This week at the Foreign Office

2012-12-14

Syria

The Foreign Secretary outlined the

immediate priorities for the Friends of the Syrian People

at the meeting in Marrakesh this week. He said “Syria needs a political transition leading to an inclusive new government, with full executive authority. This is the course most likely to achieve stability in the country.”

International Human Rights Day

On International Human Rights Day Baroness Warsi launched the

UK’s campaign for election to the Human Rights Council

. She said: “We believe in a Human Rights Council that can make its voice heard, even when the issues are unpopular or difficult to hear.” The Foreign Office marked

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence

ending on Monday with a

guest post from Dr. Helen Pankhurst

from CARE international.

Foreign Office website moves to GOV.UK

On Thursday the

Foreign Office began publishing its news

, speeches, policy, publications and corporate information on GOV.UK – the single home for all government services and information. Our travel advice and consular information, and our Embassy and High Commission websites will follow by March 2013.

Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK)

The Foreign Secretary

condemned the DPRK’s satellite launch

on Wednesday saying that the launch was a clear violation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874 because it involved the testing of ballistic missile technology. The Permanent Under Secretary,

summoned the DPRK’s Ambassador

in London to the Foreign Office to make clear to the UK’s condemnation of the DPRK’s actions.

Parental Child Abduction

New figures revealed that the number of parental child abduction cases dealt with by the Foreign Office has risen by 88% in under a decade. The child abduction section at the Foreign office launched a

campaign to increase understanding of the issue

.

Jordan

On Tuesday

the Foreign Secretary met His Majesty King Abdullah of Jordan

they discussed the situation in Syria, the Middle East Peace Process and institute reforms in Jordan that would bring about greater political participation, transparency and economic opportunity.

Iran

Foreign Office Minister Alistair Burt said that the Iranian investigation into the death of the blogger Sattar Beheshti whilst in custody had

failed to deliver justice

. The Minister said: “The bruises on his body – which the authorities have abjectly failed to explain – are almost certainly a result of mistreatment and brutality that he – like so many others – suffered in detention.”

Also this week

Foreign Office Minister David Lidington set out the

UK’s commitment to EU enlargement to all countries of the Western Balkans, Iceland and Turkey

.

Foreign Office Minister for Africa Mark Simmonds called for

an immediate return to civilian rule in Mali

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Foreign Office Minister Alistair Burt visited Libya to strengthen

UK relations with the new Libyan government

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Minister for Africa Marks Simmonds

hailed Ghana as a ‘beacon of democracy’

following successful elections.

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/this-week-at-the-foreign-office--104