

UK signs series of international digital agreements at first Future Tech Forum

- UK and Singapore sign deals to speed up trade, on digital identity and on cyber security
- Comes as UK also endorses Prague Proposals on telecommunications supplier diversity

A series of agreements have been signed during the first Future Tech Forum in London to help create new digital trade opportunities, remove barriers to cross-border trade and reduce costs for businesses.

Three Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed by UK Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries and her Singaporean counterpart, Minister for Communications and Information Josephine Teo.

The agreements will underpin the UK-Singapore Digital Economy Agreement (DEA), currently being negotiated, which seeks to enhance the trade relationship and boost digital trade for businesses and benefits for consumers.

An agreement on 'digital trade facilitation' aims to reduce barriers to digitally led trade by encouraging businesses to use electronic invoicing. It will establish a pilot project for the transfer of electronic bills of lading – the main commercial document of the shipment of goods – between the UK and Singapore.

By removing expensive and antiquated paper record keeping, the move will not only help reduce costs for businesses and help drive more competitive pricing for consumers, but it will also reduce the carbon footprint of trade.

A further agreement marks an important step in achieving the smooth operation of digital identity systems between different jurisdictions. It will help reduce barriers in cross-border trade and enable businesses and individuals to use the international digital economy with more confidence and security.

An agreement on cyber security acknowledges the common interest between the UK and Singapore in addressing the international challenges of protecting the countries' interests online, and a shared vision of maintaining the economic and social benefits of a free, open, peaceful and secure cyberspace.

Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

The Future Tech Forum is bringing global leaders together to discuss how we can use tech to create a greener, healthier and safer world.

The deals signed today will reduce costs for businesses and make it easier for our thriving impact startups to trade internationally and create wealth and jobs across the country.

It has been a pleasure hosting the UK's G7 Presidency and working together we will continue to create a more productive and resilient global economy with digital technology at its heart.

The Future Tech Forum marks the end of the UK's G7 Digital and Tech Presidency, its work on the 'digital and tech track', and builds on the G7 digital and technology ministers' declaration signed in April, which identified six priorities to recover from the pandemic and create a more productive and resilient global economy with digital technology at its heart.

The UK will tomorrow (Tuesday 30 November) issue a joint G7 presidency statement highlighting the progress in the digital field made through collaboration with members and partners. This includes reforming domestic legislation for the uptake of electronic transferable records, securing more resilient and secure supply chains, increasing collaboration on data sharing to benefit consumers, encouraging competition in digital markets and improving internet safety. The UK now hands the presidency to Germany.

The UK also today confirms it will endorse the Prague Proposals on telecommunications supplier diversity, which will guide international efforts to advance and promote diversity in the telecoms supply chain so countries are not left dependent on a small number of operators to build their networks.

The proposals highlight the importance of working together to achieve open and interoperable networks where companies can mix and match equipment and components from a variety of vendors to boost security and drive competition and innovation in the telecoms supply chain. UK work in this area already includes research and development and trials through the £250 million [Diversification Strategy](#).

ENDS