

Press release: PM meeting with President Xi: 1 February 2018

Prime Minister Theresa May today met with President Xi during her three-day official visit to China.

President Xi said that, step by step, China and the UK had elevated our relationship and he looked forward to further building on its success. The President quoted William Shakespeare, stating that: 'What's past is prologue.'

The PM said that, once Britain leaves the EU, we will be free to strike our own trade deals and pointed to the joint trade and investment review which will now take place as the first step towards delivering ambitious future trade arrangements.

President Xi said China's markets would be further opened to the UK, including in sectors such as beef, dairy and other agricultural goods.

The PM and the President said the UK and China would hold further discussions on how best they can cooperate on the Belt and Road initiative, which offers significant opportunities to deliver further prosperity and sustainable development across Asia and the wider world. The PM and President spoke of the importance of international standards and transparency to ensure the initiative's success.

The PM said it had so far been a very successful trip for the business delegation which had accompanied her to China, with deals worth at least £9bn expected to be signed.

The President and the PM discussed their shared commitment to protecting the environment, including their support for the Paris climate change agreement and determination to tackle the ivory and illegal wildlife trades.

The PM said the world had a collective responsibility to tackle plastic pollution on behalf of future generations. She pointed to the work which was being done in China to remove plastic particles from the Yangtze river to stop them from flowing into the ocean.

The two leaders discussed North Korea and their shared determination to bring to an end DPRK's illegal nuclear activity, agreeing denuclearisation was the objective.

They discussed Hong Kong, and reiterated the importance of and their commitment to "One Country, Two Systems".

As permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, they also discussed the importance of the Rules-Based International System.

The PM and President agreed the importance of having frank conversations in

areas where the two countries do not see eye to eye, and looked forward to further deepening their ties in the 'golden era', including in areas such as culture and education.