

Speech: Women's Aid Public Policy Conference: David Gauke speech

Introduction

It's an honour for me to speak at this event. The wealth of knowledge and experience here today is so impressive and I'd like to pay tribute to Katie, and to everyone at Women's Aid for making this conference happen, and thank our hosts and sponsors Freshfields and Lloyds for hosting this event.

The space for discussion and the sharing of best practice it provides, is an opportunity to really influence our approach to domestic abuse and strengthen our response to an abhorrent behaviour that often hides in plain sight and creates a type of suffering that skulks in the shadows.

With an estimated 2 million adults – straight, gay, partners, and parents – affected each year; with between a quarter and a third of children in this country having been exposed to it; with too many people suffering in silence, fearful of consequences for them and their abuser; with families left unable to flourish because of the devastating effects of it; with almost 60 per cent of female offenders in the system having experienced it; and with an estimated economic and social cost of £66 billion each year, it is crucial that we recognise our duty to protect and support the victims of domestic abuse.

That duty is what prompted the government to commit to a new approach on this and to introducing a new draft Domestic Abuse Bill to Parliament.

Draft Domestic Abuse Bill and consultation response

As you know, in March last year we set out our proposals for that Bill and began a period of consultation so that all interested parties, including survivors, as well as support organisations and frontline professionals could contribute to the process.

That includes many of you here today and let me say how grateful I am to all of you who responded and particular thanks go to Women's Aid – not only for responding to the consultation but for keeping up the pressure to ensure that domestic abuse remains at the top of the agenda.

The consultation allowed us to get to this point – harnessing a wealth of knowledge, experience, and expertise – so that we could draft a better Bill and strategy for dealing with domestic abuse.

I realise we only published our response and the new draft Bill on Monday so you will still be digesting its contents. With that in mind, I wanted to take this opportunity to talk you through them.

Promoting awareness

When we started the consultation process we did so with an open mind but with four key objectives.

Our first was promoting awareness. The idea that domestic abuse is something for families to address behind closed doors is now, thankfully, an outdated one. However, you told us that we need to do more to make domestic abuse better understood by everyone – so that victims know that they need not suffer in silence; and professionals – whether that be the police, teachers, GPs, or social workers – know the signs of abuse and are equipped to challenge it.

That means it is crucial that we raise awareness with the public. We recognise that if we want to change attitudes we must engage with children at the earliest opportunity, which is why we will be introducing Relationship Education in all primary schools and Relationship and Sex Education in all secondary schools and recently consulted on draft guidance.

In primary schools, the draft statutory guidance advises schools to teach the foundation knowledge of what constitutes healthy, respectful relationships. At secondary level, teaching will build on the knowledge gained at primary and introduce concepts about healthy intimate relationships, for example laws and concepts of consent, harassment and abuse.

To raise awareness more widely, we are funding projects and helplines that aim to improve community awareness of domestic abuse; and the Department for Work and Pensions is updating its communication materials to better signpost victims to support.

We will also introduce a statutory definition of domestic abuse, capturing the various types of abusive relationships that can exist, including economic abuse. To aid agencies in the way they identify domestic abuse, this definition will be accompanied by statutory guidance. At the same time, we will invest in domestic abuse training to include the police, social workers and probation services – as well as continuing to work alongside NHS England to raise the profile of domestic abuse with professionals throughout the health service. What we want is for victims to recognise that they are being abused and know that when they speak up they will be heard and they will be helped.

Protecting and supporting victims

Our second objective was how we can better protect and support victims.

Clare's Law – the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme – was an important step forward in making information available to potential victims about abusers' history. It is now time that Clare's law becomes law in the very real sense of the word. To do that, we will be able to issue statutory guidance to the police on how the scheme works; and work with them to enable online applications to the scheme – making it easier to access than ever before. When abuse does happen, we must recognise that no two victims are the same.

Last year the government launched our Victims Strategy to improve the experience of a wide range of victims. That includes the many who experience domestic abuse and we allocated £8 million to projects right across the country specifically to support children whose lives have been devastated by it.

We will now increase funding and build capacity for services aimed at disabled, elderly, LGBT+ and male victims; update training and guidance on economic abuse; and introduce a new crisis support system for victims with no recourse to public funds.

We also want to make protective orders simpler and more effective, as well as making them more flexible so that they can better address the specific circumstances of each case. We will therefore legislate for the creation of a new protective order – a Domestic Abuse Protection Order, or DAPO – with a straightforward application process open to the police, the victim or other parties. The Order will also be available in any ongoing family proceeding, certain civil proceedings and in criminal proceedings.

