

Press release: UK to host Australia-UK Ministerial talks

The UK Government will host Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Julie Bishop and Australian Minister for Defence Marise Payne in the UK for the 10th Australia-United Kingdom Ministerial Consultations (AUKMIN) on Friday 20 July 2018.

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt and Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson will join their counterparts for discussions of high level foreign policy, defence and security issues between the United Kingdom and Australia. This AUKMIN marks over a decade since the talks began and is a chance for both nations to reflect on the enormous progress made over that time.

Speaking ahead of the talks Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

Australia is one of the UK's closest allies and I am delighted to be co-hosting Foreign Minister Bishop and Defence Minister Payne so soon after being appointed as Foreign Secretary. Our relationship with Australia is based on shared history, interests and values, and we have a dynamic modern friendship including a significant exchange of people and goods. The recent commissioning of nine warships from BAE, to be manufactured in Australia, is a sterling example of this relationship in action.

I look forward to our continued work together on global challenges and opportunities – based on our shared respect for the rules-based international system. The fight against extremism and terror, eliminating modern slavery and encouraging global co-operation will be top of the agenda during this tenth AUKMIN. Talks with businesses and government on boosting trade between us when we leave the EU will also be a top priority.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

We are entering an exciting new era for Britain and Australia with our two nations having one of the strongest relationships in the world. With both our world class Armed Forces respected and present all over the globe, defence is one of the pillars of our deep and enduring relationship.

The £20bn Global Combat Ship deal between BAE Systems and the Australian Government demonstrates how defence and our Armed Forces

are not just vital to keeping us safe but also crucial to delivering prosperity, jobs, and keeping our two countries at the height of innovation and advanced manufacturing. I look forward to strengthening our historic defence relationship further this week.

The United Kingdom has a strong and dynamic relationship with Australia underpinned by common values, shared heritage and a closely aligned strategic outlook. Military ties between the two nations are deep and long-standing, including a range of operational and intelligence activities such as joint-operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. The recent awarding of a £20 billion contract from the Australian Government to BAE Systems to build nine British Type 26 Global Combat Ships is a demonstration of the relationship between the two countries creating a safer world.

Further information

- Follow the Foreign Secretary on Twitter [@Jeremy_Hunt](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

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[News story: A big day for our Bus Station investment](#)

BEC has submitted a formal planning application for permission to do the work, which will be the catalyst for wider development of North Shore.

The total Bus Station project cost is £4.1m, of which Sellafeld Ltd is providing £2.6m.

It will create a hothouse for tech, digital, media, and creative start-ups.

Alongside units for fledgling firms, the plan includes:

- conference and meeting space for 75 people
- an artisan food and drink outlet, open to the public
- health and wellbeing facilities

The scheme is part of our Transformation Programme, which seeks to leverage public and private sector investment to help grow and diversify the West Cumbrian economy.

To comment on the plans, quoting ref: 4/18/2292/0F1 visit:

Copeland Borough Council Office

Market Hall Office

Whitehaven

For further information, read the [‘Sellafield invests £2.6m to create Cumbria business hub’](#) article published in April 2018.

[Speech: Dr Liam Fox gives opening remarks at International Trade Summer School](#)

Good afternoon everyone,

A very warm welcome to the National Trade Academy Programme’s first ever International Trade Summer School.

It’s a pleasure to be hosting this special learning programme and I’m delighted to be here with you this afternoon.

You are here today because you are the next generation of global business leaders and policy makers. With that comes the responsibility of equipping yourselves with the knowledge and skills to succeed.

This summer school will allow you to do just that. It will broaden your horizons; deepen your knowledge; and help you prepare for the exciting opportunities available in the global economy.

It is fantastic to see the range of world class academic institutions; undergraduate and masters courses; as well as nationalities that we have represented in the room today.

What you will learn across the next few days will strengthen your understanding of international trade and investment and help you to make positive contributions to the global economy throughout your careers.

I know many of you have travelled from across the UK, and even further afield to take part in the summer school, but you all share a common goal – to learn more about the benefits of international trade and investment.

This is an important discipline that underpins global prosperity.

Yet trade is also more important, and politically relevant, than it has been for decades. One only has to open a newspaper to see trade flows, free trade agreements and global commercial opportunities fervently discussed and debated over.

For more than a generation now, global trade had been on a trajectory of ever-increasing openness. It has never been easier to buy and sell into overseas markets or tap into a world of knowledge and expertise.

This has brought vastly exciting new opportunities. Globalisation and new technology have not only opened up international markets, but have led directly to entire industries that, only a decade or two ago, could never have been imagined, let alone shaped macroeconomic thinking.

There is now unprecedented opportunity to engage openly in international trade and investment.

Both the concept and the practice of free trade are critically important. There is, for example, a wealth of evidence to back up a strong positive correlation between economic openness and growth.

