Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

Strengthening the Iraq-Britain partnership

2012-07-10

After the meeting they issued the following statement:

“Following yesterday’s re-opening of the Iraqi embassy in London which marks another important step in Iraq’s re-emergence on to the international stage; we reinforced today our commitment to continue to strengthen UK-Iraqi bilateral relations. We are determined to forge a close and strong relationship across a wide range of shared priorities: politics, economics, trade, education and culture. We share the vision of a democratic, secure and prosperous Iraq, playing an important role in the region.

“Following Iraq’s successful hosting of the Arab League Summit in Baghdad earlier this year, and also the more recent E3+3 talks with Iran, we are determined to work together to help bring stability and prosperity to the region. A stronger Iraq will mean a stronger Middle East.

“We share deep concerns over the worsening plight of all Syrian people as the situation in Syria continues to deteriorate. We are united in our condemnation of all violence in the country, including the increasing acts of terrorism. We reiterate our call for the Syrian regime to meet its commitments to the full implementation of the six-point plan drawn up by Kofi Annan and the League of Arab States. It is vital that that the international community unites to help solve the problems of Syria through an orderly, democratic political transition and to prevent them from spreading to other countries in the region.

“Cooperation between Iraq and Britain, particularly on trade and investment has steadily grown in recent years. In response the British Government already has plans underway to open a visa application centre in Baghdad during the autumn, and is committed to taking forward joint work on the technical aspects of resuming direct flights between the UK and Iraq. Together these will help to improve Iraqi and British business engagement. But there is more we can do and more that we want to do. Developing our trade and commercial links is an absolute priority and should reflect the ambition of both British and Iraqi businesses. Iraq is opening its doors to the world, offering opportunities across a range of sectors, including energy and infrastructure. British companies have a worldwide reputation for excellence and we want British businesses to help Iraq in its continued development and economic growth. Whilst we share this ambition, we also want to work collaboratively to ensure economic conditions in Iraq enable businesses to operate fairly and competitively. This means continued improvement in governance, transparency, accountability and of course security.

“Let us not forget at this time the sacrifices made by all those who have brought Iraq her freedom. Iraq’s recent history has, or course, been challenging. As the dreadful attacks last week show, some of those challenges remain. We stand shoulder to shoulder in condemning the continued acts of violence by cowards determined to destabilise Iraq and cause huge devastation to innocent civilians. We remain resolute in our belief that there is no place for terrorism anywhere in the world and will continue to support efforts to improve security in Iraq and the region.

“Strengthening the Iraq-Britain partnership is our long term goal and we look forward to furthering our cooperation in the coming months and years.”

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/strengthening-the-iraq-britain-partnership