

Press release: Japan will “spare no effort to support the UK” in joining the CPTPP

Japanese Cabinet Minister Toshimitsu Motegi has welcomed the UK's recent announcement that it is looking to seek potential accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), saying Japan would “spare no efforts to support the UK” in a meeting with Dr Liam Fox, international trade secretary, this morning.

Dr Liam Fox met Motegi, who is responsible for CPTPP, as part of a visit to Japan, the UK's closest partner in Asia.

The UK and Japan are like-minded advocates for global free trade, and building on our existing relationship with Japan is a key element of delivering the UK's first independent trade policy for over 40 years as we leave the European Union.

This is Dr Fox's first visit to Asia following his launch of a [consultation on potentially joining CPTPP](#), and his welcoming this month's signature of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). Japan accounts for nearly half of the CPTPP's GDP, and is the UK's fifth largest trading partner with total trade worth £28 billion, up by nearly 15% in 2017.

Dr Fox is also beating the drum for British businesses based in Japan, meeting a range of business leaders and the British Chambers of Commerce Japan. Further, he is highlighting the value of Japanese investment in the UK, in light of the huge and job-creating investments made in the last year by the likes of Hitachi, Toyota and Mitsubishi Corp.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox said:

As we set our own trade policy for the first time in over 40 years, the government is determined to break new ground by putting the UK at the heart of the world's fastest growing regions, like Asia.

That's why I'm visiting Japan, our fifth largest trading partner, and meeting Prime Minister Abe and colleagues, British businesses and Japanese investors to take our trading relationship to the next level and deliver a new framework for free and open UK-Japan trade. These talks are vital in putting the country at the heart of the Asia-Pacific, a region that will be the engine of global growth in the twenty-first century.

Dr Fox welcomed the recent EU-Japan EPA with Theresa May and Prime Minister Abe agreeing to work quickly to establish a new partnership between Japan and the UK based on the final terms of the agreement. Ensuring certainty to

businesses in both countries is something they have made clear is a top priority.

The 11 members of CPTPP accounted for £82 billion of UK trade in 2016, more than the Netherlands, France or China. The economies of existing members are diverse, spanning a region which is a driving force of global economic growth.