Putting this type of protection in place should mean abuse cannot continue or escalate – keeping victims and their children safe while they consider their options. For the new model to work in practice it will require training for agency professionals and this will accompany the statutory introduction of the DAPO.

I think it's really important that we are alert to the ongoing impact of abuse in the wider justice system. In my opening I mentioned a statistic: sixty per cent of female offenders in the country have experienced domestic abuse. That is a staggering statistic and it demonstrates why our response to abuse and addressing it at the earliest possible opportunity can be so crucial to breaking the cycle of victimisation and offending.

We know that women who are both offenders and victims of abuse can struggle to access support. That's why the Government announced £2 million domestic abuse funding last March to support female offenders. This funding has formed part of a two-year, £5 million investment through our Female Offender Strategy to improve community support for female offenders and women at risk of offending, including to address issues arising from domestic abuse.

I am delighted today to be able to announce the second round of allocations from that fund, including – among others – organisations like Together Women in West Yorkshire who are working on a specialist integrated approach to domestic abuse, housing and support service – to help affected women to find the accommodation that can be the difference between them starting a new life or returning to prison; and Women's Work in the East Midlands who are providing specialist one-to-one domestic abuse support – to help tackle mental ill health, improve self-esteem and provide the kind of training that can help women out of the revolving door of reoffending.

This funding will help agencies responding to domestic abuse to build better links with these organisations and others like them across the country that support female offenders and those at risk of offending.

Making sure potential victims are protected from abusers and doing our best to understand how to help those who are abused are – we believe – two crucial components to stopping abuse and its ongoing effects in their tracks.

Transforming the justice process

Our third objective was how we can transform the justice process for abuse victims. Going through the justice system can be scary and bewildering experience for any victim, let alone one who has experienced domestic abuse. You told us that we should prioritise the safety and wellbeing of victims and their children and offer more support as their cases progress through the system.

This must start at the very beginning of the process and how authorities respond to abuse cases. We know there has been a recent increase in prosecutions for coercive or controlling behaviour – that is encouraging news. But it does not mean that we can take our foot off the gas. We must continue to improve understanding of the offence within statutory agencies so that we can continue to increase prosecutions. As we do that we will also review its effectiveness as an offence to ensure that it continues to disrupt abuse and serves the needs of victims.

The government is also developing national guidance for police officers on serial perpetrators of domestic abuse, improving training so that they can support offenders to change their behaviour; and we are considering the introduction of a best practice toolkit, as well as continuing to test new risk assessment processes and the rollout of the body-worn video.

When cases do go to court, we know that proceedings can be incredibly difficult for victims. We will therefore legislate so that domestic abuse victims are automatically eligible for special measures in criminal proceedings – to mitigate against any further trauma that their involvement in court might cause.

Over the years we have taken several steps to improve the family court process for vulnerable people. We will now legislate to ensure that abusers are prevented from cross-examining victims in person – a practice which can serve as an extension of their abuse.

However, we recognise that we must do more to protect victims in the courts. That's why we have already allocated £1m in funding to Finding Legal Options for Women Survivors (FLOWS), a project providing front-line domestic abuse workers with the legal resources to safeguard women.

We are now allocating £900k of funding to organisations based in a number of family courts – to provide specially trained staff who will offer dedicated emotional and practical support to domestic abuse victims before, during and after hearings. These organisations will also deliver a programme of awareness raising among key family stakeholders and practitioners.

Taken together, we believe these changes can bring about a real step change in the way domestic abuse is investigated and prosecuted or litigated.

Improving performance on domestic abuse

Our fourth and final objective in this process was how we can improve performance. As a government we are committed to using high-quality data to underpin our policy making and following the evidence on what works. We recognise that domestic abuse is an area where we need more data and insightful analysis. So, we will develop means to better collect, report and track domestic abuse data.

We will also look closely at local initiatives, the way agencies respond to abuse, and what the third sector does – so that we can identify the most successful methods and look at how they can work more broadly to effect and bring about change.

Through this commitment we believe we can raise standards throughout the system when it comes to tackling domestic abuse.

Conclusion

This new draft Bill and new approach to domestic abuse is a once-in-a-generation chance to ensure that perpetrators feel the full force of the law. And it is a real opportunity to transform the lives of those affected. I know that you will have concerns about how some of these new measures will affect the wider system.

