

# Press release: Foreign Office Minister visits Riyadh

Minister for the Middle East Alistair Burt visited Riyadh for bilateral meetings with the Governments of Saudi Arabia and Yemen (Sunday 15 October 2017).

In meetings during the visit, including with Foreign Minister Al Jubeir, Mr Burt highlighted common UK-Gulf security interests and discussed a range of issues. These included UK support for Vision 2030, the need to redouble efforts to end the war in Yemen, and the tensions with Qatar.

Mr Burt discussed the dire humanitarian and economic situation in Yemen with President Hadi and Foreign Minister Mekhlafi.

Speaking after his visit to Riyadh, Minister Burt said:

Saudi Arabia is one of our strongest regional allies and we continue to work closely together in a range of important areas. We support the delivery of Saudi Arabia's ambitious reform programme, Vision 2030, and the need to resolve the ongoing dispute with Qatar.

Central to all of my meetings was the ongoing conflict in Yemen. I made clear my concern that this conflict was now contributing to the largest humanitarian crisis in the world, and that the longer it continued the worse the situation would get. I also stressed the importance of keeping space open for the humanitarian community. Everyone agrees that urgent steps must be taken to make progress towards a political solution. The UK is playing a central role in these efforts and I call upon all parties to the conflict to show the flexibility required to keep the political process moving.

## **Further information**