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The Foreign Secretary travels to Iran to hold talks with the Iranian government.

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Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt will visit Iran for the first time today (19

November). He will hold talks with the Iranian government on the future of the nuclear deal, Iran's role in the conflicts in Syria and Yemen, and the ongoing cases of detained British-Iranian dual nationals.

This week's visit will be the first by a western Foreign Minister to Iran since the US withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal. The Foreign Secretary will meet Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif and other senior figures. He will stress that the UK remains committed to the nuclear deal as long as Iran sticks to its terms, and discuss European efforts to maintain nuclear-related sanctions relief.

The Foreign Secretary will also use his meetings to press Iran to improve its human rights record. In particular, he will call for the immediate release of detained British-Iranian dual nationals where there are humanitarian grounds to do so.

The Foreign Secretary will also discuss Yemen, and underline our deep concern at reports – documented by the UN Panel of Experts – that Iran has supplied ballistic missiles and weapons to the Houthis, in violation of Security Council Resolutions. This is destabilising and contrary to efforts to diplomatic efforts to end the conflict. At this point it is important that all countries support the UN Envoy's efforts to convene talks between the parties in Stockholm.

Speaking ahead of the visit, Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

More than anything, we must see those innocent British-Iranian dual nationals imprisoned in Iran returned to their families in Britain. I have just heard too many heartbreaking stories from families who have been forced to endure a terrible separation. So I arrive in Iran with a clear message for the country's leaders: putting innocent people in prison cannot and must not be used as a tool of diplomatic leverage.

Of the Iran nuclear deal, he will say:

The Iran nuclear deal remains a vital component of stability in the Middle East by eliminating the threat of a nuclearised Iran. It needs 100% compliance though to survive. We will stick to our side of the bargain as long as Iran does. But we also need to see an end to destabilising activity by Iran in the rest of the region if we are going to tackle the root causes of the challenges the region faces.

Further information

News story: Health technology expert panel meets for the first time

IT experts, clinicians and academics will come together at the first meeting of the Healthtech Advisory Board today (19 November 2018) to help guide the government on its mission to transform technology in the NHS.

The board will look at how the NHS can harness the potential of technology and create a culture of innovation, with the aim of improving patient outcomes and reducing the workload on NHS staff.

The board will report directly to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. Its role will include:

- assisting in policy creation
- challenging decision making
- acting as a sounding board for new ideas

Dr Ben Goldacre will chair the board. He is a clinician, academic and author who runs the DataLab at the University of Oxford. Dr Goldacre will be joined by:

- Rachel Dunscombe – CEO of the NHS Digital Academy and Director of Digital for Salford Royal NHS Group
- Nicole Junkermann – founder of NJF Holdings, an international finance and investment company
- Manoj Badale – co-founder of Blenheim Chalcot, a digital venture builder
- David Gann – Professor of Innovation and Technology Management at Imperial College London
- Sir Mark Walport – Chief Executive of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)
- Nicola Blackwood – Chair of the Human Tissue Authority
- Roger Taylor – Chair of Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation
- Daniel Korski CBE – co-founder and CEO of PUBLIC, a venture capital firm
- Michelle Brennan – company group chair for Johnson & Johnson Medical Devices Companies
- Dan Sheldon – Head of Digital at Well Pharmacy
- Jeni Tennison – CEO of the Open Data Institute
- Parker Moss – health technology entrepreneur in residence at F-Prime and Eight Roads

The board will meet every quarter to help guide the government on its mission to overhaul technology and IT in health and social care.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

I want the UK to have the most advanced HealthTech ecosystem in the world. That starts with improving the technology and IT systems in the NHS and creating a culture of innovation so patients can benefit from cutting-edge treatments while reducing the workload of

staff.

The new future-focused HealthTech Advisory Board will bring together tech experts, clinicians and academics to identify where change needs to happen and be an ideas hub for how we can improve patient outcomes and to make the lives of NHS staff easier.

Chair of the board Ben Goldacre said:

I am delighted that Matt Hancock has created this board to inject challenge and diverse expertise around better use of data, evidence and technology in healthcare.

I hope we can bring positive change for staff and patients, and realise the Tech Vision with a cutting-edge 21st century NHS. Medicine is driven by information: better use of data can revolutionise health care.