

Speech: Penny Mordaunt doubles support for plastic recycling

Thank you to all of you for being here particularly to my parliamentary colleagues and Sir David Attenborough. There will be many things and many legacies you would have left, but I think awareness on this issue is top of the list for me. It was really game-changing what the Blue Planet did, really getting the public engagement we need on this issue so thank you for all you've done on that programme.

After the programme, my department got 5,000 letters and as colleagues will know it's really important to me that the people who are providing my budget – the British taxpayer – really approve of what we are doing with that money and I can think of no better initiative to provide some ODA spend on.

This makes complete sense for both national and global perspectives for our aid budget to confront environmental challenge and issues like climate change.

The mismanagement of plastic waste on land accounts for most of the plastic pollution in our waters. Around two billion people lack access to basic waste collection services.

This has a ruinous impact on their health and leads to disaster in our oceans. We urgently need to find ways of reducing the use of plastics and improving how waste is managed in poorer countries.

I just want to give you a quick update on what's happened to date and also, you won't be disappointed here, say some things about the future.

At the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, the Prime Minister launched the Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance and called on other countries to help tackle the problem of marine plastic. Last year we provided £66.4 million from DFID, BEIS and Defra's budget to tackle this issue specifically.

Since then, my department has been working to deploy these resources on various projects.

Just recently as well, through UK aid match we agreed to double the donations raised by Tearfund's plastics appeal and we set aside £2 million for that.

But thanks to the generous donations made by the British public, we are upping that amount and we will match their funds to the tune of £3 million because it is a really popular appeal. And the funds will set up vital recycling hubs across Pakistan and preventing approximately 150 million plastic bottles and other things from entering the ocean each year.

We have also committed £10 million to assist the 19 developing countries that have signed up the Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance. These countries and the UK have all made substantive commitments, such as restricting plastic bag

use and banning plastic microbeads in personal care products. UK support, and sharing experience with countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada, will see the Commonwealth leading the way in taking practical steps to reduce pollution of our oceans.

We're also making available up to £3 million for pilot projects in Ghana, Bangladesh and Uganda to trial ways to increase plastic recycling, with a view to scaling those up. These projects will work with local operations of major corporations such as Coca-Cola and Unilever, governments, and local waste collectors to increase the amount of plastic waste collected and reused locally. This is a win-win, because it is helping the environment but it's also creating new jobs.

The Ghana pilot started in December and it's focused on improving waste management and increasing recycling by leveraging in private sector investment and gathering evidence on what works.

It is led by the Association of Ghana Industries, which is made up of the Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Ghana, Dow Chemical West Africa Limited, Fan Milk Ghana Limited, Guinness Ghana Breweries Limited, Nestlé Ghana, PZ Cussons Ghana Limited, Unilever Ghana and Voltic (GH) Limited.

Last December we also started the pilot in Bangladesh. The estimated total demand for resin in Bangladesh is around 540,000 tonnes per year. And only 10 per cent is made up of recycled resins, with the rest imported from petrochemical sources.

They will work with industry to increase the quality and volume of local plastic recycle and the percentage of locally recycled plastic used by industry, particularly in garment manufacturing.

The Uganda pilot is yet begin, but imminent and is also very promising. Kampala generates 42,000 tonnes of plastic waste each year yet recycling capacity across the whole country is under 9,000 tonnes. We have a partnership between key businesses including Coca-Cola Beverages Africa, government, and civil society to increase the proportion of plastic bottles recovered and recycled locally.

Interestingly, with my other hat on, 80 per cent of Kampala's 6,000 waste collectors are women. The opportunity to support jobs while improving the environment made an overwhelming case for doubling funding for these initiatives.

Furthermore, the Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution programme that we are funding in Africa and South Asia will reduce pollution from plastic waste. And ocean protection and addressing plastic pollution are major themes of the Global Environmental Facility, to which the government has committed £250 million from last year and 2022.

BEIS and Defra are also tackling this issue. For example, BEIS has announced support through the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund to establish the UK as the world's leading innovator in smart sustainable plastic packaging. Defra,

with our support, is funding the World Economic Forum Global Plastic Action Partnership to work with Governments and multinational corporations to fast-track a circular economy for plastics.

And I know that many businesses want to see a better, cleaner world, and are determined to use their organisational and financial muscle. It is fantastic to see representatives from industry here today including Diageo, Marks and Spencer and H&M.

I want to build a Great Partnership with business like that. There will be many opportunities for us to work in concert.

I've just bored Mary upstairs with two initiatives I just want to quickly mention that my department is doing.

First of all, a new initiative to increase the number of partnerships that we are doing, and who we are working with, leveraging technical expertise and really helping businesses that haven't engaged on this agenda to do so and deliver the global goals.

Secondly, the national conversation we're having at the moment to close the financing gap to deliver the global goals. To do what we need to do to tackle this issue we need a lot more money.

