Press release: UK-Southern African trade: boosting UK and African economies

The UK-Southern African Economic Partnership Agreement is a key element of a package of measures to boost African growth outlined by the Prime Minister, who highlighted that Africa's long-term success matters to the UK, so it is in the world's interest to help secure African jobs and growth.

Trade Minister George Hollingbery, who is joining Theresa May for her Africa visit, met with his counterpart from Botswana, who represented the trade ministers from the five Southern African Customs Union countries (South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Eswatini (Swaziland)) and Mozambique.

Today in Cape Town, Minister Hollingbery and Minister Kenewendo signed a joint statement confirming that our trade agreement will be ready to enter into force as soon as the EU deal no longer applies to the UK. This means that UK consumers will be able to continue to enjoy Southern African wine, tea and fruits, among other popular goods, helping to support Southern African producers and exporters.

Further, UK businesses will continue to be able export goods including cars, motor parts and pharmaceutical products into Southern African economies – the overall trading relationship between the UK and these countries is worth nearly £10 billion annually.

This is one part of a package of trade measures to bring the transformative power of private sector trade and investment from the UK to Africa, a continent that is home to 16% of the world's people but just 3% foreign direct investment and 3% cent of global goods trade.

Other measures, which are all part of the UK's new and distinctive offer to work alongside, invest in, and partner with African nations for our mutual benefit, include:

- The UK Government has made an extra £5.5 billion in support from UK Export Finance available to 8 markets across Africa, supporting UK-Africa trade. This includes Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Mauritius, Morocco, Senegal and Tunisia.

- This announcement follows substantial increases to UK Export Finance's appetite for 10 African markets over the last 18 months, as well as the introduction of support in 16 African countries.

- A new Prosperity Fund programme of up to £8 million will support implementation of the new UK-Southern African Economic Partnership

> Agreement. The funding will increase trade with and within Southern Africa by helping to remove barriers to trade, and in doing so expand import and export opportunities for UK and African businesses.

Trade Minister George Hollingbery said:

> This week's visit with the Prime Minister has highlighted the importance of the UK increasing trade with our partners in Southern Africa, through transitioning existing trade arrangements, supporting exporters and reducing barriers to trade.
>
> Our trade relationship with the region is already worth £10 billion, and trade is a key driver of economic growth for both Southern Africa and the UK and will support UK producers and value chains, as well opening up new markets for UK exporters.
>
> Today's announcement is the most advanced statement of progress to date with around 40 existing EU trade agreements that the UK is transitioning, and an important step in positioning the UK as a global champion of free trade and development.
>
> Strengthening our partnerships with Southern African nations demonstrates that the UK is committed to deepening our relationships across the world as part of our Global Britain vision.

About UK Export Finance:

- UK Export Finance, the UK's export credit agency, provides export finance support, to ensure no viable export fails due to lack of finance or insurance from the private sector.
- This support can take the form of loans, guarantees and insurance to help UK exporters win, fulfill and get paid for exports, and offer their overseas buyers attractive financing terms alongside high-quality goods and services.

News story: New unit to tackle exploitation of vulnerable young people

Children and Families Minister Nadhim Zahawi announced today (28 August) the unit, backed by up to £2million investment, will offer bespoke support to local councils to help stop child sexual exploitation, trafficking, modern slavery and other attempts by criminals to take advantage of vulnerable children and coerce them into crimes like drug trafficking.

Children who go missing from home or care are vulnerable to exploitation from a range of criminal threats and the new national response unit to launch in 2019 will provide tailored support to local areas so they can respond effectively to these safeguarding challenges and learn from what works.

Last year’s figures from the National Crime Agency show that over a third (35 per cent) of police forces reported evidence of child sexual exploitation in relation to county lines. County lines is where children and young people are exploited by criminals and used to traffic drugs in rural areas.

Children and Families Minister Nadhim Zahawi said:

> Exploitation of children in any form is an abhorrent crime and it is deeply saddening that vulnerable children and young people are prey to criminals.
>
> They are often at risk of multiple threats outside of their family lives, such as child sexual exploitation, gangs and county lines, and the new national unit will help local areas protect them from these threats and get the right support so they have the chance to succeed in life.

