

Minister for International Relations and Welsh language visits the US to boost trade with Wales' most important business partner

The United States is Wales' largest inward investor, with some 270 US-owned companies currently based in Wales employing almost 50,000 people. America is also one of Wales' top trading partners, importing £2.3 billion worth of goods from Wales last year.

During the 4 day visit, the Minister will hold meetings with US companies who have a presence in Wales or are considering expanding to Wales. The minister will also meet with senior political representatives in Washington, New York and Philadelphia as part of our commitment to strengthen relations between the 2 countries.

The meetings are designed to identify and promote export opportunities for Welsh businesses and meet with senior business reps who are considering investing in Wales – either new FDI or expansion plans – particularly important post-Brexit.

During the visit, the minister will address an audience at the World Bank in Washington on the 2030 Development Agenda and talk about Wales' ambitious and far-reaching Future Generations Act. This is the first time a Welsh Government Minister has visited the World Bank in Washington DC. The minister will then host a St David's Day reception on Capitol Hill for key political figures and business leaders.

2019 is the UNESCO year of Indigenous Languages, and on Thursday the minister will be speaking at the United Nations in New York on the unique approach taking in Wales to promote and encourage use of the Welsh language, including through our new school curriculum which proposes to teach Welsh as a first language to all learners. The minister will point out that Welsh is still very much a living language in a society dominated by a global language, which in itself is testament to the remarkable story of the survival of the language against all the odds, at a time when other Celtic languages have declined.

The minister will celebrate St David's day at a joint event with the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in New York in honour of Catherine Zeta Jones.

Speaking ahead of the visit, Eluned Morgan, said:

“This will be my first international visit in my new role and forms part of our continued efforts to promote Wales, and its many

benefits, to the world. We have always been an outward looking nation. We recognise that we have a great deal to gain by working with others. Our international links enrich our country economically, socially and culturally, but we also have much to offer the world too.

“In the current international climate it is more important than ever to maintain close links with one of our most important markets. We are demonstrating that Brexit does not mean we are turning our backs on Europe and the world. The US is the 3rd largest export market for companies in Wales and now more than ever we need to make sure we are doing all we can to maintain these strong links and explore new possibilities for the future.

“Wales has so much to offer the world, from our rich culture and heritage, to our outstanding landscapes. We also have a unique story to tell in the way we are placing sustainability at the heart of all that we do. I believe Wales can provide the blueprint for others to follow in emphasising and protecting our culture and communities, and the environment. We are tackling the challenges of today, while also laying the foundations for a sustainable future. This is something we are fiercely proud of and something I believe we can all learn from.”