My budget's big as I'm always told, but it's not that big, so we need much more money, so we're talking to investors, pension funds and the British public about how we can use their savings, pensions but also investment money to help this agenda. For example, I think we could encourage a lot more young people to save if we had global goal ISA's if they knew their savings were also helping on issues like this.

And I want to not disappoint Theo so I'm going to make not one, but three announcements today.

The first is that in the coming weeks I will co-host with The Ellen MacArthur Foundation and the World Economic Forum's Global Plastics Action Partnership a meeting with major brands, waste management companies and investors. We are going to be discussing about how we can put the global plastic supply chain on a more sustainable footing. This is going to take work that we have done today and really look how we can scale it and deliver it on the scale we need it.

We really want to hear from other companies that want to be involved in that.

Secondly, I can commit today to a doubling of the budget for those waste pilot projects that I started. This is not actually a full delivery of a service we hope to set up, but they are testing projects in different nations to find out what is actually going to work. So we're doubling that up to £6 million.

We will reduce plastic pollution and improve livelihoods through work with business to take very practical steps in developing countries to set up those waste collections and recycle schemes.

The third announcement isn't really an announcement, but more of a cry for help. Obviously, we have to stop plastic from getting into the supply chain that's absolutely the way to crack this, but I also think we need to be looking at ways to clean up what's out there. When I look at where there are clusters of plastic in the ocean, I think the biggest floating island is just off Pitcairn Island. It cannot be beyond the wit of us to find ways of doing this. I've read a lot, I've look at the technology that's out there I know this is tricky stuff, but I think we ought to be perusing that agenda.

I don't have the answers yet, but I want to get to them and if we find answers I want to fund them, so my third point is if anyone has any ideas then send them our way because we are interested in that.

The conversation with businesses will be a chance to gather what insights we can and what projects we could help get off the ground and how we can use UK aid to best support them which is what the British public wants us to do. We all have a duty to the poorest in the world, to our planet and to future generations. I think this is an incredibly important issue and it is also an urgent one.

Thank you to all of those businesses, sorry I had to namecheck them all, because they are doing sterling work, and all of those who are working in partnership with us for really keeping the agenda going without whom none of this would have been possible today.

Thank you.

[Speech: International Trade Secretary at Security and Policing Exhibition](#)

I would like to welcome the many international delegations who are joining us at today's Security and Policing Show – more than 40, I believe – as well as Mark Goldsack, my Department's new Director of our Defence and Security Organisation.

And thank you to the Home Office's Joint Resilience and Security Centre, and ADS for organising such a successful event yet again this year.

The UK's security industry is one of the strongest and most innovative in the world. It is one of our most diverse sectors in terms of both capabilities and application.

You are experts in a wide-range of areas, including scanning, trace detection and anti-theft systems. We are one of the top three nations for cyber-security solutions globally. And we are renowned the world over for our expertise in securing public spaces, building on our experiences at London

2012 and elsewhere – thanks for your efforts.

Your innovation, design, heritage and expertise are second to none.

I sometimes get asked: “What does Britain actually make now?” I’ve no doubt many of you have heard the same thing. I have to point out that we export a huge variety of commodities. In the year to December 2018, we sold £33.3 billion-worth of cars, £24.7 billion of medicinal and pharmaceutical products, and £24.7 billion of mechanical power generator products—from aircraft engines to gas turbines, and from steam generators to nuclear reactors. So much for Britain not producing anything any more; we are actually experiencing a renaissance in manufacturing in this country.

At the Department for International Trade, we also get the little brother of that: “What does Britain actually export?” Again, I tell them that we have an excellent economic success story to tell. Between 2010 and 2018, exports have grown by 40.8%, around 5% per year on average, driven by an increase in services exports of 55.2%.

Exports of goods and services in the year to December 2018 were worth almost £630 billion.

In addition to our world-class goods exports, we are also the world’s second largest services exporter. In the year to September 2018, we sold some £82.4 billion-worth of business services, almost £61 billion of financial services and nearly £38 billion of travel services. Here, across the sectors, the UK has huge comparative advantage. Services account for almost half of all our exports—42.4% going to the EU and 57.6% to non-EU countries.

This sector is a great example of why such questions fail to understand our national success.

The statistics are clear. The United Kingdom is the world’s second-largest defence exporter; the third-largest aerospace exporter and a producer of 40% of the world’s small satellites.

At the Department of International Trade we have been doing our part to further strengthen that success, providing support to UK companies to help them get started and expand their footprint in global markets.

This year alone, the department has supported over 140 export wins.

For example, we have recently helped a Lincolnshire based security systems innovator, Concept Smoke Screen, to secure a £17.5 million contract to export anti-theft fogging systems to Brazil’s banking sector.

