

Readout of Doha Forum, dated 21 May 2015

On Sunday morning they came to the Residence for a briefing with the Ambassador, the Director of UKTI Qatar, and the Director of the British Council Qatar. In the afternoon the Minister, the Ambassador and British Council Director met with the General Manager of Katara Cultural Village (a Qatari who studied in Scotland) and a manager at the Qatar Museums Authority.

Yesterday, the first day of the Doha Forum, the Scottish Minister had a meeting with the Qatari Development Minister and the Emir of Qatar: both arranged by the Qatari Embassy in London. No readout of either meeting.

This morning the Minister is presenting at the Doha Forum, at a session on democratic challenges in the Gulf region. He's then got a meeting with the Qatari Culture Minister (the Ambassador and/or the British Council Director might also attend), before flying back this afternoon.

I would say that the reports billing the visit "... as strengthening Scotland's economic, diplomatic and cultural links with the region ..." is fairly accurate: he's been promoting Scottish business and trade opportunities with Qatar; his being here is a sign of strengthening diplomatic ties; and the meetings with Qatari culture figures is strengthening that side too.

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British Embassy Doha, Qatar