

Speech: The future of US-UK maritime co-operation

Thank you, it's great to be here to welcome our American friends to Somerset House.

And this is an appropriate setting for today's (13 September 2017) conference.

Because Somerset House has had a unique, formative influence on modern America.

230 years ago, this building was visited by the American architect, Charles Bulfinch.

And it was this building – with its classical dome and columns – that inspired Charles Bulfinch's subsequent architectural style.

It was a style that Bulfinch carried with him back to America.

And which informed his designs for many of America's great public buildings.

Such as Massachusetts State House, the Old Connecticut State House, and Harvard's University Hall.

And when Bulfinch was appointed by President James Monroe as Architect of the Capitol building in Washington, he gave that building its first dome and neoclassical wings.

Which means that there's direct lineage from the dome that sits on this building, and the columns of its façade to the iconic architecture of American democracy, expressed in so many public buildings in the United States.

And that lineage is representative of the relationship that this country enjoys with the United States.

Yes, there's our shared culture and values.

But also our joint commitment to commerce and trade.

Today, the USA is the UK's largest export market and second largest import market.

Last year, trade between the UK and the USA amounted to 227 billion dollars.

The stock of investment we hold in each other's economies currently stands at 1 trillion dollars.

We're 2 low tax, low regulation economies.

And so much of our trade is made possible by the unceasing passage of ships moving across the Atlantic Ocean.

Liverpool to New York.

Southampton to Baltimore.

Portsmouth to Charleston.

Belfast to Boston.

And many others.

Famous ports, whose names ring out with history, proclaiming hope, opportunity and prosperity from shore to Atlantic shore.

And we meet today at a special moment in our country's history.

A point at which we are about to step away from the European Union.

I have long argued that Britain's future lies not in federal union within the EU.

But as a global, trading nation, like America able to write all its own laws and sign its own trade deals.

This has always been an internationalist country.

London is the most diverse city in Europe.

And Britain has always looked beyond Europe to the wider world, especially to the English-speaking nations with which we share so many ideas, values and customs

Brexit is an opportunity for us to build those international links.

So I am delighted that the US and the UK governments have established a joint Trade and Investment Working Group, dedicated to strengthening our relationship.

The working group is laying the groundwork for a comprehensive free trade agreement between our 2 nations.

That can only be good news for ports on both sides of the Atlantic.

And so I am delighted to open today's conference, and look forward to hearing your ideas, of how our ports can continue to support our mutual prosperity.

Thank you.

News story: Emergency Services Show 2017

Air, Rail and Marine Accident Investigation Branches at the Emergency Services Show, 20-21 September

Are you one of the first emergency services on the scene of an air, marine or rail accident? Perhaps you manage a control room for one of the emergency services. If so, you'll want to visit our stand at the Emergency Services Show. We are the AAIB, MAIB and RAIB – the three independent branches of the Department for Transport that investigate air, marine and rail accidents.

To help prevent similar accidents from happening again, our evidence gathering starts from the point of notification through search and rescue stages to forensic examination of the site. At the Emergency Services Show, our staff will be on hand to tell you everything you need to know so that if you're at an accident site, you can help preserve evidence that can provide us with vital clues to establish the cause.

Transport accidents pose some serious difficulties to the emergency services. Ballistic recovery systems in small aircraft, confined spaces on ships, 100s of tonnes of dangerous goods inside derailed freight rail wagons. Would you know how to approach evidence preservation in these environments?

Visit us at the Show to learn about all of this and more.

[Emergency Services Show website](#)

News story: 4th Annual Meeting of the Global Islamic Finance and Investment Group

Senior policy makers from around the world met in London yesterday (12 September 2017) to discuss cross-border cooperation to further boost the global Islamic finance industry at the 4th annual meeting of the Global Islamic Finance and Investment Group (GIFIG).

Islamic finance, or Sharia-compliant finance, has seen remarkable growth over the last decade. The value of the industry more than doubled between 2008 and 2015, and the sector is full of potential to grow further still, providing greater choice and giving people the financial products that can meet their

values.

The annual meetings of GIFIG form a key part of the UK's commitment to support the development of the industry globally, and ensure that London, which is already home to the largest Islamic finance market outside the Muslim world, retains its top position.

The meeting was co-chaired by Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific, Mark Field, and the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, Stephen Barclay who said:

The UK is recognised as the leading Western centre for Islamic finance, and I want us to play a big part in the future of the sector. London is the most globally connected financial centre, providing a nexus of expertise in financial, professional and supporting services. And with our strong links with other outward looking economies, including those with significant Muslim populations, we are ideally placed to play a central role.

I am delighted to welcome representatives from so many countries interested in the development of Islamic finance to London to discuss how we make sure that people from all walks of life have access to appropriate finance.

This year's meeting of GIFIG looked at areas where countries with an interest in Islamic finance can work better together to support the development of the industry. Discussions also covered responses to the industry's on-going market and regulatory challenges and synergies between Islamic and other areas of finance.

The UK has a track record of supporting Islamic finance. UK firms have been involved in Islamic finance since the 1980s and the UK has been at the forefront of key developments in Europe ever since. The UK today is one of the few jurisdictions worldwide that accommodates Islamic finance within a single and secular regulatory framework. There are now over 100,000 Islamic finance retail customers in the UK, benefiting from Sharia-compliant current accounts, home finance, savings, investment and other products.

[Press release: Have you checked your heating oil tank?](#)

With an autumnal nip in the air, the Environment Agency is urging anyone with a domestic heating oil tank to check their tank is in a good state of repair before getting heating oil delivered for the winter.

Leaks and spills from a domestic heating tank can be difficult and expensive to clean up; leaked oil can end up in groundwater supplies and drains, many of which lead directly into rivers, streams, lakes and even garden ponds.

If oil does get into drains it could pollute watercourses; harming livestock, wildlife and plants. Our vital drinking water can also come from the same surface and groundwater supplies so protection is important.

Oil is poisonous to fish, other wildlife and smothers plants – just two litres of oil could seriously pollute the volume of fresh water needed to fill an Olympic-size swimming pool.

Steve Brown from the Environment Agency said:

Heating oil can cause serious problems if it gets into the water environment.

The clean-up costs could be tens of thousands of pounds; and these costs fall to the owner of the leaking tank. These costs are not always covered by household insurance policies. A serious case of land contamination from a leaking oil tank could also severely affect the value of property in the area.

This is why it's vital that oil is only ever stored in tanks that are in good condition. Both the tank and its pipe work should be regularly inspected and people should never buy more oil than they can safely store.

If anyone does find a spill, please contact us straight away so that we can reduce the impact on the environment.

To report an oil spill people should contact the Environment Agency's 24-hour incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

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