

Government response: Business Secretary's message of support for Honda Workers

I am sorry not to be able to be with you today. I am attending on behalf of the government, the memorial service at Coventry Cathedral of Lord Bhattacharyya – one of the great champions of the British motor industry.

Honda's decision was, and is, a massive blow to a town and an industry which the country is proud of. I strongly believe it was the wrong decision.

If you are looking to build the next generation of motor vehicles, you need a modern plant; a highly efficient and dedicated workforce; a supplier network finely tuned to meeting its needs; access to some of the most innovative new technology anywhere in the world; and a well-connected location.

Swindon is the ideal place.

I will continue to work jointly with Associates, the Trade Unions, suppliers, Swindon Council, local MPs and the whole local community to make a joint case that is compelling and shows with evidence that this decision should be reversed.

Swindon is renowned for its engineering excellence and I will do whatever it takes to persuade Honda to be part of its future as well as its present.

The health and industry of this town must flourish for years to come.