

Speech: British High Commissioner's speech at UK-Ghana Investment Summit

Welcome everyone.

Your excellency The Vice President of Ghana Dr. Bawumia,

Honorable Minister of Finance,

Honorable Minister of Trade,

Baroness Fairhead, Minister of State for Trade & Export promotion in the UK,

Sir Paul Collier, Professor of Economics and Public in the Policy Blavatnik School of Government at Oxford University,

Friends in the Diplomatic Corps and the Media,

Akwaaba.

We really genuinely are delighted that you could join us today. As Tony said a moment ago, I am Iain for those of you I've not met. For those of you that I've not met, I am very keen to meet you. My name is Iain Walker, it is spelt confusingly as a Scot with an extra "I", so for those of you who find that confusing you can use my Monday-born alter-ego "Kojo". I am perfectly happy with that as well.

It really is an absolute privilege to welcome such an esteemed group of guests to today's Investment Summit.

Thank you, thank you again. I think in this room, we all know about "Ghana Beyond Aid", about its focus on economic development, focus on investment, and focus on jobs. As Ghana moves beyond aid, it has been my top priority to make sure that we can adapt a UK response within the context of the G20 compact with Africa. Ghana Beyond Aid as set out by his excellency the President is a vision that the UK supports. As a long-time friend, as long-time partners, we want to work with Ghana, with you, to move this vision into implementation.

We believe, we hope, that the 2 billion pounds of development support over the last 2 decades, in particularly in the Health and Education sectors, has helped to play a role to make it possible for Ghana to now move beyond aid.

But, as Ghana changes, so too does the UK. As we look forward, as we look together beyond aid, we want to help define what comes next. And then we want to work with you shoulder to shoulder, together. We seek not to preach, but to work as partners, to work as friends and to take forward a deeper and more strategic relationship: job creation, inward investments, enhanced focus on trade, mutual prosperity, mutual interests. We can do more, much more, if we focus on clear common priorities.

To that end, we held our first ever UK-Ghana Business Council yesterday, co-chaired by his excellency the Vice President and by our Minister for Africa, Harriett Baldwin. And joined with the Honorable Minister of Finance, Honorable Minister of Trade and Adam Afriyie, the Prime Minister's Envoy for Trade. We now have, I believe, an institutional mechanism for driving forward the UK partnership with Ghana. We want to use that to drive forward these regional priorities.

Today we have over 50 companies in the room, you are truly all very very welcome. We hope today enables you to understand the many investment opportunities here in Ghana, and also the opportunity for greater value-added exports.

Like the government of Ghana, we believe that Private sector participation is absolutely key. As Ghana seeks to move beyond aid, the UK's approach to development changes – you will hear more about that in a moment from Baroness Fairhead.

Before I pass the ball, let me introduce some other colleagues here. I am delighted that Rachel Turner, our Director from DfID here, who not only knows Ghana very well, but is playing a key role in our changing approach of our policy. I am also pleased to welcome Tenbite Ermias, CDC's Managing Director for Africa. You'll hear from him, and you'll hear from many more of our guests, UK Export Finance, from PIDG, from AgdevCo and others.

At this great moment I'm delighted that Baroness Fairhead has joined us. I'm going to not say too much, I'll let her come up here in a moment. But thank you Baroness for joining us this morning.

We've also got in your packs there, there's an article that Sir Paul Collier published in the Sunday times recently. I hope you read it, it talks about the importance of private sector participation in development, something that we share, something we believe. That's why we put it in your packs this morning, but welcome again, Sir Paul, thank you.

Let me close by saying thank you to Tony Burkson, who has organized today, with Nana Frimpomaa and Colin Sykes and many others in the High Commission.

I hope that we facilitate better conversations for you all this morning.

But lastly, it's the vision of Ghana beyond aid as it moves towards implementation, I hope that we can reflect on the shared values of our shared history. Let's use that history not to dwell on the past, but to use that to create a future of an even stronger UK-Ghana relationship.

Thank you again.

Enjoy the Conference.

News story: Regional allocation of adult social care winter funding

The extra funding, [announced by Secretary of State for Health and Social Care Matt Hancock earlier this month](#), is aimed at reducing delayed transfers of care and could pay for the following:

- home care packages to help patients get out of hospital quicker
- reablement packages, which support workers to help patients carry out everyday tasks and regain mobility and confidence
- home adaptations, including new facilities for personal care, such as adapting a shower room if a patient has limited movement

Councils have been allocated the funding based on the adult social care relative needs formula. Letters have been sent out today to inform them.