As with any piece of primary legislation, the Ministry of Justice, working with the Home Office, has presented to parliament a detailed impact assessment that sets out the costs and benefits. We have also agreed to put forward the Bill for pre-legislative scrutiny to give parliamentarians the opportunity to feed in to this landmark piece of legislation and ensure that we get it right.

But I think the prize in this is clear to see – a fundamental shift in the way we as a society look at domestic abuse, so that we can really start to turn the dial on preventing and tackling it.

From raising awareness both amongst victims and those charged with protecting and supporting them, to understanding that different victims require different types of support, to shifting the justice process to work better for victims, collecting and analysing abuse data to drive better performance – we believe that the draft Bill and consultation response we published on Monday can do that.

I cannot thank you enough for the input you've given to us already in creating this new approach. As the legislation enters and makes its way through both Houses of Parliament, we expect the close scrutiny to improve it even further and I look forward to your continued support to inform our thinking as that happens.

Together, we will ensure that perpetrators can no longer hide in plain sight and bring domestic abuse out of the shadows once and for all. In turn, we can end the suffering of millions and ensure that every survivor is free to

flourish.

Thank you.

[Seeking chairs and members for the new disability Regional Stakeholder Network](#)

We are looking for chairs and members for 9 regional groups across England.

We are seeking people that want to make a difference, either as a chair to lead and drive the efforts of their group forward, or a member to share their views and experiences to help government make improvements.

The Regional Stakeholder Network will bring the views of disabled people, local disability organisations, disabled people led organisations, and organisations that represent disabled people closer to government. It will create face-to-face forums and provide a channel for people to share their views about policies and services that affect them.

Announced in December last year by the Minister for Disabled People, Sarah Newton MP, the Regional Stakeholder Network complements existing, ongoing engagement with disabled people and disability organisations across government, and offers an additional channel for organisations across England to contribute their views on government priorities and a wide range of government policies that affect disabled people.

Regional Stakeholder Network's aims and objectives

[Aims and objectives of the Regional Stakeholder Network](#)

Further information is available in the information pack and job descriptions.

Information pack

[Information pack](#) (ODT, 602 KB)

[Easy read: information pack](#) (PDF, 4.32 MB, 23 pages)

[British Sign Language: information pack](#)

Chair job description

[Chair job description](#) (ODT, 7.65 KB)

[Easy read: Chair job description](#) (PDF, 1.59 MB, 7 pages)

Member job description

[Member job description](#) (ODT, 7.45 KB)

[Easy read: Member job description](#) (PDF, 1.54 MB, 6 pages)

Express your interest

If you are interested in this opportunity to be part of your local Regional Stakeholder Network, to represent disabled people's views and work with others in your area and with government, download and complete the chair or member application form:

Chair application form

[Chair application form](#) (ODT, 10.7 KB)

[Easy read: Chair application form you can print and fill in with a pen](#) (PDF, 1.69 MB, 13 pages)

[Easy read: chair application form you can download and fill in on screen, save – then email or print](#) (PDF, 3.41 MB, 13 pages)

Member application form

[Member application form](#) (ODT, 7.94 KB)

[Easy read: Member application form you can print and fill in with a pen](#) (PDF, 1.69 MB, 9 pages)

[Easy read: member application form you can download and fill in on screen, save – then email or print](#) (PDF, 3.67 MB, 9 pages)

Contact us if you require the information in another format.

[Speech: International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2019: Foreign](#)

Secretary's Speech

Ambassdor, distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I'm incredibly honoured to be here today as we remember those 6 million.

Seventy-four years ago, almost to the day, Soviet soldiers advanced into Poland and liberated Auschwitz.

There, amid heaps of corpses, they discovered about 7,000 men, women and children, emaciated, starving, stricken by disease.

These broken human beings were among the handful of survivors of the 1.3 million people who had passed through the gates of Auschwitz.

One of them, of course, was Primo Levi, who was found by Russian soldiers lying incapacitated with scarlet fever, indelibly tattooed with an identity number that he would bear for the rest of his life: "174517".

In his classic, *If This Is a Man*, he struggled to describe the essence of the crime wrought by the Holocaust. He said, "Language lacks words to express this offence, the demolition of a man.

"In a moment, with almost prophetic intuition, the reality was revealed to us: we had reached the bottom. It is not possible to sink lower than this; no human condition is more miserable than this, nor could it conceivably be so.

