

Foreign Secretary speech at India Global Week

Hello, and thank you for having me as part of India Global Week.

Covid-19 is a global challenge.

And the UK has been proud to stand alongside India in its international response.

As we have responded to this crisis, we have been privileged to have 25,000 Indian professionals working in our brilliant National Health Service here at home. We hugely value their contribution.

With India's help, we were able to obtain vital supplies of paracetamol at the height of the crisis, critical in the fight against Covid-19.

Over the past few months, we've brought home UK nationals from India, and worked closely with the Government of India to get Indian nationals home safe and sound.

Throughout this crisis, we've worked together.

So I'd like to thank the Government of India, and my colleague and friend Dr Jaishankar for their invaluable assistance in this extraordinary effort.

As leaders in the international response, the UK and India have also co-authored the G20 Action Plan, providing an immediate package of \$200 billion of global support to the most vulnerable countries around the world.

Even before Covid, UK was India's second biggest research partner, with our joint research estimated to be worth £400m by 2021.

And with India's contribution to the recent GAVI vaccine summit, together we smashed the target for vaccine funding, with \$8.8 billion raised.

But we have the potential to do more.

A vaccine created by British scientists and manufactured in India, if successful in clinical trials, will reach 1 billion people across the developing world, thanks to Oxford University and India's Serum Institute.

That would be an extraordinary achievement – benefitting not only the British and Indian people, but making it accessible for the most vulnerable people, right across the world.

Working together, we can make it happen.

Beyond the immediate challenge of Covid, the friendship between Britain and India is strong, and we want to take it to the next level.

Our trade relationship is growing.

Bolstered by entrepreneurs, business founders and innovators, it increased by nearly 10% to over £24 billion in 2019.

We issue more skilled work visas to India than the rest of the world combined.

And the number of Indian students in the UK has tripled in the last three years.

Bound by our shared aspirations, the UK and India will be energetic champions of free trade, to boost small businesses, cut the cost of living, and create the jobs of the future.

We also believe our friendship with India will be crucial, as the UK fulfils its ambition to be an even stronger force for good in the world.

When the UK hosts COP26 in 2021, we will be key partners in tackling climate change.

And as India returns to the UN Security Council next year and takes up the G20 Presidency in 2022, I look forward to deepening our cooperation on international issues.

Bound by the depth of friendship between our peoples, we will look to India as partners, not only in our response to this current crisis, but as we build back better and stronger than ever.

Britain will continue to be a part of India's success story, and India will continue to be a part of ours.

Thank you.