In the 1990s, per capita income grew three times faster in the developing countries that lowered trade barriers than in those that did not.

Similarly, the OECD Growth Project found that a 10% increase in trade exposure was linked to a 4% rise in income per capita. This shows that free trade works.

Free trade agreements lead to transformational changes for businesses, industries and economies, as well as individuals. The results can be extraordinary.

One example is the EU / Korea free trade agreement, which came into effect in July 2011. In that year, the UK exported £2.5 billion of goods and services to the country. Just 12 months later, this had almost doubled to £4.5

billion, as South Koreans discovered a taste for British food and drink, cars, and luxury goods.

On a day to day basis, you and households across the UK experience the benefits of liberal trade policy.

It is the reason that you can go to a supermarket and buy strawberries in December. It is the reason that you can buy a flat screen television today for a fraction of the price of decade ago.

Consumers now have more freedom of choice than ever before.

This summer school is being held at a moment of remarkable success for this country's exporters.

The UK's exports are now at a record high, with exports of goods and services rising to a record value of £620 billion in the year to May 2018.

Goods exports were up 10%, driven by demand for manufactured goods, while services exports rose 4.2% due to strong global interest in the UK's prestigious financial and travel services.

From automobiles to education, financial services to aerospace the UK is world renowned for its high quality products.

Research from Barclays Corporate Banking found that 64% of consumers in India, 57% in China, and 48% in the UAE were prepared to pay more for goods made in the UK, because they perceive the quality as higher.

That is the advantage, and the reputation, that you are taking out into the world.

As Secretary of State for International Trade I am proud to lead a department that is focused on maximising opportunities for British businesses to grow and thrive internationally. The department secures both UK and global prosperity by promoting and financing international trade and investment and championing free trade.

The department was created in July 2016 and since then has grown rapidly. We have already achieved an enormous amount.

We have established a world class international economic department, building the capability the UK needs to deliver our own independent trade policy for first time in 40 years. This will enable us to strike new trade agreements and explore new partnerships with the world's fastest-growing economies.

The department has 3,700 staff across 108 countries. We think globally and seek to maximise our trade opportunities around the world by establishing enduring partnerships and boosting our trade relationships.

I have appointed nine new HM Trade Commissioners – senior leaders with regional remits in key markets around the world. They will champion British trade and support our work overseas.

In May we established a new International Trade Profession, headed up by our Chief Trade Negotiation Adviser Crawford Falconer, to develop a world-class trade policy capability across government, opening career opportunities and cultivating new talent. You will hear more about this later in the programme.

I convened the Board of Trade in October 2017 to meet the modern needs of businesses, exporters and inward investors across the country. Its purpose is to ensure the benefits of trade and investment are spread across the whole of the UK.

One of the initiatives of the Board of Trade is the National Trade Academy Programme, which I launched in March this year and this brings us all here today.

The programme is already delivering this Government's manifesto commitment to forge a new culture of exporting. It is successfully building skills and knowledge through a broad range of initiatives which we have been running across the UK. As well as the summer school these include:

- an exporting 'Ideas Hack' held at the University of Central Lancaster;
- a Global Trade and Investment Seminar in Stirling;
- the Future of Global Trade Expert Forum for academics and practitioners; and
- an Apprentice Exchange Industry & Trade day at Aston Martin's Headquarters in Gaydon.

We've had fantastic feedback from these initiatives and, as I look around me at the quality of today's attendees, I am confident that this summer school will be just as successful.

All this excellent work, and more, will continue to provide the support needed to ensure that the United Kingdom remains one of the world's leading trading nations.

The total value of our trade with the rest of the world is equivalent to over half of our gross domestic product.

In 2017 a record level of Foreign Direct Investment projects landed in the UK, which is a testament to the UK's attractiveness. This is a ringing endorsement for the strength and potential of the future of the UK economy.

We remain the leading destination for inward investment in Europe.

Just last month our annual Foreign Direct Investment report showed that foreign investment created 76,000 jobs last year and safeguarded a further 15,000, amounting to nearly 1,500 jobs per week across the country.

Through our Outward Direct Investment strategy we are developing new ways to help British companies that invest and operate overseas to grow their global footprint.

Later today you will hear from the Chief Executive of UK Export Finance, Louis Taylor, who will explain how UKEF support this. They have already

launched an enhanced overseas investment insurance scheme to protect UK firms investing abroad.

This is just a taste of some of the fascinating and transformative work that goes on across this department and how we are having a positive impact.

Over the course of the summer school you will have the opportunity to meet with a variety of senior officials from the department and explore these areas further.

You will hear from senior leaders from across business including Barclays, Santander and Morgan Stanley; from supporting organisations including the City of London Corporation and the Institute of Exports & Investments; as well as from companies who have achieved exporting success.

