

Press release: Defence Secretary strengthens UK-Qatar Defence relationship

During a visit to the Gulf state today, Sir Michael Fallon and his Qatari counterpart, Khalid bin Mohammed al Attiyah, signed a Statement of Intent concerning Qatar's proposed purchase of 24 Typhoon aircraft.

The UK and Qatar share a close and longstanding Defence relationship, and today's Statement of Intent further reinforces this, deepening military cooperation between the two, and the opportunity to further enhance the security of all partners in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

After a number of years of negotiations between our two countries, I am delighted to have been able to sign today with Qatar's Defence Minister, this Statement of Intent on the purchase of 24 Typhoon aircraft by Qatar.

This will be the first major defence contract with Qatar, one of the UK's strategic partners. This is an important moment in our defence relationship and the basis for even closer defence co-operation between our two countries. We also hope that this will help enhance security within the region across all Gulf allies and enhance Typhoon interoperability across the GCC.

The security of the GCC, of all Gulf countries, is critical to the UK's own security.

The UK and Qatar share mutual Defence interests, including countering violent extremism, and ensuring peace and stability in the region.

Not only will the purchase of Typhoon aircraft further strengthen this strong bilateral relationship, it will benefit Qatar's military capability, and increase security co-operation and interoperability between the UK and Qatar and other GCC Typhoon partners.

The Typhoon is a multi-role combat aircraft that has long-term potential to be at the forefront of air power for many years, and today's Statement of Intent demonstrates continued confidence in Typhoon and British manufacturing.

In addition to supporting Royal Air Force operations protecting the UK in the skies above Britain and globally, the Typhoon has already been purchased by eight nations around the world.