Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

This week at the Foreign Office

2012-11-30

UN Resolution on Palestine

The Foreign Secretary explained that the UK abstained from voting on the

UN resolution to recognise Palestine

as a non-member observer state because certain assurances were not received. The Foreign secretary said “We will redouble our efforts to restart the peace process, and will continue our strong support for President Abbas, the Palestinian Authority, and a two state solution”

Preventing sexual violence in conflict.

The foreign office is participating in

16 days of activism

against gender-based violence from 25 November – 10 December, highlighting numerous issues around sexual violence in conflict. The UK has set up a specialist team of experts that will be deployed to conflict areas to support UN missions and local civil society to investigate allegations of sexual violence, gather evidence and help build the capabilities of other nations. This week the Foreign Secretary met with a

steering group of experts

on this issue who are advising the Foreign Office in this area of work.

UN General Assembly resolutions on human rights

The UK welcomed several UN resolutions on human rights this week. The Foreign Secretary welcomed the

UN resolution on the human right situation in Syria

saying: “The widespread and systematic human rights violations being committed by the Syrian regime and its militia are absolutely appalling and deserve the strongest condemnation.”

The

UN resolution on Iran

was welcomed by Foreign Office Minister Alistair Burt. He said: “The overwhelming number of votes in support represents a clear statement by the international community that this situation is unacceptable and should be condemned.”

The UK welcomed the resolution on the human rights situation in the

Democratic People’s Republic of Korea

(DPRK) which said that although there had been progress there continue to be reports of widespread and systematic violations of human rights in DPRK. The resolution called upon the DPRK to immediately put an end to systematic, widespread and grave violations of human rights.

Kuwait

The Foreign Secretary met the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister who was here for the Emir of Kuwait’s state visit. The two ministers chaired the first meeting of the

UK-Kuwait joint steering group

to strengthen ties between in important areas like trade and foreign and security policy.

Bahrain

Foreign Office Minister

Alistair Burt spoke to Bahrain opposition members

to discuss the current situation in Bahrain. He reiterated the UK’s support for the Declaration of Non-Violence that was launched earlier this month by Al Wefaq and five other political societies, and said “It is an important confidence-building measure and I encourage other leaders in Bahrain to declare publicly their support for this initiative.”

Also this week

The Foreign Secretary updated parliament on HMN coroner’s verdict on the death of Alan McMenemy.

The Foreign Office published its call for evidence on the foreign policy aspects of the balance of Competences Review.

Minister Lidington updated parliament about progress on making a collection of colonial administration files available to the public.

The Prime Minister and The First Minister of Scotland sent messages for St Andrew’s Day.

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/this-week-at-the-foreign-office