Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

Minister for the Middle East statement following meeting with Syrian Opposition

2018-01-16

Minister for the Middle East Alistair Burt said:

The UK continues to play a leading role in response to the tragedy in Syria. We have committed nearly £2.5 billion to our humanitarian response to the crisis.

I am alarmed that in spite of commitments to de-escalation the regime and its backers continue to bomb and shell opposition areas in eastern Ghouta and Idlib. In recent weeks these regime offensives have killed hundreds of civilians, displaced tens of thousands, and destroyed hospitals and other civilian infrastructure. These attacks must stop.

After nearly seven years of conflict and over 400,000 deaths, it is abundantly clear that only a political settlement can bring a durable end to the human suffering and the regional instability the conflict fuels.

Along with our international partners, the UK supports the efforts of the UN-mediated Geneva process as we believe this is the best way of reaching a lasting political settlement to end the conflict. We commend the constructive engagement by Nasser Hariri and the Syrian opposition in the latest round of Geneva talks and call on the Syrian regime to likewise engage constructively and agree to direct talks.

Further information

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