prior to her first deployment in 2021.