

Speech: Looking Back to 2017: Looking Forward to 2018 – UK and Chile – Celebrating Business

Welcome everyone to the Residence for the Embassy Christmas reception. Christmas is a time for celebration, for getting together with family and friends – and that is just what we want to do this evening. A celebration of friendship between UK and Chile.

And I would particularly like to thank the choir from The Grange School for their wonderful contribution to the celebrations. I understand this used to be a tradition, and I hope it is a tradition we can renew.

And there has been a great celebration of Chile in the UK in the last week. The Escuadra Palmas de Peñaflores has been at the London Olympia International Horse Show, showcasing some of the best of Chile's horsemanship and culture. Their visit has had wide press coverage and included meetings with the HRH Duchess of Cornwall and HRH Countess of Wessex. A truly innovative way of rising Chile's profile in the UK.

Royal connections also highlighted Chile's leading role on ocean issues – and further opportunities for partnership with the UK. HRH Prince Charles, The Prince of Wales met with Foreign Minister Heraldo Muñoz, at Our Ocean conference in Malta in October 2014. HRH praised Chile's commitment to ocean issues, as shown by the commitment to over 1 million square kilometres of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). This is also an important theme for the UK.

Only yesterday, there were discussions in Parliament on ocean issues, led by Sir Alan Duncan, the FCO Minister for the Americas. Sir Alan highlighted the UK's Blue Belt Initiative – a global programme, in partnership with the UK's Overseas Territories, with a commitment to protect over 4 million square kilometres of ocean by 2020.

As we highlighted in the UK presence at IMPAC4 – the major conference on MPAs, convened by Chile in September 2017, there is much the UK and Chile can do together on this agenda, both sharing experience and learning, and encouraging global dialogue and action. As can be seen in the fantastic new BBC series 'Blue Planet II' by Sir David Attenborough, the ocean is fundamental to the future of our planet. Sustainable use of resources, combined with demands of economic development, against a backdrop of global maritime trade and security means we are all going to need to develop innovative approaches, in partnership. I hope that Chile and the UK will further develop their partnership on this agenda.

Innovation was a major theme last night with the launch of Chile's Congreso del Futuro 2018 – a major initiative involving over 100 of the world's top scientists and thinkers – many of them British. We look forward to welcoming the British speakers in January 2018. The world, and the global economy is

changing rapidly, shaped by the emergence of new technologies. Our work on Science and Innovation has continued to be a major priority of the Embassy in the last year, facilitated through projects under the Newton Fund.

Looking to the future the UK's Industrial Strategy launched earlier this month. The 'UK Industrial Strategy – A Leading Destination to Invest and Grow' – ensures the UK remains one of the best places in the world to innovate, do business, invest and create jobs. It sets out how we welcome investment from overseas, participate in global supply chains, and buy and sell goods and services from all over the world. It highlights Britain's leading expertise, skills and global leadership in key emerging sectors such as artificial intelligence, big data, clean energy, and self driving transport.

During this last year, the Embassy has promoted new links and collaborations here in Chile in many advanced high tech areas. For example the Government of Chile has promoted the introduction of BIM – building information management methodology in all future infrastructure projects. The Embassy has encouraged projects and partnerships in mining, on climate change, clean energy and growth and green finance. We have showcased ideas and technology – for example in transport – the 'bus de dos pisos' pilot which showed to citizens how modern manufacturing and innovation can give a cost effective, customer friendly, solution to modern transport. We have furthered links on satellite technology, in life sciences and promoted the exchange of ideas and challenges on cyber security. We want to do more.

In a fast changing world, there are major global trends that are significant not just for our economies, markets and people, but for societies across the world. Our Industrial Strategy includes four 'Grand Challenges': Growing our Artificial Intelligence and Data-Driven Economy, Clean Growth, the Future of Mobility and our Ageing Society. The UK is committed to being at the cutting edge of innovation in these areas and to working with international partners such as Chile – and partners in both the government and private sectors to rise to these challenges and take advantage of the opportunities they present. Areas which create new prosperity for both countries. Areas which help improve quality of life. Areas which create new business, which is central to the work and priorities of the Embassy here in Chile – and always has been.

We have also continued to work in partnership with the British Council, promoting arts, cultural and higher education links – for example the Pacific Alliance seminar on innovation held in Valparaiso earlier this year. A city where we have also shared UK experiences on heritage and urban development; and development of museums. It is interesting to hear of Chile's recent announcement of a new Ministry of Arts, Culture and Heritage. Recent UK reports highlight the economic benefits of a thriving arts, cultural and museums sector.

We have celebrated many historical events anniversaries in this Residence during my tenure here. For example – the 90th Birthday of Her Majesty, The Queen; 50 years of the British Government's ownership of this beautiful Residence; 100 years since the rescue by Piloto Pardo of the Armada de Chile,

of Shackleton 's men from Antarctica; and next year we will celebrate as part of the Armada de Chile's bicentenary, 200 years since the arrival of Lord Cochrane (the man in the hall) to Chile, and his role in the Armada de Chile and the fight for independence, establishment of democracy, and promotion of free trade.

Today, as well as celebrating Christmas, we are celebrating another – and important anniversary, connected with trade. 100 years since the formation of the British Chilean Chamber of Commerce in Chile.

A century of developing UK-Chile business links. A century of furthering free trade to the benefit of both our countries. And today, in this century, the concept and ideals of free trade have never been more important. We look forward in furthering discussions on trade negotiations with Chile and continuing to build and deepen our business links across many sectors of trade and investment. Britain is a great place to do business, as is Chile. I am proud of the partnership with the British Chilean Chamber of Commerce, which is co-located with us in the Embassy, and will now hand over to the Director, Greg Holland to tell us both about the work of a century – and the work for the 21st century to promote business between UK and Chile.

Fiona Clouder, Her Majesty's Ambassador to Chile