Or there is Herefordshire based Silent Sentinel, who have recently sold £2.5 million of surveillance equipment into Poland.

In terms of cyber we have exporters such as Garrison, developers of one of the world’s most secure commercial internet browsing technologies, who have recently secured major deals in Germany and the United States. It is success stories like these that underpin hundreds of thousands of high-skilled

manufacturing jobs, allowing people to support their families right across the country.

This sector plays a vital role in the UK's prosperity: totalling some £4.8 billion of our exports – and it continues to grow.

But it also plays a wider role: creating the products and services which promote global stability in a very direct way, by sharing the means of security and policing with our friends and allies, and, in the final analysis, saving lives.

I am sure you don't need me to tell you that we are at a pivotal time in British history. As we prepare to leave the European Union, Brexit is predictably consuming much of the Government's attention – and a lot of our political bandwidth.

In terms of my department's own responsibilities, our main priority is making sure that we transition the trade agreements the EU has with third countries, and that our trade regime works operationally on day one, in any scenario.

For the Government as a whole the priority is, of course, securing an agreement that the EU and the House of Commons can both agree to.

While I cannot tell you exactly what the outcome of those discussions will be, I can tell you that it is the Government's firm intention for you to have continued access to European markets and supply chains, and to provide certainty for businesses and individuals as we move towards our future deep and special partnership with the EU.

But I would also like to highlight the fact that there is a world beyond Europe and there will be a time beyond Brexit.

While people often think of International Trade as a 'Brexit department', about 90% of our staff work on trade and investment promotion.

Around 130 of those are in the Defence and Security Organisation, our largest sector team by a wide margin, alongside a separate team for civil aerospace.

We recently launched our first ever space exports campaign. And we are making renewed efforts to focus on our cyber security sector, which is driving much of the growth in our exports.

Last April we launched a specific Cyber Security Export Strategy, based on the benefits of trade prosperity and our own national security, and I am glad to see so many representatives from companies in that area here this evening.

Some of you may also have been involved in the work we have been doing to develop a revised Security Exports Strategy, which we hope to publish soon.

It will set out our ambitions to support the industry, working in partnership with other departments, the Government's innovation programmes and trade associations to provide greater levels of support to ensure that the UK's exports in this important sector continue to grow.

This work, in turn, forms part of our wider Export Strategy that was published in August 2018. It is informed by extensive engagement with businesses and business organisations across all parts of the UK.

One of the things we identified in that Strategy was that the Government needed to concentrate our support on where we could make the most difference... .. ensuring no viable export fails for lack of finance or insurance – through our world-class export credit agency UK Export Finance... .. connecting businesses with local markets and addressing barriers to trade... .. informing business about overseas markets, giving them the knowledge they need about local business cultures, regulations, or consumer needs – including the development of great.gov.uk as a one-stop advisory shop...

... and encouraging firms to export through targeted support and in setting up a network of Export Champions – businesses who have successfully exported, and have the credibility to mentor others to do the same.

No-one is better-placed than the Government to talk to other Governments – something that is important to many of you here.

Many of you count foreign Governments as key customers. Even more of you count the British Government as a key customer.

Many of you operate in heavily-regulated areas, where Government-to-Government conversations can make a real difference; helping to connect businesses, opening markets and unlocking opportunities overseas.

And I am delighted to be able to add to that support this evening. Just before speaking to you, I signed an agreement with Sir Kevin Tebbitt, the Chairman of RISC.

This document formalises the efforts we have made with RISC and the many trade bodies that they represent over the last year to strengthen our mutual support for the sector, and we will be setting out our plans for this in more detail in the forthcoming Security Export Strategy.

The Security sector is one of the most adaptable and responsive industries in our country: rising again and again to the challenges posed to our safety and security.

And it needs to be, given the ever-evolving nature of the security challenges we face: whether it be cyber security solutions to protect our data, innovative ways to manage crowded places, or in preventing disruption at large transport hubs.

But I am confident that it is this very adaptability and responsiveness which will underpin your future success and continue to drive our international exports.

The mission of my department – to build a future for the UK's international trade that supports our prosperity, secures our stability and guarantees our security – is a vital one and it is complemented by the efforts of everyone in this room.

Britain stands on the brink of a new era in our trading history, continuing our close cooperation with our partners in European Union while reaching out to friends old and new in the wider world, from which 90% of global growth is expected to originate in the next five years.

Our mission is to open new markets, build new trade and investment opportunities and to use these to underpin the Government's agenda for a truly Global Britain.

It is a vital mission: and it is one I very much look forward to advancing in partnership with this sector in the year to come. Thank you.

Press release: Lord Ahmad: "The UK has an unbreakable bond with the Commonwealth"

Today (11 March) people across the world celebrate Commonwealth Day as the family of 53 nations enters its 70th year.

