

[Press release: PM meeting with First Ministers of Scotland and Wales: 23 January 2019](#)



A UK Government spokesman said:

Today the Prime Minister met with the First Ministers of Scotland and Wales as part of ongoing discussions to find a consensus around the terms of the UK's exit from the EU.

Both Ministers have been invited by the Prime Minister to attend all relevant meetings of a new Cabinet sub-committee that will bring together work on preparations for the UK's exit from the EU, spanning both deal and no deal outcomes.

This builds on the increasing engagement in recent months between the UK government and the devolved administrations and our commitment to give them an enhanced role in the next phase of the Brexit process, respecting their vital interests in these negotiations.

The Prime Minister also made clear that the right way to rule out no deal is to agree a deal, and that is what the Government wants to achieve.

Published 23 January 2019

[Press release: New figures show](#)

British services in demand across the world

New figures released today (Wednesday 23rd January) show that the UK's renowned services sector is going from strength-to-strength, with an increase in exports to regions across the world.

Services exports grew the most to the Americas, increasing by 2.6% to £74.6bn in the year to Q3 2018. The following global regions also witnessed strong growth:

- Asia – up 1.9% to £42.1bn
- Europe – up 1.7% to £149.4bn
- Australasia & Oceania – up 1.1% to £7.0bn

Asian countries with strong export growth in services include South Korea (up 43.8% to £3.3bn) and Taiwan (up 30.1% to £1.1bn). Services exports to our largest single country export market the US is up to £62.7bn, whilst our trade in services surplus with the country is up to £33.4bn.

The financial sector boasted an impressive increase of 3.9% to £60.9bn, with the largest single country contributor to the increase being the US, which imported £14.5bn worth of financial services from the UK, up 4.1%.

A new report from Deloitte also published today ranks the UK as the top destination for foreign direct investment (FDI) in Europe.

And figures released by the United Nations earlier this week confirm this trend, showing that investment inflows into the UK grew by more than \$21bn from 2017 to 2018.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox MP said:

Today's figures show how our world-leading services sector continues to play a key part in our position as one of the world's largest exporters.

British services, ranging from our renowned financial sector to its expertise in management consultancy are in demand all over the world, with the US alone importing over £62.7bn worth of British services.

As I attend Davos, showcasing that Britain is open for business, my international economic department continues to offer its full support to businesses of all sizes who have the ambition to sell

overseas.

Data released earlier this month shows services exports in the year to November 2018 increased by £2.1bn to £281bn. Our vibrant services sector continues to export far more than it imports, with services exports worth 62% of total trade in services. Last August, the Department for International Trade launched its ambitious new Export Strategy, seeking to move exports as a percentage of GDP from 30% to 35%.

The strategy set out a range of support which will help businesses make the most of significant export opportunities around the world.

Additional information:

- Regions include Europe, Americas, Asia, Australia and Oceania and Africa.
- Data referring to the year to Q3 2018 is non-seasonally adjusted and experimental, whilst data referring to the year to November 2018 is seasonally adjusted.

[News story: Over £35 million to support Scottish universities tackling global challenges](#)

This is part of a £270 million package to support projects across the country to reduce the impact of ocean pollution, improve security of food supply and control infectious diseases.

Putting the UK at the forefront of tackling global grand challenges, this is part of the modern Industrial Strategy which brings government, businesses and organisations together to address challenges of clean growth, the future of mobility, healthy ageing and the use of data and artificial intelligence.

Projects run by the Universities of Strathclyde and Edinburgh will see world-leading UK researchers collaborating with partners in the developing and developed world to tackle some of the world's biggest challenges. These will be backed by over £35 million of UK Government funding, Science and Universities Minister Chris Skidmore announced today.

He confirmed that the One Ocean Hub, led by University of Strathclyde, will receive over £18 million in funding. This will support their work in bringing together researchers and local communities across the globe to protect and make best use of ocean resources, while also cutting pollution and keeping oceans sustainable. This supports the Government's ambition in the modern

Industrial Strategy to maintain the UK's position at the forefront of encouraging the world to move towards clean growth.