The new unit, which will operate from 2019 up until 2022, will address child sexual exploitation together with other crimes, such as gang and drug activity, which also exploit vulnerable children and can lead to children going missing.

The Department for Education will award a contract to run the new national response unit to support local practitioners to respond to these threats more effectively, which could include:

- providing advice and directing authorities to resources;
- an online forum for professionals;
- additional staff with experience in tackling particular areas of exploitation; and
- assessing an area’s needs, strengths and weaknesses in responding to exploitation threats.

This follows the Home Office’s announcement that it is awarding £13m through the Trusted Relationships Fund to 11 local authorities across England to help young people at risk of abuse to foster ‘trusted’ relationships with support workers.

These projects will help young people have positive adult role models in their lives, following a review by the Early Intervention Foundation, commissioned by the Home Office, that showed that a lack of a dependable adult was often an important factor in child abuse and exploitation cases.

Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability, Victoria Atkins, said:

> This Government is committed to protecting children from all forms of exploitation and abuse, be it from county lines, gang activity or sexual abuse.
>
> This new unit, along with our £13million Trusted Relationships Fund and the Serious Violence Strategy, will provide vital support to children and help steer them away from destructive harms.

Press release: UK launches ambition to generate billions more investment in Africa to trigger transformational growth

- CDC Group, the UK's Development Finance Institution, will aim to invest up to £3.5 billion in Africa, supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs.
- The UK will aim to mobilise a further £4 billion of private investment for African countries, particularly from the City of London.

The UK is announcing a range of measures to boost much-needed investment in businesses and infrastructure across Africa, the Prime Minister announced in Cape Town today (Tuesday 28th August). This includes for the first time ever setting a clear ambition of mobilising an additional £4 billion of private sector investment into the continent by working more closely with the City of London.

This comes as the Prime Minister has today also set a new ambition for the UK to be the largest G7 foreign direct investor in Africa by 2020.

Africa's population is set to double by 2050 and as many as 18 million extra jobs a year will be needed. There is a chronic need for private and public investment to create better opportunities in Africa to prevent the next generation falling further into poverty, potentially fuelling instability and mass migration with direct consequences for Britain.

But this growth also means that the scale of the opportunity across Africa is huge: according to the IMF, Africa's GDP is set to reach $3.2 trillion in the next five years.

Home to the City of London, the world's leading financial centre, the UK is well-positioned to become Africa's future investment partner of choice. Initiatives announced today in support of this include:

- CDC, the UK’s Development Finance Institution, will significantly increase its investment into Africa – aiming to invest up to £3.5 billion in businesses on the continent over four years. This will support hundreds of thousands of jobs, build stability and trigger growth in some of the poorest and most fragile countries.
- A new investment of up to £300 million of UK aid invested through the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG) will build essential infrastructure such as power, roads and water, that will lay the foundations for new trading and business opportunities across Africa in places businesses previously would not have been able to operate.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

> Africa’s emerging markets offer huge untapped potential to the UK. There is a massive shortage of investment, infrastructure and jobs in these markets, and the City of London is uniquely placed to help fill this gap while earning benefits for the UK economy.
>
> We’re building mutually beneficial partnerships which are helping to stimulate long-term transformational growth and create good jobs for people in the world’s poorest countries, while also allowing UK investors to access the wealth of opportunity offered by African countries.

In addition to announcing a substantial scale up of investment through CDC and PIDG, the UK is setting a clear ambition to mobilise £4 billion of private investment, particularly from the City of London. In total, UK initiatives will generate up to £8 billion (around $10 billion) of investment for African countries between 2018 and 2021.

The UK’s commitment to building bigger, broader economic partnerships with African nations will prove a huge benefit to UK business and investors, while also accelerating the transformational growth needed to lift countries out of poverty for good and to forge mutually beneficial partnerships between the UK and African countries.

The City of London manages over £8 trillion of assets but at the moment only around 1% of those assets are invested in Africa.

This partnership will mobilise further capital from pension funds, insurance companies and other investors, enabling the City to take on an even greater role as Africa’s partner of choice for financial services as the UK leaves the EU.

This will create the opportunity to boost investment returns for the UK’s pension pot, while triggering essential long-term investment for African businesses, transforming the world’s poorest nations into the UK’s trading partners of the future.