[Allocation of adult social care winter funding, by local authority](#) (PDF, 76.9KB, 4 pages)

News story: Driving ambition in green finance

The transition to a clean, low carbon and resilient economy is a multi-billion pound investment opportunity and we want UK businesses to take full advantage of it. The UK has long been regarded as a leading global financial centre, with a world leading stock market featuring nearly 80 green bonds listed on the London Stock Exchange. We are determined to cement the UK's position as a global hub for investment in clean growth.

Since setting up the [Green Finance Taskforce](#), the government has been taking concrete steps to strengthen our green finance capability. The government and City of London will co-fund a new Green Finance Institute that will act as the focal point for future UK green finance activity. The government has also announced changes to pensions regulations so that trustees will have to set out how they consider the financial risks and opportunities arising from climate change.

And the government has now committed to build on the Green Finance Taskforce report by publishing the UK's first ever Green Finance Strategy in Spring 2019. This will set out the steps we are taking to attract the investment we need into our clean economy; to cement the UK's position as a global leader, including by supporting developing countries through their low carbon transition; and to integrate green principles across the financial services

sector.

Raising awareness and increasing engagement in Green Finance

As part of [Green GB Week](#) there will be a dedicated Green Finance events programme with activities spread across the week. The aim of these events is to raise awareness of the green finance agenda and the role of financial services in unlocking investment into environmentally and socially-beneficial technologies and infrastructure in the UK and internationally.

These events will reach a broad audience including consumers and young people, as well as organisations across the financial sector including regulators, insurers, pension funds, asset managers, legal firms and retail banks. The official Green Finance Day on Wednesday 17th October agenda includes:

- A Market Opening at the London Stock Exchange with a speech from John Glen, Economic Secretary to the Treasury;
- A full day programme at the Tate Modern coordinated by HSBC covering including sessions on women in sustainable finance, greening your pension fund, integrating climate risk into investment decisions and building capacity in emerging markets;
- A Climate Resilience Summit led by Willis Towers Watson; and
- On the Friday of Green GB Week, The Financial Conduct Authority will lead a half day workshop on supporting green finance innovation, and BNP Paribas will host a careers event to highlight different finance career opportunities to students interested in sustainability.

More information on all the events is [available](#).

Catalysing investment in Clean Tech

The government will be investing up to £20 million alongside at least £20 million from private investors in a new venture capital fund called the Clean Growth Fund. It is only through innovation, nurturing better products, processes and systems that we will see the cost of clean technologies come down. This new fund will aim to catalyse the market and leverage private sector funding to ensure these innovative clean technologies can bridge the valley of death and achieve impact at scale. On 17 October, we published a [Request for Proposals for fund managers](#).

Boosting investment in green infrastructure

BEIS is working with the Infrastructure and Projects Authority to explore how best government could produce meaningful data setting out which infrastructure projects can be considered 'green'. This would increase transparency, illustrating the government's commitment to leading by example in tackling climate change, and showcasing the opportunities available to investors looking to place funds in green projects.

The government will host a national conference followed by at least five regional workshops – bringing together Local Authorities, cities, investors

and civil society to help build partnerships to start delivering the pipeline of projects currently being developed at local level. This will help connect investors and the wider finance sector to local projects, and increase the role that regions and local players can have to boost the development of green infrastructure. The government will be working in partnership with UK100, Leeds City Council and more to set up this ambitious programme of work, which will be delivered throughout 2019.

Supporting consistency and comparability in the sector

The British Standards Institution (BSI) will be developing two new UK-led, internationally relevant, PAS (Publicly Available Specification) documents in Sustainable Finance to increase confidence in, and understanding of, sustainable investments and activities. A new Strategic Advisory Group chaired by Peter Young, Trustee and Chair of the Green Purposes Company, has been established to provide strategic direction for BSI's wider Sustainable Finance Standardisation Programme. This work was commissioned by Ministers in the Clean Growth Strategy and is being co-funded with the City of London's Green Finance Initiative.

BSI will also be leading a new International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) Technical Committee to develop international standards on Sustainable Finance, informed by the UK-led PAS work. This demonstrates the prominence of UK thought leadership globally, and will contribute to meeting the objective we set out in the Industrial Strategy to become the standard-setters in green finance.

