Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

Foreign Secretary discusses Syria and Egypt with Qatari Foreign Minister

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The Foreign Secretary today met the Foreign Minister of Qatar, Dr Al Attiyah, at Lancaster House. They had a wide ranging discussion, focusing in particular on Egypt and Syria. They reaffirmed the warm bilateral relationship between the UK and Qatar and discussed how both countries could build on the existing cooperation in sport, culture, defence, education, trade and investment and energy. The Foreign Secretary also highlighted the success of the Qatar - UK 2013 year of cultural exchange.

Speaking this afternoon, Foreign Secretary William Hague said:

It was a pleasure to welcome Dr Al Attiyah to London on his first official visit to the UK as Foreign Minister. The UK’s strong relationship with Qatar is based on trust and mutual friendship. We share deep concern about events in the region, particularly the crisis in Syria and the political turmoil in Egypt.

On Syria, we agreed that the UN team on the ground should be given urgent and immediate access to investigate the alarming reports of a chemical weapons attack. A political solution is the only way out of the bloodshed. We will continue to support the Syrian National Coalition to achieve a political resolution, and to respond to the humanitarian crisis affecting millions of Syrian civilians.

On Egypt, we agreed that leaders on all sides must urgently reduce the risk of further violence and renew efforts to de-escalate the situation through inclusive political dialogue. We will continue to work with international partners to support a political solution, one which ensures the Egyptian people can achieve the long term security and prosperity they deserve.

Further information

This year we are celebrating the friendship between Qatar and the United Kingdom. We hope that UK-Qatar 2013 will foster cultural exchanges between our two countries and develop future opportunities for collaboration in the arts, sport, science and education. For details please visit the

Qatar UK 2013 website

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