

Speech: Foreign Secretary remarks during a press conference in Santiago de Chile

Thank you very much it's great to be here in Chile in on the 200th anniversary of the independence of Chile in which the British admiral played a part in not just a political liberation but it was a commercial liberation as well.

And that liberation set Chile on the path to becoming one of the great global countries for free trade with I think 26 free trade agreements with more than 70 countries around the world. And the reason I am here as the first British foreign secretary to come to Chile for 25 years, is to emulate Chile and to learn from you Roberto, and obviously to do a free trade deal eventually with Chile itself.

Because we see great opportunities to develop what is a historic friendship and partnership and later on I will be going to see a new Bupa hospital, British-built, here in Chile.

And it's great to see some of the famous London bus companies like Wrightbus, competing to supply buses here in Santiago.

And we believe that in addition to our commercial opportunities – by the way we have Chile Day in London in September – in addition to those commercial opportunities there is a political opportunity as well.

We see a great chance to be closer to the Pacific Alliance which is a group of free trading countries. For a British audience they should know that is distinct from the Mercosur, which is of course a customs union

We discussed Venezuela, and we share very much the perspective of Chile on the tragic events unfolding in that country. And we discussed the campaign against trading illegal wildlife, and we agreed that it was vile and reprehensible that in the 21st century some countries could support and condone the use of chemical weapons.

This is an old, rich and historic friendship between two outward looking and free trading economies, and as we say on London double decker buses, now is the time to take it to the next level.

Find out [more about the Foreign Secretary's visit to Latin America](#).