Global leadership and building capacity in emerging market economies

UK leadership on green finance is further demonstrated by the new UK PACT (Partnering for Accelerated Climate Transitions), a £60 million BEIS-run technical assistance programme to share UK skills with partners around the world. The first UK PACT projects strengthen collaboration between the UK and China on green finance, with a focus on harmonised standards for green bonds, analysis of green asset performance, advice on TCFD implementation and supporting the set-up of a new UK-China Green Finance Centre.

[Press release: Lower Thames Crossing opens its doors at first of sixty public events](#)

People who live, work and travel across Kent, Thurrock, Essex and beyond are being invited to shape plans for Britain's biggest road tunnel as Highways

England hosts the first of 60 public engagement events on the multi-billion pound Lower Thames Crossing project today (Tuesday 16 October).

A consultation was launched last week into updated proposals for the project, a new 14.5 mile road linking the M2 in Kent with the M25 in Essex, including a 2.4 mile tunnel under the river. Starting this week, the project team are taking to the road to meet local people, explain the plans and answer questions.

Today's event, at Orsett in Essex is one of 25 public information events being held over the coming weeks, along with pop up stalls and visits by the team's mobile visitor centre to various locations across Essex, Thurrock and Kent.

Businesses and organisations from across the region have welcomed the plans, which will nearly double road capacity across the Thames while halving some journey times at the existing Dartford Crossing, where traffic will be reduced by almost a quarter.

Highways England Project Director for the Lower Thames Crossing, Tim Jones, said:

The Lower Thames Crossing will be among the biggest and most complex new roads ever built in the UK, and we are providing a wide range of information about the project, its impacts and benefits. We want to help people understand the proposals and have their say to help shape the plans. These events are an excellent opportunity to do just that.

People will be able to see the changes we've made since the preferred route was announced last year, and how we've responded to the feedback we've received. And of course they will be able to put questions directly to members of the project team. I encourage anyone with an interest to come along to one of our events to make sure their voice is heard in this once-in-a-generation opportunity for Britain's roads.

Councils and business and industry groups from across the region have reiterated support for the project as the consultation gets underway.

Leader of Medway Council, Cllr Alan Jarrett, said:

We fully support the proposal for an additional crossing and investment in the wider road network. A Lower Thames Crossing will not only reduce congestion on the Dartford Crossing, but it will also bring with it economic benefits to both sides of the river; it will bring more visitors into the south-east and would benefit commuters.

Medway is fast becoming known as the new economic powerhouse for

the south-east, and although we already have great transport connections, such as a high speed rail service into central London, a new crossing will be a major catalyst to drive further economic development.

We will be submitting a response to Highways England's consultation and would encourage residents and businesses to attend a consultation event to find out more about the proposal and how the crossing would affect them, as well as provide their feedback.

How the northern portal of the Lower Thames Crossing, in Essex, will look

Cllr Peter Fleming, Leader of Sevenoaks District Council, said:

"The importance to the Sevenoaks District of the Lower Thames Crossing cannot be underestimated. The potential reduction in HGV movements both in and through the District and the subsequent reductions in congestion and improvement in air quality are just some of the benefits that will accrue our communities and businesses after the crossing is delivered."

Cllr Roy Whitehead, leader of Chelmsford City Council said:

Chelmsford City Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on Highways England's latest consultation on the Lower Thames Crossing. Providing another strategic crossing of the River Thames is crucial in relieving the existing congested bottleneck at the Dartford Crossing and will provide a catalyst for further economic growth in Chelmsford and across Essex.

Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE, leader of the London Borough of Bexley said:

The Thames Gateway is poised to help the country and the capital prosper and grow. Transport infrastructure – including river crossings – it essential for this to happen, so I welcome this consultation and the prospect of investment in this important project.

Christian Brodie, Chair of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), said:

This marks the important next step for this urgently needed and game changing project which will help us drive forward the economy of the South East. I would urge every business to back this vital investment in infrastructure and participate in the consultation.

Denise Rossiter, Chief Executive Officer of Essex Chambers of Commerce, said:

We are extremely pleased that this important Consultation has been launched for a ten-week period. Essex Chambers have strongly supported the need for a Lower Thames Crossing from the very start. The time now is for businesses to have their say and we would encourage you to visit the Lower Thames Crossing website to learn more about this fantastic project that will help Essex prosper economically, logistically and be a global leader.

Jo James, Chief Executive Officer of Kent Chambers of Commerce, said:

The Lower Thames Crossing will open up new opportunities, enabling businesses across Kent and the wider South East to achieve their growth potential and will have a significant impact on our future prosperity.

