News story: UK Government raises a dram to Scotch whisky industry

Scotch whisky is a global success story. An iconic product which is enjoyed from Perth to Paraguay and everywhere in between, and has been for centuries.

Not only is it a valuable addition to a Burns supper, it is also one of the UK's most successful export products, worth more than £4 billion in 2017, with 39 bottles shipped overseas per second.

With more than 120 distilleries in Scotland, the industry supports more than 10,000 jobs in Scotland and indirectly supports up to 40,000 jobs across the UK.

The UK Government recognises the industry's importance, not just to the economies of Scotland and the rest of UK, but also as a globally recognised cultural symbol.

That's why in the 2017 Autumn Budget the Chancellor announced a freeze on spirits duty. The freeze will give our world-leading distillers the confidence needed to invest and grow their businesses, and encourage new firms to enter the market. A bottle of Scotch is now £1.15 cheaper than it would otherwise have been since the end of the duty rise in 2014.

The UK Government is also determined to help Scotch reach new markets, through targeted support from the Department for International Trade, and the UK Government's Great British Food Unit. Launched in 2016, it is helping turbo-charge exports, boost inward investment and support emerging British companies export worldwide.

The Scottish Secretary recently met with the people behind Aberlour Distillery to reaffirm the UK Government's commitment to the sector, as well as listen to their priorities as the UK leaves the European Union.

Scotland Office minister Lord Duncan also visited Strathearn Distillery, Scotland's smallest distillery, which has branched out into new products, and developed a range of rums and gins. While there, he discussed issues around Brexit, exporting and the huge opportunities around whisky tourism – which is becoming increasingly popular, with visitor numbers across Scotland increasing.