Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

Foreign Secretary in Brussels for talks with EU Foreign Ministers

2017-07-17

Foreign Secretary speaks to media after the Council meeting

Foreign Secretary departs the EU Foreign Affairs Council

On departing the EU Foreign Affairs Council, Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson, said:

We got a very good agreement on sanctions against those who are responsible for chemical weapons attacks in Syria, and I was very pleased to see that 8 individuals, 8 people involved in the technical work on chemical weapons, have been sanctioned so their movements will be restricted and their assets frozen. You may remember that we started this. The UK has been playing a role in this for months and people have been sceptical about the ability of the EU to focus on this and so I'm very glad to see that.

Some tough words on the DPRK, on North Korea. There are some people who think we should engage early with Pyongyang, we absolutely disagree with that. They've got to make serious moves to de-nuclearising their country before it is right for us to begin a proper dialogue and I'm glad that the Council conclusions reflected that.

Foreign Secretary speaks to media ahead of the Council meeting

EU Foreign Affairs Council - July 2017

On arriving at the EU Foreign Affairs Council, Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson, said:

We are going to be talking about sanctions against those who have been involved in a series of chemical weapons attacks in Syria and I'm very pleased to say that this is one of the things that the UK government has been talking about for many months. There's been a series of chemical weapon attacks, the latest of which was the barbaric attack in Khan Shaykhun on April 4.

What the Foreign Affairs Council will be agreeing today is that 16 named individuals will be sanctioned, their movements will be restricted, their assets will be frozen. They are military technical personnel, which shows the resolve of the UK and the rest of our friends in Europe in dealing with those who are responsible for chemical weapons attacks.

We will be also discussing the continuing crisis in North Korea. On the Testing of the ICBM that we saw recently, we remain absolutely determined to try to get the North Koreans to see sense and to continue to put pressure on the regime in Pyongyang. We think the best way to do that is to put pressure on the Chinese. We are seeing some progress there but a lot more to be done.

Further information

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