

News story: Transatlantic flight guarantee as UK and Canada agree new air arrangement

- Transport Secretary announces arrangement between UK and Canada guaranteeing vital routes will remain in place once the UK leaves the EU
- the arrangement provides certainty for businesses, allowing trade to continue driving tens of billions pounds into the UK economy
- builds on the successful conclusion of the government's air services arrangement with the United States

Millions of passengers will be able to enjoy the same access to transatlantic routes once the UK leaves the EU.

The Transport Secretary Chris Grayling has today (30 November 2018) announced that the UK has reached a new air services arrangement with Canada which will see flights continue between the 2 nations post Brexit.

The deal ensures that planes flying from the UK will continue to enjoy the same access they currently have with Canada, helping the UK maintain its place as Europe's most important aviation hub.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

This new aviation agreement between the UK and Canada will further strengthen the strong economic and cultural bonds shared between our countries.

International cooperation is essential to a thriving economy and this latest arrangement continues to build momentum for the UK as we leave the EU and take a more prominent position on the world stage.

Since 2012, the number of passengers travelling between the UK and Canada has been steadily increasing with more than 3 and a half million people travelling between the 2 countries last year.

Today's announcement with Canada is another step forward as the UK continues to build on an important trade relationship which saw goods worth £17.5 billion traded between the 2 countries last year.

It follows the government's recent [announcement of a new air services arrangement with the United States](#), guaranteeing passenger journeys and further bolstering a trade relationship worth £50 billion.

The deal will replace the existing EU aviation agreement which is currently in place, providing passengers and businesses with the guarantee that they

will continue to enjoy the same access they currently have with Canada.

Press release: UK Minister visits Nairobi for talks on sustainable blue economies and marine conservation

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The UK Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the United Nations, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, visited Kenya from 26 to 27 November 2018.

In addition to leading the UK delegation to the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference, Lord Ahmad held talks with Cabinet Secretary Monica Juma and the Chief Justice. He also met with young Kenyans, refugees, and survivors of gender based violence. In addition to his ministerial role, Lord Ahmad is also the British Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, an issue which has long been a priority for the UK government.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference the Minister welcomed Kenya's leadership on economic development and underlined the UK's commitment to the sustainable use of our oceans. This includes the joint leadership of the Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance (CCOA) with Vanuatu.

CCOA was launched at the April Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) held in London and unites countries around the Commonwealth in their shared ambition to tackle plastics in the marine environment.

Foreign Office Minister Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, Lord Ahmad said:

We have all seen the devastating impact that plastic pollution is having on our oceans, ruining marine environments and affecting livelihoods. It is vital that we move towards a sustainable blue economy, where we stop treating the ocean as a bottomless, free resource.

The United Kingdom, Vanuatu and our Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance partners are determined to make sure our oceans are clean, healthy, productive and biologically diverse. We call on all Commonwealth countries to pledge action now on plastic pollution, whether by following Kenya's lead by cutting down on single-use plastic bags or taking steps to eliminate avoidable single-use plastic waste, before it is too late.

Lord Ahmad also visited the organisation RefuSHE on Monday, which provides holistic services to unaccompanied refugee women and girls in Nairobi, many of whom are survivors of violence. Lord Ahmad heard from the RefuSHE women and girls about the challenges they face, and their hopes for the future. The British business community in Kenya is supporting these vulnerable refugees including with education and training.

Speaking after his visit, Lord Ahmad said:

It was wonderful to visit RefuSHE today, and to hear these brave women and girls discuss their stories, and their hopes for the future.

My visit to this inspirational organisation fell during the 16 days of activism to end Gender Based Violence, an issue which I care passionately about. The UK will continue to do all it can to raise awareness of gender based violence, and support efforts to tackle, and ultimately eradicate it, around the world.

On Tuesday evening the Minister met with young Kenyans for a wide ranging discussion on youth unemployment, tackling corruption, and human rights.

- The UK supported the delivery of the Blue Economy Conference through

funding which allowed participation from Commonwealth Small Island Developing States.

- During her recent visit, the British Prime Minister announced a package of support responding to the issues the next generation care most passionately about in Kenya and around the region. This included support for the fight against corruption in Kenya, through the signature of a framework agreement which allows the return of assets of corruption from the UK to Kenya. It also included support for the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs through the catalytic Jobs Fund, which is due to be launched early next year. See a [full list of announcements made during the Prime Minister's visit to Kenya](#).

Further information

[News story: Shipbuilding firms chosen for Fleet Solid Support competition](#)

A syndicate of British firms, along with four international shipbuilding companies, have been selected to compete for the Fleet Solid Support ships contract, Defence Minister Stuart Andrew has announced.

The crucial vessels, which will deliver ammunition, food and supplies to UK forces across the globe, will work alongside the Royal Navy's fleet of warships and will be an important part of the UK Maritime Task Group.

The British consortium is made up of leading manufacturing and engineering companies Babcock, BAE Systems, Cammell Laird and Rolls-Royce.

They join Italian firm Fincantieri, Spanish company Navantia, Japan Marine United Corporation, and Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering of South Korea as the five successful firms who have been invited to submit a tender for the competition.

Defence Minister Stuart Andrew said:

The widespread interest in this competition shows that our Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary remain among the most prestigious in the world.

These support ships will be vital for supporting our formidable Queen Elizabeth Class carriers and will ensure our warships can deploy in a range of challenging environments and across huge distances, wherever they are in the world.

The five companies, which were selected from eight interested firms, will now develop bids before a final decision is made regarding the winning bidder in 2020.

The Fleet Solid Support ships, up to three of which will be procured through international competition as they are not warships, will be fitted with specialist and classified equipment at a British shipyard before entering service with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary from 2026.

Shipyards across the United Kingdom will be able to bid for this work in 2022.

As part of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, the vessels will be civilian-manned and carry self-defence weapons only.