

Minister for Asia visits South Korea to deliver closer bilateral ties

Minister of State for Asia, Amanda Milling, visited South Korea this week (8 -10 May) to attend the inauguration of President Yoon Suk-Yeol and promote collaboration on bilateral and global issues.

Prior to the inauguration ceremony, the Minister met President Yoon to discuss a range of bilateral initiatives aimed at strengthening cooperation between our two countries. They also exchanged views on regional security and the importance of the international community acting together to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

President Yoon was presented with a letter of congratulations from UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Minister for Asia, Amanda Milling, said:

South Korea is a key security partner and trusted friend in the region, as well as a very important trading partner for the UK.

Our countries have a strong relationship based on a shared understanding of the world's major threats and how best to deal with them, including regional security and Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine.

It was a pleasure to represent the UK at the inauguration of President Yoon Suk-Yeol and I look forward to enhancing and elevating the bilateral relationship, building on our shared values and mutual interests, as part of the UK's far-reaching work in the Indo-Pacific.

The Minister also met Foreign Minister-designate Park Jin and senior South Korean Parliamentarians from the Foreign Affairs Committee. This follows another year in which bilateral relations have flourished. Last year South Korea was a guest nation at the UK's G7 Summit and outgoing President Moon attended the COP26 Summit in Glasgow.

Korea also welcomed the visit of the UK's Carrier Strike Group, headed by the aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, in a clear demonstration of commitment to enhanced security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

Whilst in Seoul, the Minister also took time to visit the Korean War Museum, laying a wreath in honour of soldiers of all allied countries who gave their lives during the Korean War – including 1,106 of the more than 80,000 British service personnel who fought to defend Korea against Communist aggression. She also met with a group of young defectors from North Korea (DPRK), reiterating the UK's position on universal human rights and ongoing support

for the North Korean defector community through the British Embassy in Seoul.