

# Speech: CHOGM 2018 – Investing in Global Britain

Good afternoon, and welcome to this 'Investing in the UK' event.

It is a pleasure to have so many of you attending today.

The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting is, first and foremost, a forum of cooperation and a chance to strengthen our partnerships with friends and allies.

This event is, then, a welcome opportunity for me to talk exclusively about the strengths of the United Kingdom!

As Secretary of State for International Trade this is something that I've had the opportunity to practice all over the world, from Sydney to Vancouver, from Bangkok to Bogota – and everywhere in between.

Fortunately, it's a message that I'll never get tired of delivering.

For some less well-informed investors, the economy of the UK begins and ends in London.

There is no denying that our capital is one of the great global cities.

It is the world's foremost financial centre – a hive of commercial activity unrivalled anywhere in Europe with an economy roughly the size of Sweden's.

Moreover, it is a city that continues to be at the cutting edge of new industries. Take, for example, technology.

Last year, new tech companies were founded in London at the rate of one an hour.

In that same period, more tech venture capital was invested in this city than in Germany, France, Spain, and Ireland combined.

I could go on about the merits of London. But the department I lead has a remit covering the whole of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and is tasked with spreading the prosperity and opportunity of international trade across the whole country.

Moreover, today's event is designed to showcase the vast commercial prospects that exist both inside and outside our capital.

Few people realise that almost 80% of the UK's GDP is generated outside London.

The UK remains the number one destination for inward investment in Europe, with an open, liberal economy, a flexible and dynamic labour market,

business-friendly taxation and regulation and a strong, transparent rule of law.

Fundamentally, the UK is a safe and stable economy in which to invest, with a proven track record of returns for our global partners.

I'm delighted that we are joined today by a panel of 6 recent investors in the UK, hailing from across the Commonwealth, who will share their experience of doing business here.

You will hear their stories of successful investments across the country, including:

Seqirus from Australia, whose centre of excellence in Liverpool has created 100 new jobs in developing a new flu vaccine.

South Africa's Fair Tree Capital, whose hotel portfolio spans South West England and the Lake District.

And Royal Enfield Motorcycles, whose new technology centre in Leicestershire involves significant UK-India cross collaboration on engineering and design.

Added to this, I am delighted to announce that India's Wadhawan Global Capital will invest £300 million into the UK over the next few years, supporting 1,000 jobs.

This is just one of 55 potential deals that we have identified across 17 Commonwealth member states, collectively worth over £2.7 billion, and creating some 5,800 jobs.

I very much look forward to learning what Wadhawan's plans are during the fireside chat later in this session.

Our panellists' businesses are part of an extensive pattern of investment that exists between the UK and the Commonwealth.

In the 2016/17 financial year, there were 384 new FDI projects in the UK from Commonwealth investors – 17% of the overall total.

These created almost 10,000 new jobs across the country and safeguarded a similar number.

The importance of our Commonwealth partners to the UK economy cannot be overstated.

India is the fourth-largest source of UK FDI, just behind the United States and China.

In turn, India comes just ahead of Australia and New Zealand, which together have overtaken Japan to land 127 new projects in the UK.

It is no wonder that 2016/17 was the most successful year for FDI in this country's history, given the strength of our regional diversity.

By this I don't mean the bewildering array of accents and cultures spread over this small island, but the regional expertise that exists to support certain industries.

Wales, for example, has recently seen a £3 million investment from the Melbourne-based life science firm Medical Ethics.

The company cited the UK's proven capacity to provide the expertise required to commercialise their technology, including regulatory affairs, manufacturing and clinical studies.

Tax subsidies and patent incentives were also a contributing factor, giving the UK a competitive edge when compared to other locations around the world.

Meanwhile, South West England boasts strong links with the aerospace and nuclear industries, with the presence of Rolls Royce and Airbus, as well as the new reactor development at Hinkley Point, creating a highly skilled local workforce.

The South East is home to globally renowned film studios at Pinewood and Leavesden, while Cambridge and East Anglia plays host to 'Silicon Fen', as well as Europe's most important life science and research clusters.

It also hosts Motorsport Valley – a globally leading cluster of high-performance technology, motorsport and advanced engineering companies that includes the majority of the world's Formula 1 Teams.

The area also contains Silverstone race circuit – familiar to many as the home of the British Grand Prix.

Most importantly, the UK's 2 flagship regional economic development programmes – the Midlands Engine and the Northern Powerhouse – are having a significant impact on Britain's regional prosperity, creating a wave of new commercial opportunities.

The Midlands is now home to the largest number of medical technology companies in the country, with 8 world-class research universities combining their collective excellence to drive cutting edge innovation, research and skills development.

And the Northern Powerhouse has brought together the great cities and towns of the North of England to form a global hub of advanced manufacturing and energy capability.

We have the National Graphene Centre in Manchester.

We have Sheffield's Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre; the home of Boeing's new high-tech component manufacturing facility – much praised when I visited Boeing's Headquarters in Seattle last week.

And we have the National Innovation Centre for Data, which opened in Newcastle last year.

These regions were the cradle of the Industrial Revolution. Now, once again, they are world leaders in science, industry and technology.

And let's not forget Northern Ireland, with its burgeoning machinery and engineering sector.

Or Scotland, which is leading the world in the uptake and development of renewable energy.

With all of these, I hope I have given you a flavour of the vast opportunities that are available in this county and inspired you to look to London and beyond for your investment.

My Department for International Trade is committed to ensuring that the UK continues to be a global leader in attracting foreign investment.

Earlier this month we launched our new FDI strategy, designed to focus our efforts on maximising wealth creation across the whole UK, and to transform DIT from one of the most respected investment promotion organisations in the world, to the most sophisticated.

Our 3-part approach will make innovative use of data in measuring the economic impact of projects.

It will identify those opportunities across the UK with the greatest potential for international investors.

And it will target government support precisely where it will have the greatest positive impact on the economy.

DIT, together with our overseas business partners, intends to fully realise the potential of every part of the United Kingdom, and build a more prosperous future for Britain, the Commonwealth, and the world.

Now, I'm sure you're all as eager as I am to hear from our panellists, but first, I have the great pleasure of introducing the Lord Mayor of London.

For more than 8 centuries, the Lord Mayor and the City of London Corporation have been London's beating commercial heart.

They have been instrumental in the City's success and have forged its international reputation.

This afternoon, we have the pleasure of his views and experience on the almost limitless investment opportunities that London has to offer.

Lord Mayor – welcome.