

[News story: Prime Minister's visit to Saudi Arabia and Jordan: April 2017](#)

Prime Minister Theresa May visits Jordan and Saudi Arabia from 3 to 5 April to further strengthen the UK's relationships in the Middle East.

Jordan

On her first visit to Jordan as Prime Minister, Theresa May will visit Amman today, 3 April. The Prime Minister will announce a new UK-Jordan initiative to tackle the terror threat and develop new capabilities to strike at the heart of Daesh, with new support for the Jordanian Air Force. She will confirm a plan to improve co-operation on countering violent extremism in the region.

The Prime Minister will also discuss how the UK can build on our co-operation with Jordan to manage the fallout from the Syrian conflict.

Saudi Arabia

The Prime Minister will visit Saudi Arabia Tuesday 4 April and Wednesday 5 April. She will make clear that they are a close and important ally and that we will continue to work closely in a range of areas, particularly on counter-terrorism where UK-Saudi co-operation is vital.

The Prime Minister is also expected to explore ways of boosting our already very strong trade ties. Saudi Arabia is currently the UK's largest trading partner in the Middle East, with exports of British goods standing at £4.67 billion and services at £1.9 billion in 2015.

Announcements

[News story: Small, local charities set to benefit from fundraising skills training](#)

The Foundation for Social Improvement ([the FSI](#)) has been awarded a grant worth £199,580 to run a two year training programme, helping small, local charities and community groups develop their fundraising skills.

The programme run by the FSI in partnership with [LocalGiving](#), the [Small Charities Coalition](#) and [Charity Finance Group](#), will provide over 5,000 fundraising training opportunities. It will include face-to-face events across the country, webinars and online learning resources, one-to-one advice and consultancy appointments, fundraising campaign planning support, and intensive mentoring matches. Training will be subsidised, helping organisations to take part who may not normally have the resources to attend.

The training will be for small, local charities and community groups with an annual income of up to £1 million, which have a local focus within England.

Minister for Civil Society, Rob Wilson said:

Small, local charities and community groups provide essential support for local people and are the backbone of our communities helping to build a fairer society that benefits everyone, not just the privileged few.

I want to help them be more resilient and sustainable, and this training programme will give them valuable skills so they can continue their vital work helping to support people up and down the country.

Details of the training events will be added to the FSI's website as they become available, with online resources for those who might not be able to attend the training. You can also follow the [FSI on Twitter](#) for latest news and information about the training.

[Press release: HMRC launches new Fraud Hotline](#)

HM Revenue and Customs has launched a new hotline for the public to report fraud and evasion in the fight against tax fraud.

This service will replace the two separate tax evasion and customs hotlines with one, streamlining HMRC's intelligence gathering on tax fraud.

Customers can report all kinds of tax fraud and evasion on the new hotline, including PAYE and National Insurance fraud, undisclosed offshore investments, non-payment of the National Minimum Wage, tax credit fraud, failure to pay UK duty, tax evasion and VAT fraud.

Jennie Granger, HMRC's Director General for Customer Compliance, said:

Information provided by the public is a crucial element of HMRC's work to close the tax gap, so it's vital that the reporting process is as simple and accessible as possible. The HMRC Fraud Hotline will form an important part of our intelligence gathering operations to bring in more money for the Exchequer and the country.

We encourage the public to continue to work with us and report any suspected fraud or evasion to us for investigation.

- The HMRC Fraud Hotline – on 0800 788 887 – is open between 8am – 8pm seven days a week, 365 days a year.
- You can also report online using our digital form available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).
- In the last financial year we received over 113,000 reports from members of the public providing information to the department.
- An audio clip for broadcast can be found [here](#)

Press release: UK Public Health Rapid Support Team appoints first director

Funded by the UK Government, the UK-PHRST is jointly run by Public Health England (PHE) and the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, with Oxford University and King's College London as academic partners.

The UK-PHRST consists of public health experts, scientists, academics and clinicians ready to respond to urgent requests from countries around the world within 48 hours to support them in preventing local disease outbreaks from becoming global epidemics.

