Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

Foreign Secretary summons Russian and Iranian Ambassadors

2016-12-15

The Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson has summoned Russian Ambassador Yakovenko and Iranian Ambassador Baedinejad to the Foreign Office this afternoon to discuss the situation in Syria. In two separate meetings, the Foreign Secretary made clear the British Government's concern over the actions of Iran and Russia in Syria.

Following the meetings Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

I summoned the Russian and Iranian Ambassadors to the Foreign Office in order to convey in person the Government's profound concern over the situation in Aleppo.

Both Russia and Iran have failed to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law, specifically by failing to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to civilians during the months when eastern Aleppo was besieged.

They deserve no credit for the fact that an evacuation appears to be underway today. Having inflicted such suffering on the people of eastern Aleppo, Iran and Russia cannot expect praise for allowing some people to escape at the final hour. Both countries need to ensure the UN now oversees the evacuation process and that all civilians and non-combatants are properly protected.

The Foreign Secretary set out the vital importance of protecting civilians. He voiced deep concern at the reports of executions; ambulances being shot at, disappearances by pro-regime forces and how the Russian and Iranian governments were prolonging the suffering of the Syrian people through their support for the Syrian regime.

The Foreign Secretary made clear that only a negotiated political settlement will bring peace to the people of Syria.

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