

# Speech: Building a global Britain

## **Introduction**

Thank you for that kind introduction.

I am delighted to be with you here this afternoon during what is my third official visit to China.

I first visited this unique country back in 2008 when I attended the second UK-China Senior Leadership Forum, which we jointly hold with the Communist Party of China.

And it is for similar reasons that I return today, ten years later, leading a delegation of UK Parliamentarians to what is the tenth such forum, which I spoke at earlier this morning.

Now it is fair to say the relationship between China and the UK during this time has grown significantly.

President Xi Jinping came to the UK on a State Visit in 2015, launching the new 'Golden Era' between our two countries.

At the start of this year, Prime Minister Theresa May visited China to renew, strengthen and intensify our relations.

And I am pleased to return today at what is a truly crucial moment in our relationship.

For as we make preparations for our departure from the European Union, the UK Government is determined to realise our bold vision for a global Britain that will follow – an outward-looking, welcoming, free-trading country providing leadership on the world stage.

And there is no more fitting audience to discuss Britain's changing role in the world than a group of Chevening scholars – those leaders, influencers, and decision-makers from all over the world who have experienced British culture, and are committed to building lasting positive relationships with the UK.

You represent the very essence of global Britain – and remind us why delivering that vision is so important to our future prosperity and success as we forge a new role for ourselves outside the EU.

And that is what I would like to talk to you about today: the reasons the UK voted the way we did, how negotiations are progressing, and above all, how we want to emerge on the other side – the sort of country that we wish to build.

## **The vote to leave the EU**

There were many different reasons why people voted to leave the European

Union in 2016.

As some of you here will know, I voted and campaigned hard to remain in the EU – as did many people in the UK.

But reflecting on that campaign, I think that above all else, people in the UK sought to regain a feeling of control – not just control over our laws, but over our lives too, and the decisions that affect our daily lives.

So the British electorate made a choice: they chose the power of domestic democratic control over pooling that control – meaning those decisions being made in Britain by people directly accountable to British citizens.

They chose to strengthen the role of the UK Parliament and the devolved Scottish Parliament and Welsh and Northern Ireland Assemblies, ensuring that more powers go to the devolved governments than ever before.

They chose for Britain to become an independent trading nation once again – free to sign its own trade deals with partners, friends and allies around the world.

And above all, as the Prime Minister made clear in her speech on the steps of Downing Street, the vote was a choice for wider change – to make Britain a country that works not for a privileged few, but for every one of us.

This does not mean we are no longer a proud member of the family of European nations. As the Prime Minister has made clear, we may be leaving the European Union, but we are not leaving Europe. I am confident that the powerful cultural and social ties which bind us together will endure long into the future.

Nor does it mean that we do not wish the EU to succeed: the future prosperity of the EU is profoundly in our national interest and that of the wider world, which is why we are optimistic of a broad and comprehensive trade deal that is in all of our interests.

And crucially, our vote to leave the EU does not mean that we are retreating from the global stage. As Prime Minister May said to President Xi during her visit in January, we are seizing this opportunity to become an ever-more outward-looking, global Britain...

...a Britain that is free to strike our own comprehensive trade deals with nations around the world, including, of course, China...

...while continuing to work together with our international partners to tackle head on the global challenges we will face.

This is what the British people voted for, and that is what the UK Government is committed to delivering.

## **Guiding principles of the negotiations**

It might be useful therefore if I explain the terms of the agreement that we

are seeking for our future relationship with the EU, as set out by the Prime Minister in her Mansion House speech in March this year.

First, the agreement we reach with the EU must respect the result of the referendum. It was a vote not just to take control of our borders, laws and money, but a vote for wider change, so that no community in Britain would ever be left behind again.

Second, the new agreement we reach with the EU must endure. After Brexit both the UK and the EU want to forge ahead with building a better future for our people, and not find ourselves back at the negotiating table because things have broken down.

Third, it must protect people's jobs and security. People in the UK voted for a new and different relationship with Europe, but while the means may change, our shared goals have not – to work together to grow our economies and keep our people safe.

Fourth, it must be consistent with the kind of country we want to be, a modern, open, outward-looking, tolerant, European democracy. A nation of pioneers, innovators, explorers and creators. A country that celebrates our history and diversity, confident of our place in the world; that meets its obligations to our near neighbours and friends and partners further away. A country that is proud to stand up for its values.

And fifth, in doing all of these things, the agreement should strengthen our union of nations, England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales; as well as our union of people.

## **Our future partnership**

So these are the five tests for the deal that we will negotiate

- implementing the decision of the British people
- reaching an enduring solution
- protecting our security and prosperity
- delivering an outcome that is consistent with the kind of country we want to be
- bringing our country together, strengthening the precious union of all our people

In terms of the economic partnership we are seeking, we are clear that as the UK is leaving the European Union, we will no longer be members of its single market or its customs union.

