

Press release: Foreign Secretary to meet Gulf counterparts to discuss ongoing regional tensions

The Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson will meet a number of his Gulf counterparts this week, as foreign ministers engage with allies on the tensions in the region.

Reflecting the UK's close friendship with all of the Gulf states, this morning (Monday 12 June) he met the Qatari Foreign Minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani. Later this week, the Foreign Secretary will hold talks with the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

In all meetings, the Foreign Secretary will urge his counterparts to take immediate steps to de-escalate the current tensions and find a rapid resolution through mediation. He will say that it is in the interests of the wider region as well as the UK that a swift solution is found. He also will express the UK's concern that collective action by the other Gulf states is having an adverse impact on the lives of ordinary people in Qatar.

At this morning's bilateral with Sheikh Mohammed, the Foreign Secretary urged Qatar to engage with neighbours on their concerns and do more to address support for extremist groups, building on the steps already taken.

After the meeting, the Foreign Secretary said:

I have been in touch with my counterparts across the region about the current tensions with Qatar. I have urged all sides to refrain from any further escalation and to engage in mediation efforts. In that regard I pay tribute to the work of the Amir of Kuwait.

In finding a resolution, I call on Qatar to take seriously their neighbours' concerns. Qatar is a partner of the UK in the fight against terrorism but they urgently need to do more to address support for extremist groups, building on the steps they have already taken to tackle funding to those groups.

I am also concerned by some of the strong actions which Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt and Bahrain have taken against an important partner, and urge them to ease the blockade on Qatar. I call on all states to take immediate steps to de-escalate the situation and to find a rapid resolution through mediation.

Further information