As part of this new and distinctive offer to work alongside, invest in and partner with African nations for our mutual benefit, we will be bringing in more 'Best of British' experts including extra investment specialists, to work with African governments and businesses to unlock the private sector finance so critical to sustained growth, job creation and tackling poverty.

Notes to editors:

- There is a desperate shortage of private and public investment in the world's poorest countries. The additional financing needed to achieve the UN Global Goals by 2030 is estimated to be $2.5 trillion every year, with current investment levels less than half of that.
- CDC aims to invest up to £3.5 billion in Africa over the next four years (2018-21). This is a combination of initial capital provided by the UK and returns made from CDC's existing investment portfolio.
- All returns generated by CDC are reinvested time and again into more businesses, ensuring that every penny of taxpayers' money is creating the jobs and economic stability that enable countries to leave poverty behind.
- In 2017, companies backed by CDC in Africa and South Asia employed nearly three quarters of a million people (734,000). CDC's investee companies newly created 63,000 of these jobs in 2017.
- The Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG) is a Development Finance Organisation in which DFID is the majority funder, alongside seven other donors.
- The UK will invest up to £500 million in PIDG, of which up to £300 million will be allocated for Africa, to help governments develop projects that are able to attract private investment and provide new or improved infrastructure to people living in the poorest countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

Press release: World first as UK aid brings together experts to predict where cholera will strike next

Aid experts at the Department for International Development (DFID) have teamed up with the Met Office, NASA and US scientists to use for the first time a world-leading approach to accurately predict where and when cholera will spread.

Cholera Prevention in Yemen

US scientists, working with NASA satellite data, have developed a model to predict where cholera is most at risk of spreading with an impressive 92 per cent accuracy in Yemen. UK aid is turning this from theory to reality, using these predictions and Met Office forecasting to give aid workers on the ground in Yemen the information they need to respond to cholera outbreaks quicker than ever before.

DFID is helping to prevent the deadly disease spreading any further by working with UNICEF to target the delivery of vital support to areas predicted to be at greatest risk. This includes:

- promoting good hygiene to prevent people falling ill in the first place;
- stock-piling hygiene kits, jerry cans and chlorine to clean water in advance of an outbreak;
- providing cholera treatment kits, rehydration salts, zinc supplements and intravenous fluid packs to treat people that have fallen ill; and
- providing medical equipment for hospitals and clinics, such as cholera beds.

DFID Chief Scientist Professor Charlotte Watts said:

> The conflict in Yemen is the worst humanitarian crisis in the world, with millions of people at risk of deadly but preventable diseases such as cholera.
>
> By connecting science and international expertise with the humanitarian response on the ground, we have for the very first time used sophisticated predictions of where the risk of cholera is highest to help aid workers save lives and prevent needless suffering for thousands of Yemenis before it’s too late.
>
> This breakthrough means that we no longer need to wait for cases of cholera to be detected before medical staff can start taking life-saving actions.

Met Office Head of International Development Helen Bye said:

> Through our collaboration with DFID we are able to be part of this ground breaking approach to take early action against cholera, a waterborne disease, contracted through consuming contaminated water.
>
> Met Office meteorologists are able to translate our global modelling and scientific expertise to show where rain has fallen and where it will fall. We then provide weekly tailored guidance to DFID and humanitarian agencies including UNICEF to inform their life saving actions.

Aid experts at DFID began using this data to work with UNICEF to prevent the spread of the disease in March 2018, ahead of the rainy season. Last year, Yemen suffered the worst cholera outbreak in living memory with more than 1 million suspected cases.

There has not been a significant outbreak in cholera so far this year, with the number of suspected cholera cases significantly lower than last year. For example, during the last week of June this year there were 2,597 suspected cases and 3 deaths, down from 50,825 suspected cases and 179 deaths at the same time last year.

Despite the predicted risk of cholera in Ibb – a governorate on the frontline of the conflict – being just as high this year as last year, there were only 672 suspected cases of cholera in July 2018 compared to 13,659 in July 2017.

There are a number of other factors that could have contributed to a lower number of suspected cholera cases this year, including a later rainy season, greater immunity against cholera and a change in national guidance for the recording of suspected cholera cases. However, the new actions taken as a result of the predictions are helping to save lives and reduce suffering.