But what we are seeking is the broadest and deepest possible agreement that covers more sectors and co-operates more fully than any other Free Trade Agreement.

We want an economic partnership that delivers the maximum possible benefits for both the UK and EU economies, while respecting the integrity of each other's institutions and autonomy.

I believe this is achievable because it is in the EU's interests as well as ours. While the EU is the UK's biggest market, the UK is also a big market for the EU, so I am confident we can reach an agreement.

And in terms of our future security partnership, we have been clear that our commitment to the defence of Europe is unconditional and immovable. As we have seen recently with events in Syria, Russia and elsewhere, the threats we face do not recognise the borders of individual nations or discriminate between them.

And our security interests do not stop at the edge of our continent.

The UK is investing in critical capabilities including

- our nuclear deterrent
- our two new aircraft carriers
- our world class special forces and intelligence agencies

We are a leading contributor to international missions around the world and we bring to the table influence and impact that comes from our full range of global relationships.

And so am I confident we can reach an agreement.

## **Status of negotiations**

So while the negotiations have covered many complex issues, we are making good progress.

The UK and the EU recently reached an agreement on the terms of a time-limited implementation period from next year, providing certainty for both businesses and citizens.

The UK will no longer be a Member State of the European Union, but market access will continue on current terms. Common rules will remain in place until the end of the period, meaning businesses will be able to trade on the same terms until the end of 2020.

This is a decisive step forward that not only provides stability in the short term, but represents the beginning of life outside the European Union – serving as a platform on which we build our future relationship not just with the EU, but with other countries too.

For we are absolutely clear that in leaving the European Union, the UK will not retreat from the global stage.

Far from it, as a country united at home, we will be stronger abroad, and that means continuing to engage closely with our key partners around the world.

That is why we are clear that China will remain an increasingly important partner to the UK.

During the implementation period, we will be free to negotiate, ratify and sign trade deals with new partners, such as China, while continuing to benefit from the EU's existing agreements.

This will benefit not just the many businesses in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland looking for new growth markets, but Chinese firms too – boosting the prosperity of us all.

And so we hope this agreement on the implementation period will be an important step towards finalising the full Withdrawal Agreement by October this year.

It is in this spirit that negotiations continue with a positive, upbeat vision for life outside the EU that maximises the opportunities available, not just to the whole of the United Kingdom, but to our global partners too.

## **Global Britain**

But if we are to deliver that vision – a global Britain that, standing united at home, not only tackles future challenges head on, but also confidently seizes new opportunities – countries such as China will play a critical role.

As the Prime Minister made clear during her visit, we are seizing the opportunity to become an ever-more outward-looking country, deepening our trade relations with nations around the world, including China.

And we begin from strong foundations. The UK is the sixth largest economy in the world; we are permanent members of the United Nations Security Council; the biggest European defence spender in NATO, with significant military capabilities and a proven readiness to deploy them in defence of our interests; home to world leading universities that attract the best talent from around the globe; top class research and cutting-edge innovation in every field which is the envy of the world; and thanks to institutions like the BBC and the NHS, the greatest soft power of any nation on the planet.

Our relationship with China is already broad and deep, delivering real benefits for both countries – but it can go further still.

For instance, there are huge trade opportunities in China that we want to help businesses from all four parts of the UK take advantage of.

Total trade in goods and services between the UK and China in 2017 was £67 billion – a 13.8 per cent increase from 2016; UK exports to China have grown by 68 per cent since 2010; UK firms are leaders in China's markets in financial services; and China is expected to be one of the UK's largest foreign investors by 2020.

We warmly welcome Premier Li Keqiang's announcements last month that China is continuing to "open the door" to foreign trade and investment. We look forward to continuing to work with the Chinese government to make progress on market access and remove barriers to trade, in order to realise our joint ambition of an open global economy that works for all.

We are also working together with China to confront global and regional security challenges, such as keeping up the pressure of sanctions on North Korea and co-signing the 2016 Paris agreement to tackle climate change. Indeed, there is much more we can do together in the future to combat threats such as modern slavery and human trafficking, serious organised crime, and the trade in illegal wildlife products.

And as we cement our partnership, we must maintain and enhance those vital cultural links which underpin relations between us. It is worth remembering that there are more than 150,000 Chinese students studying in UK universities, as well as thousands of UK students here in China as well – many of whom are choosing to learn Mandarin.

During the PM's visit we also launched Global Partners 2020, a new programme to establish links between future leaders in the UK and China. Indeed, it is by building such links, and by working with groups such as Chevening alumni, that we can enhance and expand these links well into the future...

