

# Speech: PM press statement in South Africa: 28 August 2018

Thank you, Mr President, for your welcome and thank you for hosting me and my delegates here today. It's a pleasure to see you again after your very good visit to London in April.

This is my first time in South Africa, indeed my first visit to Africa as Prime Minister. I'm delighted to be beginning my trip here with you in Cape Town, where of course Nelson Mandela gave his first speech after walking free from prison, standing with you on the balcony of City Hall 28 years ago.

I was honoured today to handover to you and to the people of South Africa the ship's bell from the SS Mendi, and to commemorate the troops who lost their lives when the ship sank in the English Channel over a century ago, on their way to join the Allied Forces on the Western Front. And we will be forever grateful for their sacrifice in a common cause.

The historical links between us are hugely important. But our partnership today should be based on more.

The UK and South Africa enjoy a broad and forward-looking relationship, and we have committed today to reinvigorating it for the future.

## **Trade and Investment**

We want to build on the strong foundation of our economic relationship to ensure the prosperity and security of our people.

The UK is one of South Africa's largest trading partners – with our trade worth over £9 billion last year.

And we have agreed that – as the UK prepares to leave the EU – we must think about how to grow that trade in the future.

So today, as we've just witnessed, we have signed a Joint Statement with South Africa, Mozambique, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and Eswatini to ensure the provisions of the region's current trade deal with the EU continue after this agreement no longer applies to the United Kingdom.

This important step will provide the strong foundations on which we can build a closer trade and investment partnership in the future that brings even greater benefits for both sides.

The UK has long been the biggest investor in South Africa, and is the second biggest investor across Africa.

And as I said in my speech today, my ambition is for the UK to be the number one G7 investor in Africa by 2022.

As we discussed in London, the UK fully supports your drive, Mr President, to attract more investment to South Africa so as to create jobs and economic growth.

And I want to see British companies play a central role in helping you achieve your ambitions, helping create and sustain high quality jobs for the people of both our countries.

I'm sure this is something we will discuss further at our investment roundtable this afternoon with some of the British firms who are travelling with me this week.

## **Science and Innovation**

The UK's plan for jobs and growth is set out in our modern industrial strategy. That strategy has science, research and innovation at its heart and these themes are also a central part of our bilateral partnership.

Our world-class academics and researchers are collaborating at the cutting edge of scientific discovery to help solve shared problems, save lives, and shape a better world for our people.

We are partnering with you to train the next generation of South African scientists, and we will make more scholarships available for the brightest and best African students at world-class British universities – to support the continent's talented future leaders and decision-makers as they develop their skills and careers.

## **Shared security**

I look forward to discussing international issues with the President over lunch – in particular how we can work together to uphold the rules based international order as South Africa prepares to join the UN Security Council next year

So thank you again, Mr President, for the warm welcome you have given me today and for the productive discussions we've had.

We want to be South Africa's partner as we deliver the better lives that our citizens aspire to and deserve. I look forward to continuing to work with you in the years ahead to deepen our friendship and to achieve our shared ambitions.