

Press release: New HM Trade Commissioners announced

As the UK prepares for future trade agreements with countries around the world, International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox, today names 2 new HM Trade Commissioners to champion British trade with some of the UK's biggest economic partners.

The new appointments come as the latest ONS statistics show an increase in demand for British goods and services around the world in the year to January 2018, narrowing the trade deficit by £12.8 billion in the process.

Judith Slater has been appointed as HMTc for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, while Joanna Crellin will oversee trade between the UK and Latin America.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox, said:

With the IMF predicting that 90% of growth will come from outside the EU, we need to look at where the emerging markets are and put UK businesses in prime position to benefit. That is why, as an international economic department, we are introducing a new way of doing things with the appointment of our HM Trade Commissioners.

They will have more autonomy to do what works best in their region to improve trade with key markets of the future. Judith and Joanne bring a wealth of in-country knowledge and expertise to their new roles, alongside an extensive network of contacts in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and in Latin America – 2 key markets where British companies already have a well-established presence.

Trade between the UK and the Eastern European and Central Asian region has been blossoming in recent years, with total trade increasing by 9.2% to £30.6 billion in 2016. The demand for UK goods in the Caribbean and Latin America region is also strong with £9 billion of UK goods and services exported to the area in 2016.

These appointments follow an innovative new approach by the Department for International Trade (DIT) which earlier in the year published a list of upcoming visits by ministers, calling on businesses to have their say on 'in market' issues. Dr Fox and his team will be visiting the regions in the next few months, where they will also meet with the new HMTcs.

DIT Permanent Secretary, Antonia Romeo, said:

I am delighted to welcome Joanne and Judith to their new roles. They have both already done a fantastic job promoting the UK overseas and securing inward investment.

DIT's network of HMTCs is the latest example of how we are building a best-in-class international economic department, generating prosperity at home by growing exports, attracting investment and developing our trade policy.

Speaking after her appointment, Joanna Crellin, HMTC for Latin America said:

I am delighted to be appointed to be appointed as Her Majesty's Trade Commissioner to Latin America and the Caribbean. This exciting and vibrant region has great potential with an ever-growing appetite for British trade as markets here continue to grow.

I look forward to building on existing contacts in the region, to raising the profile of the region in the UK, and to building stronger and deeper trading relationships in the future.

Judith Slater, HMTC for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, added:

I'm very happy to be taking on this role at such a crucial time for British trade. There are many opportunities for UK businesses in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, both in the more developed economies such as Turkey and also in the developing markets, some of which are less well-known to our companies. I will be working hard to expand our collaboration with the countries in this region, and thus to unlock more of their exciting potential for UK firms.

About HMTCs

All of the new HMTCs will cooperate closely with HM Ambassadors and High Commissioners, the wider diplomatic network, and other HM government colleagues based in countries in their region, in a joined-up and coordinated government effort overseas to promote UK trade and prosperity.

In total, there will be nine geographical areas that the HM Trade Commissioners will cover:

- Africa
- Asia-Pacific
- China
- Eastern Europe and Central Asia Network
- Europe
- Latin America
- Middle East
- North America
- South Asia

Richard Burn, Anthony Phillipson and Crispin Simon were recently appointed

HMTCs for China, North America and South Asia, respectively.

Further HMTCs will be appointed shortly.

Joanna Crellin

Judith Slater was appointed British Consul-General, Istanbul and Regional Director-General for the Department for International Trade in September 2016. Prior to this, she was Deputy High Commissioner and South East Asia Regional Director of Trade and Investment in Singapore until September 2015.

Her previous posts include Deputy High Commissioner in Pretoria, South Africa from 2007-2011 and British Consul-General in Houston, Texas from 2004-2007. In the FCO in London, Judith's posts have included Private Secretary to the Minister of State responsible for relations with Asia and Head of Nuclear Policy Section in a Non-Proliferation Department. She has also had overseas postings in New Delhi and Canberra.

Judith Slater

Judith has a law degree from St John's College, Cambridge. She is married and has 2 teenage children. In her spare time, she enjoys golf, tennis, jogging and supporting Stoke City FC.

Joanna Crellin took office as British Consul-General in São Paulo in February 2015 in her first post overseas. She is also the Director-General for the Department for International Trade for Latin America.

She has worked for the UK government since 2001, having occupied a number of roles within the former Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) and HM Treasury – covering issues as diverse as nuclear decommissioning, social enterprise and corporate finance.

Joanna has a degree in Social Anthropology, French and Spanish from Cambridge University and a MSc in Politics and Economic Development in Latin America from the London School of Economics. She is married and has 2 small children.

Further information

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