"Nothing belongs to us any more: they have taken away our clothes, our shoes, even our hair. If we speak, they will not listen, and if they listen, they will not understand. They have even take away our name, and if we want to keep it, we will have to find in ourselves the strength to do so, to manage somehow so that behind the name, something of us – of us as we were – still remains."

Primo Levi and other remarkable people summoned enough strength to preserve their dignity in defiance of relentless efforts to extinguish the last embers of their humanity.

In 2006, I had the life-changing experience of visiting Auschwitz myself with Holocaust Education Trust. The trip was led by the inspirational Rabbi Barry Marcus, who many of you will know.

Before going into the concentration camp, we visited a museum to commemorate the Poles who had sheltered Jews. The penalty, of course, was death, not just for the individual, but for every member of that individual's family.

More than 5,000 Poles took that risk. Many others across Europe looked away. What would each of us do if history repeated itself?

I'll never forget standing on that railway platform where so many human beings' fate was decided by a simple instruction to turn left or right.

I'll never forget Rabbi Marcus singing in Hebrew as we reflected on the horror of what was around us. Nor will I forget the remarkable Polish guard who never once referred to Jews being killed: she always used the word 'murdered'.

And a question that troubled me as I tried to take all this in is, would I have looked away? Would I have done the right thing?

With three young children that I have now whose lives are just beginning, what would I have done?

So today as Foreign Secretary, it is an incredible privilege to honour some of those who did not look away, and who worked for the Foreign Office, or our sister organisation, the Secret Intelligence Service.

One of them was Captain Frank Foley, whose bust we shall shortly be unveiling.

Frank Foley fought in the trenches during World War One before being recruited by the British Government and dispatched to our Consulate in Berlin.

Ostensibly, he was in charge of passport control; in fact, he was an SIS officer – something that the Government has taken the exceptional step of publicly confirming.

After Hitler came to power in 1933, Foley used his official position to issue visas to thousands of Jews trying to escape Germany.

He applied the rules with what might be called sympathetic flexibility.

British visas could only be given to people with financial guarantees, a requirement that ruled out many Jewish applicants. So Foley invented a variety of ways to get around bureaucracy.

Richard Lachs, a Jewish company administrator, was one of many desperate people with no chance of providing any guarantees.

Penniless and unemployed, he had been hounded out of his job in Cologne and forced to take his family into hiding after the Kristallnacht pogroms.

He sought asylum in the United States, only to be rejected because the quota was full.

So he then applied for British visas for himself, his wife and their two children, with no guarantees – and little hope of success.

Richard Lachs's son, Werner, remembered what happened. "It was a Sunday morning," he said. "A friend was there, and the post produced a letter from the British Passport Control Office in Berlin, requesting that my parents

should send their passports to receive their visas. We just jumped up and down for joy.”

The Lachs family did not know it, but Foley found a way of overlooking the regulations. He appears to have decided that since someone else called Lachs had previously been granted a visa, that person’s guarantee could be taken to cover Richard Lachs and his family as well.

“I am 99 percent certain,” said Werner Lachs, “that but for Mr Foley, I and my family might have become another statistic of the Holocaust”.

Today, Werner Lachs is 92. He has nine grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and he lives in Prestwich. A few months before the outbreak of war in 1939, Foley arranged visas for a 24-year-old Jew called Gunter Powitzer and his infant son, Walter.

Yet, by the time the documents were ready, Powitzer had already been interned in Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

So Foley went to the camp himself and demanded the prisoner’s release, explaining that since Powitzer now held a British visa and was entitled to British protection.

Powitzer, who had recently been flogged, remembered how he was “bandaged, cleaned up and shaved” and presented to a “small man wearing glasses”.

“My name is Foley,” said the visitor. “I am from the British Consulate in Berlin.”

The following day, Powitzer was released from Sachsenhausen, reunited with his son and allowed to reach safety in what was then the British Mandate of Palestine.

Had Foley not acted, Powitzer would have stayed in the camp where 30,000 inmates would be murdered by 1945.

Nearly 70 years later, when a statue was raised to Foley in the Somerset town of his birth, a man called Asher Rubin wrote from Israel, “Frank Foley saved me and my father, Gunter Powitzer. Foley’s efforts are responsible for the lives of our family.”

I hope SIS will forgive me if I add that Foley made good use of what is euphemistically called ‘tradecraft’. He would direct Jews to reliable suppliers of fake passports.

He would place them in touch with SIS contacts who knew exactly how to cross the Swiss frontier. And he kept up a steady barrage of requests to London for more visas and more permits for Jews to settle in Palestine.