This really is an unparalleled opportunity to develop your knowledge and understanding.

From your studies to date you will already know that the world's economies are more interconnected than ever. I'm sure that many of you aspire to, and will, pursue fascinating careers in international trade and investment.

So I encourage you to embrace this opportunity. Listen to the expert speakers, ask questions, build your networks, and use the 'export strategy challenge' to apply what you learn across this week. There is an expert panel lined up for the final day to evaluate your export strategy pitches and provide valuable feedback to take away.

Finally, wherever your careers lead you in the future, whether you are based in your home towns across the UK, Italy, Cambodia or the Ivory Coast – one thing you all must remember is how important international trade is, not only to the UK economy, but to global prosperity.

Thank you. I have some time for questions.

[News story: Welsh employment rates at record high](#)

The Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns has welcomed the latest job statistics which highlight that the employment rate in Wales is now at a record high of 74.0%

- The employment level in Wales is up 5,000 on the quarter and up 12,000 on the year. The employment rate is now at a record high at 74.0%, beating the previous record high of 73.5%.
- The unemployment level in Wales is down 1,000 on the quarter and down

1,000 on the year. The unemployment rate is now 4.5%, above the UK average (which is 4.2%).

- Total employment for the UK is up 137,000 on the quarter and up 388,000 on the year. The employment rate is now at a record high of 75.7%, beating the previous record high of 75.6%.
- Total UK unemployment is down 12,000 on the quarter and down 84,000 on the year. The unemployment rate remains at 4.2%.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

The record high Welsh employment figures released today are a testament to the UK Government's commitment to creating the right conditions for economic growth and jobs in Wales.

The decision to scrap the Severn tolls and the UK Government's commitment to increasing Welsh export opportunities for example, have not only promoted job growth but have also created sustainable employment levels that rise each year.

However, we must not forget there is still more to be done to bring down levels of unemployment. I will continue to do everything I can to demonstrate the strength of the Welsh economy to businesses worldwide, promoting inward investment and stimulating further job creation across Wales.

[News story: Liam Fox delivers Parliament and the public a central role in post-Brexit UK trade agreements](#)

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox, today set out major new proposals ensuring that MPs, the Devolved Administrations, businesses and the public can influence Britain's post-Brexit trade, designed to ensure future agreements create prosperity across the whole of the UK.

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox said:

For the first time in over 40 years the UK will have the chance to decide who we trade with and on what terms. Those decisions must work of the whole of the UK, and that is why we are making this unprecedented commitment to transparency and inclusiveness for our

MPs, the Devolved Administrations, businesses, civil society groups, trade unions and the public.

As an international economic department, we have the chance to deliver trade agreements that work for consumers and businesses across the UK. The more input we get on these, the better they will be.

Public consultations:

Dr Fox announced the government's intention that a 14-week consultation will run ahead of any new negotiation, allowing any individual or organisation across the UK to give their view. These will be easily accessible online to ensure as many people get to feed into the government's work as possible.

This is longer than other government consultation periods and longer than the EU runs its own trade consultations for, giving the British public more say over Britain's trading future.

As part of the consultations, the Department for International Trade (DIT) will run events in all regions and nations of the UK to seek their views on how prospective trade agreements could support prosperity and growth.

Expert advice:

A new Strategic Trade Advisory Group will also be created, advising DIT ministers and trade negotiators on trade policy and negotiations.

The Group will be made up of 14 experts drawn from different groups such as business, civil society and unions, with an interest in our future trading relationships and their impact on the UK – from the workplace to consumer choice and the environment.

Individuals will be invited to apply by 17th August 2018 to join the group which will meet quarterly, providing direct advice to ministers and UK negotiators.

[Apply to be part of the Strategic Trade Advisory Group to advise the government on trade policy and negotiations.](#)

Providing evidence:

MPs will be given the opportunity to consider the Government's approach to negotiations and the potential implications of any agreements.

As negotiations progress, the Government will keep Parliament closely involved with regular Ministerial statements and updates to the International

Trade Committee. The Government will – before entering formal negotiations – publish an ‘Outline Approach’ to each negotiation, setting out the high-level objectives and scope of that negotiation. This document will be accompanied by a scoping assessment.

Devolved Administrations:

We will work closely with the Devolved Administrations on an ongoing basis to deliver an approach that works for the whole of the UK. As part of this, we are conducting a series of collaborative policy roundtables with Devolved Administrations recognising the close interaction between trade policy and devolved policy areas.

Parliamentary approval:

Once a free trade agreement is finalised, if it changes existing UK laws, and where necessary legislation doesn’t already exist, then new primary legislation will be introduced. Parliament will also be provided with comprehensive analysis of its effects.

Importantly, Parliament will be able to scrutinise any new legislation in the usual way, as well as the ratification of all agreements through the usual procedures.