To mark the occasion, the Foreign Secretary and the Minister of State for the Commonwealth, Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon, attended a service at Westminster Abbey alongside Her Majesty The Queen, senior members of the Royal family, representatives of all 53 Commonwealth countries, schoolchildren, performers and athletes.

Minister of State for the Commonwealth, Lord Tariq Ahmad, of Wimbledon said:

The UK has an unbreakable bond with the Commonwealth; a unique network bound together with the ties between people, common values and shared history.

Our common vision for the 2.4 billion people who make up this family of 53 nations is the opportunity for all citizens to thrive regardless of race, religion, gender or any other status.

As Chair-in-Office of the Commonwealth, the UK is working with our partners to tackle the great challenges of our time: to ensure quality education for all, to protect our oceans, tackle malaria and boost international trade.

Commonwealth Day celebrations are being held across the country. Many will recognise the huge contribution of the Commonwealth diaspora to the rich fabric of the UK: from Ministers to doctors and nurses, to business people, athletes, and teachers.

Last year's Commonwealth summit brought together representatives from all 53 countries where Commonwealth Leaders made commitments to build a fairer, more prosperous, more sustainable future for its 2.4 billion citizens, 60% of whom are under 30.

Further information

[News story: Develop advanced materials with South Korea: apply for funding](#)

In a bid to encourage international partnerships, £2 million is available through Innovate UK and the Korean Institute for the Advancement of Technology (KIAT) for organisations to develop game-changing and disruptive research in advanced materials and the Internet of Things (IoT).

The funding competition is under the EUREKA network.

International partnerships

The competition aims to encourage collaborative, business-led research and development projects with a clear direction towards a new product, industrial process or service.

Projects must focus on one or both of the following:

- advanced materials for transport, prioritising materials development
- the Internet of Things, with an identified industry or vertical sector application

Proposals must demonstrate:

- a clear game-changing or disruptive innovation
- considerable benefit to the UK and South Korean economies and/or national productivity
- definition of where intellectual property can be used and shared between participants and countries
- a route to market within 2 to 3 years of project completion

Business-led progress

Business must lead the project. Research and public sector organisations and charities can be partners on the project but cannot lead in the UK. They can share up to 30% of total eligible UK project costs but are not eligible to receive funding.

Partners must be separate legal and non-linked entities to ensure that projects encourage genuine international collaboration, rather than internal company research.

Guidance for South Korea will appear on the [KIAT website](#).

Competition information

- the competition opens on 18 March 2018 and the deadline for registration is at midday on 5 June 2019
- businesses of any size are eligible to apply
- up to £350,000 including VAT is available
- projects must include one UK-based business and one South Korean-based business
- an online briefing event will be held on 8 April 2019

[Press release: Universal Credit pilot to launch in North Yorkshire](#)

Benefit claimants in Harrogate who still receive old style benefits will be the first people moved onto Universal Credit Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Amber Rudd has announced today.

Amber Rudd has previously confirmed that up to 10,000 claimants across the country who are on the old system would be moved to Universal Credit under a pilot scheme to start in July 2019 once regulations have been passed in the House of Commons.

More than 1.6 million people currently claim Universal Credit, but these are new claimants or people who have had a change in circumstance. All new claimants in the United Kingdom now go straight onto Universal Credit.

The process of moving people from the old system to the new system is known as 'managed migration'.

All those in Harrogate moving to Universal Credit will be personally supported by Jobcentre Plus staff to ensure they get the best possible service.

The goal of the pilot is to learn as much as possible about how to help people to move onto Universal Credit. We will increase numbers as slowly and gradually as necessary, expanding to further locations as required.

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Amber Rudd said:

Moving people from the old and outdated benefits system to Universal Credit is a positive and important moment.

Once on Universal Credit people will benefit from a more personal service and can expect to receive up to 6 benefits combined into one, making it easier for them to manage their money.

But the switch needs to be done carefully which is why we are taking a step-by-step approach to this, starting in Harrogate.

I want to be sure that the switch to Universal Credit is a hassle free process for claimants and everyone receives the personalised service they deserve.

The Department for Work and Pensions will begin to move a small number of people from existing legacy benefits (income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit, Working Tax Credits and Child Tax Credits) to Universal Credit.

As already confirmed, claimants will also receive transitional protection, to avoid cash loss at the point of moving to Universal Credit.

Harrogate was chosen after careful consideration because of a range of factors, including the local jobcentre's significant experience of Universal Credit.

And additional support will be put in place at Harrogate Jobcentre Plus including bespoke support that will also be on hand for vulnerable claimants, including home visits.

The completion of the moving legacy benefit claimants to Universal Credit is set to finish by December 2023.

Amber Rudd has already made changes to improve the fairness of Universal Credit, in January, including that the department would stop the introduction of a retrospective benefit limit on families with more than 2 children.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5141

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