

[Morad Tahbaz: Lord Ahmad's statement, 26 October 2022](#)

Press release

Foreign Office Minister Lord Ahmad has called on Iran to release Morad Tahbaz.



Lord Ahmad said:

The Tahbaz family have confirmed that Morad has been returned to Evin prison by the Iranian authorities. By continuing his horrendous ordeal with these cruel tactics, Iran sends a clear message to the international community that Iran does not deliver on its commitments.

We call on Iran to release Morad so he may re-join family in Tehran immediately. We will continue to work closely with our US partners to hold Iran to account, and to secure Morad's permanent release and departure from Iran.

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[Secretary of State says education key to marking 25th anniversary of Belfast Good Friday Agreement](#)

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Chris Heaton-Harris has met with young people at Queen's University Belfast as he discussed plans to mark the 25th anniversary of the Belfast Good Friday Agreement in 2023.

Mr Heaton-Harris was welcomed today (Wednesday 26 October) by Queen's University Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian Greer, who discussed the university's upcoming programme of events to mark the anniversary. This includes a major international conference organised jointly with the [Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice](#), at

Queen's.

Speaking with students as he visited One Elmwood, Queen's University's new Student Centre and Students' Union, the Secretary of State highlighted the vital role which education plays in improving understanding and recognition of the transformative role that the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement has played, and continues to play, in Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK.

He stated: "The 25th anniversary of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement marks an extraordinary achievement for Northern Ireland, with the Agreement helping to lay the foundation of a more peaceful and prosperous Northern Ireland that we see today.

"I'm delighted to hear about Queen's University Belfast's programme, and to discuss with young people what the anniversary means to them – they are key to safeguarding the benefits of the Agreement for the next generation.

"This anniversary moment provides us with a great opportunity to ensure that young people in Northern Ireland, and across the entirety of the UK, are well informed and can fully engage with the progress that has been made since the signing of the Agreement.

Queen's University's President and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ian Greer, said:

"Queen's University Belfast is honoured to be the host the signature event to mark the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Good Friday Agreement.

"With current world leaders, as well as architects of the original Agreement, coming to Belfast to mark the anniversary it is fitting that it takes place in an institution which places social and civic responsibility at the heart of what it does.

"In partnership with the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice, the three day conference will offer a unique opportunity to both reflect on the achievements of the Agreement and to discuss the challenges and solutions needed to drive forward a peaceful and prosperous future for the region."

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[Defence Secretary meets Turkish](#)

counterpart at SAHA Expo in Istanbul

Press release

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace met with his Turkish counterpart Defence Minister Hulusi Akar in Istanbul.



- Defence Secretary Ben Wallace met his Turkish counterpart Minister Akar in Istanbul.
- Ministers talked about opportunities for greater cooperation.
- The meeting took place at SAHA Expo – the Turkish international defence show.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace met with his Turkish counterpart Defence Minister Hulusi Akar in Istanbul. The meeting covered a range of topics, including training, equipment, capabilities and further opportunities for cooperation across the domains.

The Ministers discussed how the UK and Türkiye will continue to work together, and with international partners, on shared challenges and issues – including Russia's abhorrent war in Ukraine and Türkiye's crucial role in ensuring grain exports are able to leave the region.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

It has been a great pleasure to meet again with my defence counterpart, Minister Akar. The UK and Türkiye share a long-standing defence partnership and commitment to shared security challenges, including Russia's war with Ukraine.

The meeting builds on several years of increased cooperation between the UK and Türkiye on defence matters.

The Defence Secretary attended the SAHA Expo – the Turkish Defence exhibition – where he met with senior Turkish figures from across defence and aerospace sectors. The Defence Secretary also held meetings with the newly appointed Slovenian Defence Minister Marjan Šarec and Ukrainian Minister for Strategic

Industries, Pavlo Riabikin.

British industry was on display during the event, which was attended by BAE Systems, Leonardo and Rolls Royce.

The Defence Secretary's visit to Türkiye comes just weeks after Minister Akar visited the UK for discussions on defence cooperation and their commitment to security as NATO allies.

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[Political and diplomatic efforts should have primacy over a military solution in the Democratic Republic of the Congo](#)

Thank you President, and I thank Special Envoy Xia for his briefing today, and welcome the participation of countries of the region in this meeting.

President, the United Kingdom remains deeply concerned by the security situation in the Great Lakes region, in particular the resurgence of violence by M23 in the last week. We call for immediate cessation of violence and the withdrawal of M23 from their current positions. All parties must respect national sovereignty and uphold the principle of territorial integrity.

We call upon countries in the region, with the support of the Special Envoy, to continue to work in close coordination with the Government of the DRC and MONUSCO to bring lasting peace to the country.

President, we have said many times that political and diplomatic efforts should have primacy over a military solution. Humanitarian considerations should also have equal priority. Military action alone will not bring peace to the Great Lakes. So we encourage the resumption of the Nairobi and Luanda processes. The UN, including through the offices of the Special Envoy, should actively support these efforts and ensure coordination with existing efforts, such as the DRC's P-DDRCS process.

President, any military action in Eastern DRC requires careful planning, coordination with MONUSCO, adherence with international law and a clear exit plan. The EAC Force and DRC Armed Forces must substantively engage with MONUSCO on de-confliction of forces, to ensure, primarily, the protection of civilians. We trust Special Envoy Xia will support this coordination.

The United Kingdom remains concerned about the humanitarian situation in the Great Lakes region. The DRC is suffering from the world's largest food security emergency, with 26 million people in crisis levels of food insecurity. Recent violence is adding to the 5.9 million people already displaced in the DRC. Access to those that need relief is severely limited. Coordination between military and humanitarian operations is vital and we call on all parties to facilitate humanitarian access.

In conclusion, President, we call upon countries in the region to intensify efforts to improve their regional cooperation, address shared security challenges via political and diplomatic means, improve humanitarian access, and bring an end to the violence. Thank you.