Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

This week at the Foreign Office

2012-01-20

This week

the Foreign Secretary urged bold steps in the Middle East peace talks

when he discussed recent developments with Palestinian President Abbas.

The Foreign Secretary promised long-term

UK commitment to Brazil

while on a two day visit to the country. He marked the beginning of an ‘ambitious’ effort to strengthen ties with Latin America, saying that: “

The days of Britain’s retreat from Latin America are over

”. The Foreign Secretary also confirmed that HRH Prince Harry will visit Brazil in March.

On Friday the Foreign Secretary attended the UK Caribbean forum. Ahead of the meeting the Foreign Secretary said it is

time for a renewed and invigorated relationship

, updated for the 21st Century.

Tuesday marked 100 years since Scott’s arrival at the South Pole.

Prime Minister David Cameron sent a message to polar scientists

and the Foreign Secretary added a guest post to his Facebook page from

Sir Ranulph Fiennes

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Minister Alistair Burt has called on Iran to urgently review all new cases involving death sentences

, and arrests contrary to human rights obligations. Speaking today, Alistair Burt said: “I am deeply concerned by a new wave of executions and arrests in Iran.

“There are reports that Iran has already executed around 50 people this year, some of them in grotesque public displays. This continues a shocking trend of excessive use of the death penalty that has been condemned by the United Nations.”

The

latest update to the human rights countries of concern

was published by the Foreign Office this week. These updates cover the period from October to December.

In

a short film

published this week, Foreign Secretary William Hague, Foreign Office Minister Jeremy Browne, Lord Coe and Paralympians Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson and Chris Holmes discuss their hopes for Britain in 2012.

Next week

Foreign Ministers will meet in Brussels

to discuss further EU sanctions on Iran and Syria. On 18 January Foreign Office Minister Alistair Burt met the

Syrian Kurdish political leader Dr Abdul Hakeem Bashar

. He reiterated the need for the Syrian opposition to come together to help define a shared vision for a future Syria where the political system is inclusive, representative and adheres to international human rights standards.

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/this-week-at-the-foreign-office--69