When not responding to outbreaks, the UK-PHRST will conduct rigorous research to improve the response to future epidemics. It will also have a strong focus on helping vulnerable low- and middle-income countries develop their own capacity to identify and control disease outbreaks, working with counterparts in developing countries to train and support their responders.

The team will also assist with training a group of public health reservists to maintain the UK's capability to rapidly scale up the response to any disease outbreak or health emergency.

Professor Daniel Bausch, a specialist in emerging infectious diseases trained in internal medicine, infectious diseases, tropical medicine, and public health, will take up the position of Director of the UK-PHRST in April. He has extensive experience in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and Asia

combatting deadly global health threats such as Ebola virus, hantavirus, and SARS coronavirus.

Professor Bausch's most recent role was as the technical lead for the Epidemic Clinical Management Unit in the World Health Organization's (WHO) Pandemic and Epidemic Diseases Department. He is a tenured Professor at the Tulane University Health Sciences Center in the United States and has served as a regular consultant for the WHO, the United Nations and the US National Institutes of Health.

In addition to his expertise in the sciences, Professor Bausch places a strong emphasis on capacity building in all his projects and also has a keen interest in the role of the scientist in promoting health and human rights.

The 2014 Ebola virus crisis in West Africa highlighted the need for the international community to develop a system to help countries respond to and control disease outbreaks that threaten public health before they can develop into global emergencies. The UK-PHRST was established in response to this need as part of the UK's contribution to global health security.

The government has made £20 million available from the UK development assistance budget to fund the team over 5 years. This new capacity reflects the UK's enhanced commitment to being a global leader in public health and science and at the forefront of fighting global threats.

Public Health and Innovation Minister, Nicola Blackwood said:

Deploying emergency support rapidly overseas to investigate disease outbreaks will help save lives and prevent emergencies like the Ebola crisis happening again.

Professor Bausch brings a vital background in tackling epidemics with the United Nations and World Health Organisation. I am confident he will continue the UK's proud tradition of being at the forefront of fighting global threats.

Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive at PHE, said:

Professor Bausch brings a wealth of expertise in dealing with international disease outbreaks. The UK-PHRST will work with countries across the globe to stop the spread of deadly diseases, not only protecting the UK but playing a vital role at the forefront of global public health security.

Professor Peter Piot, Director of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, said:

Professor Bausch's extensive experience means he is ideally placed

to lead the UK-PHRST. He combines expertise in academic research and the practical control of emerging infectious diseases, and has worked around the world, including in West Africa during the recent Ebola epidemic. Under his leadership the team will work to support countries and prevent disease outbreaks from escalating into large epidemics that can devastate societies around the world.

Daniel Bausch, Director of the UK-PHRST, said:

Effective control of outbreaks will require a multi-pronged approach, including innovative solutions to optimise preparedness and emergency response capacities, long-term commitments to strengthen surveillance and response systems in resource-poor areas of the world, and advocacy and action to ensure the universal right to health.

The UK-PHRST represents an opportunity to create a model programme at the forefront of these endeavours, with real impact to limit disease not only overseas but also in the UK.

Current UK-PHRST research projects focus on various elements key to understanding and controlling outbreaks, including in the areas of epidemiology, patient-based research, laboratory science, social science, and mental health and well-being.

Background to Professor Daniel Bausch

Professor Bausch is a tenured professor in the Department of Tropical Medicine at the Tulane University Health Sciences Centre in New Orleans, USA. He has a Masters of Public Health degree in tropical medicine and is a specialist in the research and control of emerging tropical viruses. He has extensive experience working with deadly global health threats, such as SARS coronavirus and Ebola.

Professor Bausch has also held the position of Chief of the Epidemiology Unit of the Viral Special Pathogens Branch at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, USA; Head of the Virology and Emerging Infections Department at the U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit in Lima, Peru; and Technical Lead for the WHO Epidemic Clinical Management Unit in Geneva, Switzerland. He has served as a regular consultant for the WHO, United Nations, and U.S. National Institutes of Health.

