

# Minister for the Middle East visits Tehran

Dr Murrison had meetings with senior Iranian government representatives, including Vice President Masoumeh Ebtekar, Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, the Chairman of the Strategic Council of Foreign Relations Dr Kamal Kharazi, and the Deputy Head of the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran Behrouz Kamalvandi.

The UK has an important ongoing diplomatic dialogue with Iran; this was the third UK ministerial visit in 12 months. At this time of heightened tensions, the UK continues to use all diplomatic tools available to us to prevent escalation and miscalculation.

The Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa, Dr Andrew Murrison, said:

This visit has provided an important opportunity for open, frank and constructive engagement with the Iranian Government.

In Tehran I was clear about the UK's long-held concerns over Iran's activities in the region.

I reiterated the UK's assessment that Iran almost certainly bears responsibility for recent attacks on tankers in the Gulf of Oman. Such activity, which carries a high risk of miscalculation, needs to stop to allow for immediate de-escalation of rising tensions.

And I was clear that the UK will continue to play its full part alongside international partners to find diplomatic solutions to reduce the current tensions.

I reiterated the UK's determination to maintain the nuclear deal which is in our shared security interests. I was clear that Iran must continue to meet its commitments under the deal in full – including the limits imposed on its low-enriched uranium stockpile.

While in Tehran, I also pressed again on behalf of the UK Government for the urgent and unconditional release of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and all British-Iranian dual nationals who are being arbitrarily detained.

## **Further Information**