...and in doing so, carry on down that path towards the future of a global Britain that is China's strong partner on the world stage...

...and as the Prime Minister made clear during her visit in January, write the new chapter of the 'Golden Era' together.

## **Conclusion**

For our relationship with China is, and will remain, a clear priority for the UK Government.

We are fully committed to our Global Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for the twenty-first century, addressing rising global challenges; building thriving economies of the future; and enhancing further the already strong links between our people and our businesses.

I am confident therefore that we can deliver on this bold vision for a Britain outside the EU that remains open for business and is the same outward-looking, globally minded country that we always have been.

If we are to succeed in doing so however, it will be in large part down to the hard work and efforts of many of you gathered in this room.

You provide the cultural and social bedrock which underpins bilateral relations between our two countries – and I have seen during my visit how the UK and China remain deeply committed to our comprehensive agenda for bilateral cooperation.

In short, you are pivotal to the success that global Britain can, and in my view will, become.

That is why I am confident that the 'Golden Era' will go from strength to strength as we head into the future together.

Thank you very much.

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## **News story: Biometric annual report 2017: update**

Once the Home Secretary has had time to consider the report, it will then be laid before Parliament.

The role of the Biometrics Commissioner was established by PoFA and Paul Wiles was appointed as the second Commissioner on 1 June 2016.

His role is to provide independent oversight of the regime which was established by PoFA which came into force on 31 October 2013 to govern the retention and use by the police in England and Wales of DNA samples, DNA profiles and fingerprints.

In addition to various casework responsibilities in relation to DNA and fingerprints, he also has a UK-wide oversight function as regards their retention and use by the police on national security grounds.

The Commissioner's 2017 report, which will be published on this website once it has been laid before Parliament, deals primarily with developments since the publication of his 2016 report.

It covers his casework activities, the general operation of the PoFA regime and a variety of issues that have arisen in connection with its operation in both the normal policing and national security spheres.

If you have any queries, please contact Justin Hawkins on 07792 551301.

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## **News story: Free bus passes for older and disabled people protected for the future**

Disabled and older people in England will continue to benefit from free off-peak bus travel for the foreseeable future, keeping them connected with their local towns and cities.

Bus passengers aged over 65 or with a disability have been entitled to travel free of charge on any off-peak local service in England since 2007, thanks to the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme.

The government has now amended legislation to protect the scheme in its current format, so that it can continue for years to come.

Buses Minister Nusrat Ghani said:

Being able to get out and about is hugely important for older and disabled people to keep their independence and play a role in their local community.

Buses help connect people, homes and businesses and nearly 10 million people in this country are already benefitting from free off-peak bus travel.

The legislation underpinning our important bus pass scheme is now set for the future, meaning this group will be able to access their local services and amenities.

The legislation behind the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme has been amended so that it no longer needs to be reviewed every 5 years. New regulations will ensure millions of older and disabled people up and down the country can continue to make use of buses to go about their daily lives.

In addition to the bus pass scheme, the government provides £250 million every year for bus services in England, £40 million of which helps to fund routes that may not be commercially viable but which are considered socially necessary – ensuring people are connected with their local services and communities.

Francesca Di Giorgio, Inclusion Policy Manager at RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People) said:

Blind and partially sighted people rely on bus services to get to work, visit friends and family, and be part of the community. Buses are a vital lifeline bringing independence to many people with sight loss.

We are really pleased that the concessionary bus pass scheme will continue to run, guaranteeing free off-peak bus travel for people registered blind and partially sighted.

Dave Bracher, Campaigns Manager, Spinal Injuries Association said:

Buses provide a lifeline to many of our members, enabling them to be active in their local communities, commute to work, visit family and friends and undertake a host of other activities.

We know that having a spinal cord injury, like any disability, attracts significant additional costs – and this initiative helps people financially and to lead active, engaged and fulfilled lives.

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## [Press release: Estate agent cartel directors disqualified](#)

This follows an investigation that resulted in 5 Somerset estate agents being fined more than £370,000 last year for secretly agreeing between themselves the fees they charged.

Mr David Baker and Mr Julian Frost were, at the time, both directors of Abbott and Frost Estate Agents Ltd. in Burnham-on-Sea. This was one of a group of estate agents who agreed to fix their minimum commission rates at 1.5%, so denying local home owners the chance of getting a better deal when selling their property.

During the investigation, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) identified that a number of directors were actively involved in the cartel or were aware of it and failed to take any steps to stop it.

The CMA secured legally binding undertakings from two of these directors – Mr Baker and Mr Frost – which have the effect of disqualifying them as directors and preventing them from being involved in the management of any UK company.

Mr Baker has been disqualified for 3.5 years, and Mr Frost has been disqualified for 3 years.

