

# UK welcomes journalists from across the Middle East for second UK Arab Commentators Forum

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has welcomed journalists and media commentators from across the Middle East and North Africa to its second UK Arab Commentators Forum, as part of the UK's commitment to ever-increasing ties with partners in the region. This year's Forum represents a key moment in revitalised collaboration and dialogue between the UK Government and MENA media professionals.

The Forum brings participants together from the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Tunisia, Libya, Sudan, Morocco, Yemen and the OPTs.

Participants will gain an insight into the social, economic, cultural, and political structures of the United Kingdom. They will also participate in academic seminars highlighting current trends and challenges in the media profession, including digital approaches to news and information.

The FCO is partnering with Cardiff University School of Journalism to deliver workshops and seminars that address current issues that affect media institutions and government.

Minister for the Middle East and North Africa James Cleverly said:

It was a pleasure to meet journalists and commentators from across the Middle East and North Africa for the UK Arab Commentators Forum. The UK remains an active and responsible global player, championing our values and mobilising global action on the issues that matter to us all – from conflict and climate change to human rights and free trade.

We organise this gathering not only to recognise the importance of journalism, and to emphasise our support for media freedom, but also to help strengthen the relationships between us. We value our friendships across the region.

Executive Director for Government Communications Alex Aiken said:

I am delighted that we are hosting influential commentators from across the Middle East and North Africa and look forward to our continued collaboration together. I hope that the programme of events and masterclasses will play a role in building our collective understanding of global issues such as tackling disinformation and countering terrorism.

Richard Sambrook, Professor of Journalism and Director of the Centre for Journalism at Cardiff School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies, said:

Cardiff University is delighted to partner with the FCO in hosting this forum and sharing our expertise in Journalism and Media. It is increasingly important that we all share our insights in an increasingly complex international media environment.

## **Further information**