Yet, as the Ambassador alluded to, the bleak truth is that not everyone in the British Government of the day possessed the same moral clarity or the will to confront the realities of Hitlerism. The policy of appeasement, no matter how well intentioned, was futile and morally bankrupt.

We should reflect that it was not the state as a whole, but remarkable individuals like Frank Foley who did the right thing, made the correct moral choice, often in defiance of the rules.

So here I ask: what would each of us have done if we had been in his place?

Frank Foley died in 1958 having observed the code of his profession and kept silent about his service. Four decades passed before Michael Smith wrote his biography and he began to receive the posthumous recognition.

In 1999, Yad Vashem decided to honour Foley as one of the Righteous Among Nations.

One of the Jews he saved happens to be the father-in-law of my cabinet colleague, James Brokenshire. Others include the grandparents of an SIS officer who is serving today.

Thanks to Foley, many people were spared the ordeal that Primo Levi endured and chronicled.

But even as we take pride in the memory of Frank Foley, we should never lose sight of the hard truth that when the crucial moment came and the moral test was posed, there were too few people like him.

So today, we draw inspiration from his example, and we hope that those inspired will thus never be the next people to look away in the face of atrocity.

Thank you.

[News story: AAIB Special Bulletin S1/2019 published: 25 February 2019](#)

The AAIB has published a [Special Bulletin](#) on the loss of Piper Malibu aircraft N264DB. The Special Bulletin includes validated factual information gathered in the early stages of our investigation. It also explains the aircraft permissions and pilot licencing requirements relevant to a US-registered aircraft carrying out a cross-border flight within Europe with a passenger on board.

We have gathered evidence from radar, weather reports, video of the aircraft on the seabed and interviews with witnesses. Some operational aspects are yet to be determined, such as the validity of the pilot's licence and ratings.

Our priority now is to go through the evidence, much of which is extensive and complex, so we can piece together what happened between the aircraft being lost from radar and it coming to rest on the sea bed. This will help us

understand the potential causes of the accident.

We continue to speak to the families of the pilot and passenger to keep them updated on the progress of our investigation. If any urgent safety issues arise during our investigation, we will issue a further Special Bulletin. When our investigation has concluded, we will publish a final report.

[The AAIB has published a Special Bulletin on the loss of Piper Malibu aircraft N264DB.](#)

Update 4: 7 February 2019

Following extensive visual examination of the accident site using the remotely operated vehicle (ROV), it was decided to attempt recovery operations.

In challenging conditions, the AAIB and its specialist contractors successfully recovered the body previously seen amidst the wreckage. The operation was carried out in as dignified a way as possible and the families were kept informed of progress.

Unfortunately, attempts to recover the aircraft wreckage were unsuccessful before poor weather conditions forced us to return the ROV to the ship. The weather forecast is poor for the foreseeable future and so the difficult decision was taken to bring the overall operation to a close. The body is currently being taken to Portland to be passed into the care of the Dorset Coroner.

Although it was not possible to recover the aircraft, the extensive video record captured by the ROV is expected to provide valuable evidence for our safety investigation.

We expect our next update to be an interim report, which we intend to publish within one month of the accident occurring.

Update 3: 4 February 2019

Having identified a priority search area last week, the AAIB agreed a search strategy with Blue Water Recoveries Ltd to maximise the chance of locating the aircraft wreckage.

The AAIB commissioned specialist vessel Geo Ocean III and Blue Water Recoveries Ltd commissioned FPV Morven and the search area was divided between the vessels. Both vessels began their search on the morning of Sunday 3 February.

Early in the search, the Morven identified an object of interest on the seabed using its side-scan sonar equipment. It cleared the immediate area for the Geo Ocean III to use its underwater remotely operated vehicle (ROV) to survey the area of the seabed in which the object was located. Based on analysis of ROV video footage, the AAIB investigators on board the vessel concluded that the object is wreckage from the missing Piper Malibu aircraft,

registration N264DB.

The ROV carried out a further search of the area overnight, but did not identify any additional pieces of wreckage.

Tragically, in video footage from the ROV, one occupant is visible amidst the wreckage. The AAIB is now considering the next steps, in consultation with the families of the pilot and passenger, and the police.

The image shows the rear left side of the fuselage including part of the aircraft registration.

We intend to publish an interim report within one month of the accident occurring.