This new approach is all the more important as the new guidance for recording suspected cholera cases in Yemen may make it more difficult to detect early outbreaks of cholera. Acting early and being able to target high-risk areas is critical.

UNICEF Yemen Representative Meritxell Relaño said:

> The information on rainfall assessments supports the early warning on high risk areas for cholera outbreak. This enables UNICEF and partners to refine and focus our efforts on preparedness and timely response to cholera which has affected the lives of many children in Yemen.
>
> These rainfall predictions have helped ensure that crucial preventive and response measures are in place where they will be most needed, including agreements with implementing partners on the ground, prepositioning of essential supplies, disinfection of water sources and deployment of community volunteers to engage households and communities on preventive hygiene behaviours including, safe water storage. As a result of this support and our other preparedness and response work, we have been able to avoid a resurgence of cholera on the scale seen in 2017.

The Met Office’s supercomputer in Exeter makes 14 thousand trillion calculations per second allowing it to take in 215 billion weather observations from across the world every day, which are used as a starting point for UK and global weather forecasts. In Yemen, high-resolution models are used to forecast out to six days, providing UNICEF accurate and critical intelligence as they identify areas most at risk.

These forecasts have been used to improve a predictive model that was developed by scientists at two universities in the United States – West Virginia University and the University of Maryland.

The forecast produced by the Met Office and the predictions produced by the

US scientists are then shared with UNICEF and other aid so they can see which neighbourhoods, schools and hospitals will be at greatest risk, helping them to target their response to where support is needed most.

This breakthrough of accurately predicting where and when the disease will spread has meant that aid workers can take action before an outbreak occurs.

It is DFID's ambition to combine the NASA data and Met Office forecasts in order to predict outbreaks eight weeks in advance – twice the current capability. This would help aid agencies plan major vaccinations campaigns ahead of outbreaks, protecting hundreds of thousands of individuals.

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News story: Jenrick toasts success of Scottish industry

- Treasury Minister meets with local Moray leaders to discuss how government can support vision for growth
- 205,000 more people in employment and 61,200 more businesses in Scotland than in 2010
- Scotch whisky continues to be a national success story, with nearly £2 billion exported this year alone
- government continues to engage with the Oil and Gas sector on competition and innovation

Scotland's innovators are helping to drive forward the UK's economy, with the number of businesses growing and more people in employment than in 2010.

Treasury Minister Robert Jenrick will today (28 August 2018) visit Moray, as part of his tour of the UK, to meet local leaders and entrepreneurs to lift the lid on innovations that are powering the 'new economy'.

During his visit he will meet with businesses and local politicians to discuss how the Treasury can best support their ideas for a potential Moray growth deal.

The Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, Robert Jenrick, said:

> From booming traditional industries like Scotch whisky, to new innovations in the aircraft industry, it’s clear that the Scotland’s entrepreneurs are getting it right and exporting their goods all over the world.
>
> I want to champion these contributions, which too often go unnoticed, by highlighting the work being done to drive up productivity and ensure our economy is fit for the future.
>
> It is also great to meet with local leaders to discuss their vision for the Moray economy, and how we can support this vision going forward. I look forward to being able to make progress on the Moray growth deal.

During a the visit to Strathisla distillery, Mr Jenrick singled out the whisky industry as a particular success story, which has exported nearly £2 billion worth of Scotch whisky in 2018 alone. He will also meet with Copernicus Technology, which is providing state-of-the-art technology for use in RAF aircraft. And the minister will hold a roundtable to further engage with leaders from the oil and gas sector.

Further information

Scottish economy facts:

- since early 2010, 205,000 (+8%) more people are in employment in Scotland. Unemployment has fallen by 104,000 (-48%) over the same period
- the employment rate is up 5.4 percentage points since early 2010
- the unemployment rate is down 4.1 percentage points since early 2010
- Scotland has the third highest productivity of all UK regions and nations and the second highest productivity growth since 2010 (14.1%)

The Chancellor Philip Hammond highlighted the role of innovators in the new economy in his Autumn Budget and set out the government’s plans to support those who deliver growth, create higher paying jobs and make sure everyone has the skills they need.