

# Minister for Asia visits South Korea, Mongolia and Japan to discuss free trade, climate change and gender equality

Ahead of her visit, UK Minister of State of Asia and the Pacific, Heather Wheeler MP said:

As the UK gets ready to leave the EU, its partnerships outside of Europe will take on an even greater significance and importance.

I am looking forward to visiting South Korea, Mongolia and Japan and learning more about the wealth of opportunities for international investment and trade in each of these countries, as well as their approaches to pressing international issues such as climate change and gender equality.

In Seoul, the Minister will highlight the UK and Korea's shared historic, economic and cultural ties, including the recently signed UK-ROK continuity Free Trade Agreement, the first in Asia.

Alongside Korean Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2nd Vice Minister Lee Tae Ho, Minister Wheeler will launch a new Senior Economic Dialogue that will facilitate discussion on the ways the UK and Korea can deepen cooperation in areas such as finance, digital economy and climate change.

She will also urge Korean Climate Change Ambassador Yoo Yeon Chul to join the UK by raising Korea's climate ambition ahead of COP26 in Glasgow and highlight the UK's ambitious new commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 'Net Zero' by 2050.

With a focus on gender equality and female empowerment, the Minister will give a keynote speech at the Chevening Female Empowerment Reception held at the British Embassy Seoul and share her own views and experience as a successful politician.

On Wednesday, the Minister will travel to Ulaanbaatar, where she will meet several Ministers in the Mongolian government. Discussions will be broad-ranging and will cover trade and investment, democracy and media freedom, climate change, the Illegal Wildlife Trade and wider geo-strategic issues.

On Thursday Minister Wheeler will lead the official opening ceremony of its new Embassy office in the Shangri-La Office Tower and then spend the day visiting the world-class Oyu Tolgoi mine in the Gobi desert.

On Friday the Minister will travel to Tokyo, where she will meet with the

Environment Minister to discuss climate change, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs to discuss security, trade, and the UK-Japan relationship following the UK's exit from the EU.

## **Further information**