As the ten-week consultation opens, I would strongly urge businesses to put their views forward by responding to the consultation.

Malcolm Bingham, the Freight Transport Association's Head of Road Network Policy, said:

FTA, which represents more than 17,000 logistics businesses, urges government to press ahead with construction of the Lower Thames Crossing as soon as possible to ease congestion and improve road capacity in this area. Traffic congestion at the Dartford Crossing is already unbearably high and it is predicted to return to pre-Dart Charge levels by 2020. The M2/M25 route is a vital cog in the country's freight machine and it must continue to work as smoothly as possible to ensure that British companies can trade without delays both domestically and internationally.

Richard Christian, Head of Policy and Communications, Port of Dover, said:

The UK's reliance upon continued frictionless trade at the Port of Dover has been accepted at the heart of Government. So has the need to preserve it. For a port handling £122bn or 17 per cent of the UK's trade in goods, and with half of that trade moving beyond London to keep factories busy and shops full in the Midlands and the North, the Lower Thames Crossing is an investment in the long-term economic success of the UK as a whole. The Port continues to press hard for a Government commitment to other complementary strategic investments such as the dualling of the A2 to Dover which, together with the Lower Thames Crossing, will help protect jobs and livelihoods, keep traffic flowing and prices low for British consumers.

Glyn Jones, Chief Executive Officer, Stobart Aviation, said:

Stobart Group is proud to support this visionary and important infrastructure project. It will make a major contribution to sustainable growth and significantly enhance mobility for both people and goods across the river. We look forward to working with colleagues in the Lower Thames Crossing team to help deliver this transformational scheme.

Since the preferred route announcement by Transport Minister Chris Grayling MP in April 2017, changes were made to reflect feedback including:

- making the whole route three lanes, not two
- introducing a new rest and service area west of East Tilbury
- a new design for the Tilbury junction, removing the proposed Tilbury link road to reduce traffic on the local road network
- extending the tunnel so the tunnel entrance in Kent is 600 metres further south to reduce the visual impact and protect access to a community church
- lowering road by five to six metres in places to reduce its visual impact
- moving the road 80 metres further east where it passes Chadwell St Mary to increase the distance from residential properties

All information is also available on the [consultation page](#).

The consultation period runs until Thursday 20 December.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[News story: NHS to reuse more medical equipment](#)

Minister of State for Health Steve Barclay has urged NHS staff to accept patients' unwanted medical equipment and reuse it, where safe to do so.

The move is part of plans to reduce the NHS carbon footprint and put a stop to nearly-new crutches and wheelchairs being thrown away or left unused in homes, rather than reused or recycled.

This supports the long-term plan for the NHS by reinvesting savings into frontline care for patients and staff. The move also boosts efforts to promote a 'greener NHS' and help local charities.

Some hospitals already recycle equipment, using innovative approaches to ensure money spent on medical equipment is not wasted. These schemes include:

- Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust – runs a scheme to reuse returned walking aids, such as frames and crutches. Returned items are examined, decontaminated and reused or recycled. Last year 21% of crutches and 61% of frames were returned. This saw over 2,000 pieces of equipment reused and generated savings of over £25,000
- Airedale NHS Foundation Trust – a project run by the trust and shared across local areas has seen over 800 wheelchairs recycled by the charities for use overseas, including in Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia and the Pacific
- University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust – a scheme to change the types of container it used for 'sharps', moving from disposable containers to long-span bins which last for 10 years, helping to save around £20,000 per year

Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust also operates a furniture reuse scheme, distributing unneeded equipment to local care homes and donating items to charity where local reuse is not possible. Last year this helped avoid 8 tonnes of waste.

Health Minister Steve Barclay said:

There are some great examples of hospitals already reusing vital medical equipment – such as wheelchairs and walking aids – and we want to see more of this across the country. In too many instances, however, medical equipment is being used once and then thrown away at a time when the public is increasingly aware of the impact of waste on the environment.

Patients should be able to return the countless pairs of perfectly good crutches sitting unused in the corner of living rooms across the country and know they will be put to good use helping others, either in the NHS or elsewhere through charity donations.

It is not only the kind of creativity and common sense the public wants to see from the NHS, but will also help ensure equipment is

used in an environmentally friendly way and that taxpayers' money is spent wisely – a crucial part of our long-term plan for the NHS.