

PM to warn of 'far reaching consequences' of Russian invasion on Gulf visit

- Prime Minister to travel to the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia today
- One-day visit is part of UK efforts to ensure coordinated international action on Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine
- PM will also discuss energy security in the region, as Saudi alfanar group confirms £1bn investment in Teesside green aviation fuel project

The Prime Minister will meet leaders in Abu Dhabi and Riyadh today [Wednesday 16th] for talks on energy, regional security and humanitarian relief, as he galvanises global action on the crisis in Ukraine.

He will meet Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed in the United Arab Emirates before travelling to Saudi Arabia to meet Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. The Prime Minister will discuss the importance of allies working together to increase the diplomatic and economic pressure on President Putin's regime and minimise the global fallout from the conflict.

The leaders are expected to discuss efforts to improve energy security and reduce volatility in energy and food prices, which is affecting businesses and consumers in the UK as well as regional stability in the Middle East. In addition to potential further measures to increase oil production, the Prime Minister is focused on diversifying the UK's energy supply and working with international partners to ramp up renewables.

Saudi Arabia, for example, is the third largest supplier of diesel to the UK, but the Kingdom also committed to net zero by 2060 ahead of COP26 and is investing heavily in green technology at home and in the UK.

As part of today's visit, Saudi Arabia's alfanar group will confirm a new £1 billion investment in the Lighthouse Green Fuels Project in Teesside, aiming to be the first company to produce sustainable aviation fuel from waste at scale in the UK. The project is expected to create more than 700 jobs during construction starting next year and around 240 full-time jobs once it is fully operational. Aviation fuel generated by the plant has the potential to produce 80 percent less greenhouse gas than its fossil fuel equivalent.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

The brutal and unprovoked assault President Putin has unleashed on Ukraine will have far-reaching consequences for the world, well beyond Europe's borders.

The UK is building an international coalition to deal with the new

reality we face. The world must wean itself off Russian hydrocarbons and starve Putin's addiction to oil and gas.

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are key international partners in that effort. We will work with them to ensure regional security, support the humanitarian relief effort and stabilise global energy markets for the longer term.

Today's funding announcement follows a commitment last year by Saudi firm SABIC to invest up to an additional £850 million to reopen their hydrocarbons 'cracker' at Wilton and decarbonise their operations in the north-east of England. The Prime Minister is expected to visit SABIC's innovation centre in Riyadh and meet representatives from the alfanar group. Through our Sovereign Investment Partnership, since 2021 the UAE has already invested in excess of £3bn across life sciences, technology, infrastructure in the UK – as well as a multi-billion pound investment from BP and ADNOC in clean hydrogen hubs.

The Prime Minister will also discuss shared strategic priorities with the leaders of the UAE and Saudi Arabia, including the situation in Iran and Yemen, increased security cooperation, trade and investment and supporting human rights and civil society.

The UAE and Saudi Arabia are the UK's two largest economic partners in the Middle East, with bilateral trade worth £12.2bn and £10.4bn in 2020 respectively. The UK is preparing for negotiations on a trade deal with the wider Gulf Cooperation Council, which will boost our trade and investment with the whole region.