Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

# This week at the Foreign Office

2012-06-29

**Syria

**EU member states agreed a

new round of sanctions against the Syrian regime

this week. The Foreign Secretary said:

“This sixteenth round of sanctions against banking, military and state media entities sends an unequivocal message that we will intensify the pressure until the Assad regime ends the killing and implements Annan’s six-point plan in full.”

The Foreign Secretary also

welcomed the announcement of an Action Group meeting

on Syria, and

met with Arab League Secretary General Dr Nabil al-Araby

on Wednesday to discuss the crisis.

The EU agreed that the

oil ban

against

Iran

will come into force on 1 July.

**Egypt

**The Prime Minister David Cameron and the Foreign Secretary both

congratulated the Egyptian people for their commitment to the democratic process and President Mohamed Mursi on his election victory.

The Prime Minister underlined the importance of swiftly establishing a government that reflects the breadth of political forces within the new Egypt and agreement over a new Constitution through an inclusive and transparent process.

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European Union

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Minister for Europe David Lidington spoke about the EU Common Security and Defence Policy

at the British Embassy in Paris on Wednesday. He also attended a meeting of the

UK and German European Affairs Committees

with German Minister of State Michael Link.

**Overseas Territories

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The UK Government published its

White Paper, The Overseas Territories: Security, Success and Sustainability

, on Thursday. The Foreign Secretary said:

“The White Paper is the first review of the Overseas Territories since 1999 and it demonstrates the importance the Coalition Government attaches to the Overseas Territories.”

Also this week

Foreign Office Minister Jeremy Browne marked International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.

The Foreign Secretary updated Parliament on the progress made in Afghanistan in May.

Minister of State Lord Howell urged the Government of Bahrain to increase the pace of reform and ensure the human rights of all Bahraini citizens are fully respected.

The FCO released new figures on the number of British Nationals arrested overseas in the past year.

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