

Press release: Welsh Secretary visits South Africa to build shared trading links

The time has come to take our trade and investment relationship to a whole new level as we leave the EU, Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns will say today when he addresses an international business audience in Cape Town (28 August).

The Welsh Secretary has joined the Prime Minister on a visit to South Africa to meet with a range of businesses to discuss trade and investment opportunities with Wales and the UK.

The Cabinet minister has been invited on the trade mission by the Prime Minister and will work with her and the travelling business delegation to explore how new partnerships between the UK and South Africa can add value to the UK economy and create new market opportunities for British businesses.

While in the country, Alun Cairns will deliver a speech to an audience of over 120 international business representatives and have a bilateral meeting with the newly appointed HM Commissioner for Africa, Emma Wade-Smith OBE on the potential for stronger trading links between the UK and South Africa.

He will also host a roundtable meeting with WESGRO – the official tourism, trade and investment promotion agency for Cape Town and the Western Cape. WESGRO is the first point of contact for foreign buyers, local exporters and investors wishing to take advantage of the unlimited business potential in the region.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

South Africa is a key trading partner to the UK – a long-standing, strong and strategic ally for the United Kingdom in Africa and internationally.

I'm looking forward to exploring trading opportunities for Welsh businesses here, to build on this important relationship and help to create more investment and exporting opportunities for companies from both territories.

Joining Alun Cairns and the Prime Minister on the trade mission as part of a 29-strong business delegation are two Welsh companies – Llangennech based Hydro Industries and Cardiff company Sure Chill.

Opportunities for the companies to exploit the burgeoning green technology market in Africa will be discussed by the Welsh Secretary in meetings with Green Cape and South South North – organisation that works with businesses,

investors, academia and government to help unlock the investment and employment potential of green technologies and services.

Alun Cairns added:

Hydro and Sure Chill are just two examples of innovative Welsh companies making a significant contribution to the global value of Welsh exports which totalled £16.4 billion last year – an increase of 12.3% on the previous year.

This trade mission underlines the UK Government's commitment to continuing that growth, and I hope that we will help open the doors for Welsh businesses looking to seek out opportunities to expand and thrive in international markets.

During his trip, the Welsh Secretary will also take the opportunity to meet members of the Welsh Diaspora, from the Cape Welsh Society to discuss the strength of cultural ties between Wales and South Africa.