The CMA is continuing to investigate whether to seek the disqualification of other directors of companies involved in the fee-fixing agreement.

The CMA has the power to seek the disqualification of an individual from holding company directorships, under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986, where they have been director of a company which has breached competition law and their conduct makes them unfit to be a director.

This is the second time a disqualification has been secured on grounds that the company broke competition law, the previous case being in December 2016.

[Michael Grenfell](#), Executive Director for Enforcement at the CMA, said:

Agreeing prices with competitors is one of the most serious ways a company can break competition law, as it harms individuals, businesses and the economy.

When, as in this case, estate agents agreed among themselves commission fee rates, the effect is to stop people from shopping around for the best deal on one of the biggest financial decisions any of us make – selling a house.

Company directors have an important responsibility to ensure that

their companies don't engage in illegal anti-competitive practices.

Today's news should send a clear message to directors that if their companies breach competition law they risk personal disqualification.

Notes to editors:

1. More information on this investigation including details of the CMA's full decision can be found on the [case page](#)
2. On 31 May 2017 the CMA imposed fines totalling £370,084 on 5 of the 6 agents involved- the 6th was granted immunity as part of a leniency agreement as they were the first to report the cartel to the CMA
3. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law
4. Under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986, the CMA has the power to apply to the court for an order disqualifying a director from holding company directorships or performing certain roles in relation to a company for a specified period if a company of which he or she is a director has breached competition law. The Act also allows the CMA to accept a disqualification undertaking from a director instead of bringing proceedings. A disqualification undertaking has the same legal effect as a disqualification order
5. The Competition Act 1998 prohibits agreements, practices and conduct that may have a damaging effect on competition in the UK. The Chapter I prohibition in the Act prohibits anti-competitive agreements and concerted practices between businesses ('undertakings') which have as their object or effect the prevention, restriction or distortion of competition within the UK. Any business found to have infringed the Competition Act 1998 can be fined up to 10% of its annual worldwide group turnover
6. 3 out of the 6 estate agents qualified for [leniency](#), which means the CMA will not seek disqualification against their cooperating directors, as long as the estate agents continue to comply with the terms of their leniency agreements with the CMA
7. The disqualification of Mr David Baker takes effect from 11 April 2018 for a period of 3 years and 6 months and the disqualification of Mr Julian Frost takes effect from 24 April 2018 for a period of 3 years. Mr

Baker resigned as a director of Abbott and Frost on 31 January 2018

8. For more information on the CMA see our [homepage](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#). Sign up to our [email alerts](#) to receive updates on Competition Act 1998 and civil cartels cases
9. Media enquiries should be directed to [press@cma.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:press@cma.gsi.gov.uk), or call 020 3738 6460

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## **Press release: Interim Director for Serious Fraud Office announced**

The Attorney General, Jeremy Wright QC MP, has today announced an update on recruitment for the next Director of the Serious Fraud Office (SFO).

David Green CB QC will leave the SFO on 20 April following 6 years as Director. David has overseen major successes and breakthroughs over recent years, including 6 convictions for rate rigging offences, the first SFO conviction after trial of a corporate entity for offences involving bribery of foreign officials and obtaining a number of high profile Deferred Prosecution Agreements.

Following a Civil Service Commission led process, a preferred candidate has been selected by the Attorney General to lead the SFO. They are currently undertaking the final stages of the appointment process and managing their exit from their current position. We will make an announcement in due course and the new Director will take up the role later this year.

Mark Thompson, currently the SFO's Chief Operating Officer has been appointed as the Interim Director and will take on the role from 21 April.

Mark Thompson joined the SFO in 2004. He headed the SFO's Proceeds of Crime Division from 2012 to 2016 and became its Chief Finance Officer in May 2015. Prior to joining the SFO, Mark started his career as a police officer with the Metropolitan Police before qualifying as a chartered accountant in 1997 and working for the National Audit Office and KPMG Forensic.

Commenting on the decision to appoint Mark Thompson as Interim Director, the Attorney General Jeremy Wright QC MP said:

I am grateful to Mark for taking on the role of Interim Director of the SFO. Mark has a wealth of experience in tackling corruption and economic crime and he is well placed to lead the SFO effectively at

such a crucial time. He will continue to work closely with the SFO's experienced General Counsel, Alun Milford.

Economic crime, at all levels, is a growing and changing threat and tackling it is a priority for the Government. The SFO will continue to undertake crucial work to investigate and prosecute some of the most serious and complex economic crime, working closely and collaboratively with other agencies.

I would like to thank David Green personally for his service and wish him well for his next endeavour.

As set out in the Criminal Justice Act 1987, the Attorney General appoints the DSFO.

David Green's term ends on 20 April. This is following a 4 year contract that was extended for 2 years.