Professional achievements

- 1996 to 2003: Medical Officer (and Acting Chief 2001 to 2002), Epidemiology unit, Special Pathogens Branch, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, USA
- 1996 to 2002: Director, CDC Lassa Fever Research Field Station, Guinea, West Africa

- 2001 to 2003: Commander, Public Health Service Commissioned Corps
- 2002: Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service, Uganda Ebola Outbreak Response Team, DHHS
- 2002, 2003: Foreign duty service awards, Public Health Service
- 2003 to present: Professor with tenure, Department of Tropical Medicine, Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine
- 2004 to 2009: Senior medical-technical coordinator, WHO Mano River Union Lassa Fever Network
- 2004: Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service, SARS Outbreak Response Team (Vietnam), DHHS
- 2011 to 2015: Head of Virology and Emerging Infections Department, U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit No 6, Lima, Peru

Background to the UK-PHRST

The UK-PHRST continually monitors infectious diseases and other hazards globally, identifying situations where the deployment of specialist expertise could mitigate these threats.

Informed by surveillance data, the UK-PHRST will be able to deploy on behalf of UK Government in response to requests from low- and middle-income countries, as well as with the WHO and the Global Outbreak and Response Network (GOARN).

The deployable team includes experts in:

- tracking the progress of an outbreak (epidemiologists)
- diagnosing the cause of an outbreak (microbiologists)
- advising on outbreak control measures (infection prevention and control) and community responses to outbreaks (social scientists)
- developing the best clinical response measures (clinical researchers)

The core team consists of:

- epidemiologists
- clinical researcher
- social scientist
- microbiologist
- data manager, analyst and systems expert
- infection prevention and control expert
- logistician

The core team will be backed by a reservist team who will be trained to UK-PHRST standards and protocols but will have routine 'day jobs' in their employing organisation.

Press release: New Counter-Extremism Taskforce to help tackle extremism behind bars

The specialist taskforce will analyse intelligence compiled by about 100 counter-terrorism experts working across the country to assess the threat posed by radicalisation in prisons.

It will advise prisons in England and Wales on how to deal with specific threats, as well as instruct and train prison and probation staff on how best to deter offenders from being lured into extremism.

The unit – jointly formed between HM Prisons and Probation Service and the Home Office – is being brought forward as part of the Prison Safety and Reform White Paper. It will work closely with the police and other enforcement agencies, and builds on progress already made in addressing extremism.

This includes increased training for prison governors and staff, more resources to identify and remove extremist literature in prisons and holding the most dangerous extremists in specialist units in the high security estate instead of within the general prison population.

Prisons Minister Sam Gyimah said: > > Extremism is a danger to society and a threat to public safety. It is right we come together to bolster our response to the threats posed by radicalisation behind bars, and give our hard-working staff the skills and knowledge they need to keep our prisons and communities safe. > > This new team will lead this strand of important work to help combat and defeat terrorist threats posed by offenders in the prison estate and in the community. By countering the poisonous and repugnant activities of extremists, we will help ensure the safe running of our prisons and keep the public safe. >

The taskforce is being launched on 3 April 2017 and boosts the current team carrying out work in this area. It will be the nerve centre for all counter-terrorism and counter-extremist work across the prison estate and probation service.

Specialist staff will gather and exploit evidence gleaned from frontline staff – work essential to the safe running of prisons and fundamental to public protection.

Experts will also advise on the management of dangerous and high-profile extremist prisoners, and train frontline prison and probation staff so they are equipped to deal with extremist behaviour.

A strategy centre based in London will be supported by specialist regional teams across the country – ensuring resources are focused on addressing the

most serious risks.

The new unit will build on last year's formation of a new directorate for Security, Order and Counter-Terrorism – responsible for monitoring and dealing with this evolving threat.

Governors have also been instructed to ban extremist literature and to remove anyone from communal worship who is promoting anti-British beliefs or other dangerous views.

A new training package to identify, report and combat extremism is being rolled out to all prison officers and new pre-employment vetting checks for chaplains were introduced in February 2017.