

## News story: The visit of Lord Astor of Hever to Oman

Lord Astor of Hever, the UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy visited Oman on 11 – 15 February 2018. His role is to work with the UK Department for International Trade to support and encourage the growth of business links and partnerships between the UK and Oman, and to promote the UK as a trade partner of choice for Oman. His visit reinforced the importance the UK places on its bilateral trade relationship with Oman.

During his visit, Lord Astor had meetings with a range of senior government and business officials. He had a series of key meetings with senior officials to discuss Oman – UK business trade relations and focused on education & training, touring the new Takatuf-Petrofac Oman Centre of Excellence and meeting with the National Training Fund to discuss vocational training. He also hosted an Oil & Gas networking reception and spoke about the strength of the bilateral relationship in oil and gas, both historically and looking forward.

At the end of his visit, Lord Astor said:

“I was pleased to visit Oman again in my role as the Prime Minister's Trade Envoy. Oman is a country I have a long affinity with and it is important to the UK. As a Trade Envoy, I work closely with the Trade Team at the British Embassy in Muscat and organisations in the UK to help boost links and create opportunities for UK and Omani businesses to work together.

The UK is the largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Oman by far, accounting for over 45% of total FDI. The majority of this investment is in the oil and gas sector in Oman, both in upstream exploration and production and, increasingly, in the development of downstream oil and gas industry. Bilateral cooperation on education and training, both within oil and gas and across the board, underpins economic development, and I am delighted to see British industry working with Omani institutions to deliver high quality training in Oman. There is a strong appetite in Oman to see more trade with the UK and we are keen to continue to build, strengthen and support that relationship.”