



Your Excellency's, distinguished guests ladies and gentlemen, I am very happy to be here to mark the national day of the State of Qatar. It is a great honour to be here to deliver these remarks.

The UK has a deep and rich relationship with Qatar; we hosted the latest annual ministerial dialogue here in the UK in June this year which is the 5th iteration of that.

We agreed to broaden our cooperation in many areas including by working together on humanitarian and security issues to build a safer and more prosperous future for the UK, Qatar and the wider Middle East region.

Our governments signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2017 in support of Qatar's 2030 Vision. This has further deepened the relationship between us and our business across a wide range of vital areas include education healthcare science research and innovations tourism culture and many, many more this provides a good deal of momentum within our bilateral relationship.

Our people-to-people links are thriving and our trade and investment relationship is strong.

The UK is already one of Qatar's top destinations for foreign direct investment, with investments worth over £35 billion ranging from the iconic Shard building in Southwark to housing in the Olympic village.

Qatar is also one of the largest markets for UK exports across the Middle East and North Africa with over 600 UK companies already benefitting from the opportunity to support your growing infrastructure and provide goods and services to Qataris.

Now all of this is a reflection of the commitment on both sides of this relationship to continue to thicken and deepen our friendship. As we look to the future, we would want to do even more together.

As mentioned by the Ambassador, Liverpool FC would be heading to Doha for the FIFA Club World Cup, as a patriotic Brit, I wish them every great success, but as a Tottenham fan, I do wonder whether the right side will be travelling this week.

On sports more generally over the next couple of years, we look forward to continuing to share our expertise of managing major events such as the Olympics in 2012 with Qatar as it prepares to host the World Cup in 2022, the first to be held in the Middle East.



Your Excellency, this is a very healthy picture, our two countries are working closely together on issues of mutual interest, your job and that of your Embassy is to provide oversight for that and the wisdom on how best to succeed.

We are all invested in your success, and we all wish you well. So today, on Qatar national day let us celebrate the success of the past and commit to a greater endeavour in the future.

Excellency's ladies and gentlemen, I would like you to toast the health of this friendship and that of the Emir of Qatar.

Thank you very much.

Neil Holland

Director of Protocol and Vice-Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office