

Press release: UK and Kazakhstan celebrate 25 years of diplomatic relations

The Minister's visit is the latest in a series of high-level UK visits to Astana during EXPO-2017, the international exhibition to promote safe and sustainable access to energy and reduce carbon emissions, of which the UK is a major participant. Kazakhstan is the fastest growing economy in Central Asia and a valued trade partner for the UK, with the UK's foreign direct investment to the country reaching more than US\$25 billion since Kazakhstan gained independence in 1991.

During his visit, Sir Alan Duncan will deepen the UK–Kazakhstan relationship, focusing on our shared commitment to international security; promoting of our strong trading relationship; and welcoming Kazakhstan's commitment to ongoing economic and judicial reforms. In support of those reforms, the Minister will announce UK funding of £74,000 to help Kazakhstan implement its Anti-Corruption strategy.

The Minister will meet the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan, Bakytzhan Sagintayev and Foreign Minister Abdrakhmanov and host a reception for local civil society and UK Chevening scholarship alumni. The Minister will also give a speech on the United Kingdom's global role at the Library of the First President and tour the capital, Astana, to highlight UK architecture expertise.

Speaking ahead of the visit, Sir Alan Duncan said:

I am delighted to visit Kazakhstan as it celebrates Constitution Day. I extend my warmest wishes to the people of Kazakhstan on this special occasion.

Kazakhstan is an important partner for Britain. I look forward to productive discussions with Prime Minister Sagintayev and Foreign Minister Abdrakhmanov. Kazakhstan has an important role to play on the global stage, including during its tenure on the UN Security Council.

As one of Kazakhstan's top six investors, the UK supports economic and judicial reform in Kazakhstan. I am confident they will help boost Kazakhstan's future prosperity and democracy. In that vein, I am pleased to be able to visit EXPO 2017 and look forward to seeing a number of pavilions.

2017 marks the 25th anniversary of UK – Kazakhstan diplomatic relations. I am pleased our cooperation is as strong as it has ever been and, I am sure, will continue to flourish. More than ever

before the UK is open to the world and seeks to strengthen further its relationship with countries across the globe.