Update 2: Wednesday 30 January 2019

Since we opened our safety investigation on Tuesday 23 January, we have been gathering evidence such as flight, aircraft and personnel records, and have been analysing radar data and air traffic tapes. We have been working closely with other international authorities and have kept the families of those involved updated on our progress.

On the morning of Monday 28 January, we were advised by the Bureau d'Enquêtes & d'Analyses (BEA), the French safety investigation authority, that part of a seat cushion had been found on a beach near Surtainville on the Cotentin Peninsula. A second cushion was found in the same area later that day. From a preliminary examination we have concluded that it is likely that the cushions are from the missing aircraft.

From the moment we were notified of the missing aircraft, we have been looking at the feasibility of conducting an underwater seabed search for aircraft wreckage. Based on a detailed assessment of the flight path and last known radar position, we have now identified a priority search area of approximately four square nautical miles. Through the Ministry of Defence's Salvage and Marine Operations (SALMO) Project Team, we have commissioned a specialist survey vessel to carry out an underwater survey of the seabed to try to locate and identify possible aircraft wreckage.

Due to the weather and sea conditions, we currently expect our underwater seabed search to start at the end of this weekend and to take up to three days. Side-scan sonar equipment will be used to try to locate the wreckage on the seabed. If the wreckage is found, a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) will be used to visually examine the wreckage.

We are aware that a privately operated search is also being conducted in the area, and we are liaising closely with those involved to maximise the chance of locating any wreckage and ensure a safe search operation.

Our remit is to undertake safety investigations to establish the cause of accidents. We do not apportion blame or liability.

Update 1: Wednesday 23 January 2019

On Monday night, a US-registered Piper PA-46-310P Malibu aircraft (registration N264DB) was lost from radar north of Guernsey. The aircraft was en route from Nantes, France to Cardiff, United Kingdom, with one pilot and one passenger on board.

In accordance with international protocols, the AAIB is investigating the loss of the aircraft. Since Tuesday morning, we have been working closely with international authorities including the US National Transportation Safety Board, the Bureau d'Enquêtes & d'Analyses (BEA) in France and the Junta de Investigación de Accidentes de Aviación Civil (JIACC) in Argentina.

We will be gathering all the available evidence to conduct a thorough investigation. However, if the aircraft is not found it is likely to limit the scope of the investigation.

[Press release: International Trade Secretary in Davos to get trade continuity agreements over the line](#)

Today (Wednesday 23 January) at the World Economic Forum in Davos, International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox MP will begin a series of high-level meetings with trade ministers from across the world.

Over the next two days, Dr Fox will be meeting with trade ministers from South Korea, Hong Kong, Canada, Colombia and Israel among others, as the Government works to ensure continuity of trade for UK businesses trading with nations covered by existing EU trade agreements. This drive to get deals over the line in the run-up to Brexit follows significant progress made in finalising continuity trade agreements with Australia, New Zealand and Switzerland over the past few weeks.

In addition to trade talks, the International Trade Secretary will unveil Free Trade is GREAT branding, meet with top investors to attract further capital to the UK and host a round table with global CEOs in a demonstration of the UK's commitment to the global rules-based system.

Dr Fox's arrival in Davos comes as Deloitte launch a [new report](#) confirming the UK's position as Europe's leading destination for foreign direct investment (FDI) – attracting more FDI in the three years between 2015 and 2017 (\$140.356bn) than Germany (\$50.074bn) and France (\$43.999bn) combined. Deloitte also ranked London as the world's top city for investment, with more FDI coming to the capital than any other city in the world.

The trend set out in the Deloitte report is reaffirmed by new figures from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) showing foreign investment flows grew by more than £16bn between 2017 and 2018 (up 20% from £78.4bn to £94.7bn).

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox MP said:

Davos is the perfect opportunity to show the world that Britain is open for business: outward looking, open to ideas and confident on the world stage. That's why this week I will be meeting with my counterparts in key countries as we look to finalise continuity trade agreements to ensure our exporters do not face disruption as we prepare to leave the EU.

The figures from Deloitte and UNCTAD are clear – investors trust in the fundamental strength of the UK's economy because of our workforce, innovation, transparent regulatory system and efficient tax regime. We are a nation on the rise and, with my international economic department already working on our independent trade policy after Brexit, we will be able to place the UK firmly at the heart of the world's fastest growing regions.

The week will also see telecoms provider BT confirm that it has been granted new domestic licenses to operate in China following significant dialogue between DIT and the Chinese government. This is a significant milestone for the company as it expands its operations in one of the world's fastest-growing markets.