The University of Edinburgh will also receive over £17.5 million in funding to lead a Multi-Hazard Urban Disaster Risk Transitions Hub. This will look to reduce disaster risk for the poor by building better resilience into urban planning.

Secretary of State for Scotland David Mundell said:

Scottish universities are at the forefront of ground-breaking research and these new hubs will help these universities build on our reputation as a world leader as they tackle some of the biggest global issues.

The partnerships built in Scotland, between government, universities and businesses are at the heart of how we hope to overcome these challenges. We remain committed to strengthening the strong and collaborative relationship that exists here in Scotland.

Science and Universities Minister Chris Skidmore, said:

The UK has a reputation for globally influential research and innovation, and is at the centre of a web of global collaboration – showing that science has no borders.

We have a strong history of partnering with other countries – over 50% of UK authored research involves collaborations with international partners.

The projects being announced today reinforce our commitment to enhance the UK's excellence in innovation at home and around the world, driving high-skilled jobs, economic growth and productivity as part of the modern Industrial Strategy.

A total of 28 projects across the world will see world-leading UK researchers collaborating with international partners in the developing and developed world to tackle some of the world's biggest challenges – from securing safe food and water supplies, to better understanding the connection between climate and health, as well as creating a global economy that works for all.

Of the 28 successful projects, twelve projects, including the One Ocean Hub, will be supported by £200 million from the Global Challenges Research Fund. The other 16 projects will be receiving a share of £79 million from the Fund for International Collaboration, which will be match funded by partnering developed nations and is aimed at boosting international collaboration on research and development in areas such as future advanced technologies. The successful projects are being managed by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

With UK universities and innovators engaging with their peers in all continents around the world, the international reach of the projects will secure and enhance the UK's world-leading reputation in science and research at the same time as tackling these global challenges.

The UK Government's modern Industrial Strategy sets out Grand Challenges to put the UK at the forefront of the industries of the future, ensuring that the UK takes advantage of major global changes, improving people's lives and the country's productivity. The first 4 Grand Challenges are focused on the global trends which will transform our future in artificial intelligence and data, ageing society, clean growth and the future of mobility.

[Speech: Building stability in Colombia](#)

Thank you very much indeed, Mr President and can I welcome you again to the Council. Thank you for being with us today. I would also like to welcome the Colombian Foreign Minister who has visited us before, but thank you again for being with us. And obviously a big welcome to the Special Representative in his first appearance before the Council. I think you and your team have made a very good start after just two weeks but that was a very helpful briefing. So thank you very much for that.

May I begin, Mr President, and Minister by reiterating our condolences to all those affected by the bomb attack in Bogota last week. There's no justification for such violence and we condemn terrorist acts in all their forms. It is good that the Council was able to issue a statement. I think the attack underlines the significance of the end of the armed conflict with the FARC. It reminds us of the importance of pressing ahead with work to implement the peace agreement in order to consolidate peace and build stability. And I think the focus we heard today on the implementation of the peace agreement has been very important.

I wanted to start where the Special Representative finished by saying that I think the Council has been pleased to support Colombia in this important process and the Council has been united in doing so. As the Special Representative said, Council support is a vital pillar of helping Colombia achieve success in the peace process and as the pen holder I can promise you that we will do our utmost to ensure that continues.

I wanted also, Mr President, to welcome steps that the new Colombian Government has taken over the last three months – particularly towards the effective reintegration of former FARC members and the comprehensive rural development. This is particularly through the development programs of the territorial approach. I was very interested in what Special Representative had to say about the economics – particularly in respect of education and food – and what is happening in the 24 territories. It's very good to have that level of detail.

I think we share the hope set out in the Secretary-General's report that Colombia's peace with legality plan can bring both security and economic development to former conflict areas. And we see the upcoming year as an opportunity for the government to cement and build on achievements over the past two years since the peace agreement was signed. But as the Secretary-General also said there are considerable challenges and in particular I'd like to use today, Mr President, to highlight two issues that we believe deserve the Colombian Government's urgent attention.

The first is that we share the Secretary-General's alarm regarding the increasing killings of human rights defenders and social leaders by organised criminal groups competing for rival territory. The Special Representative gave us some more detail on that. The lack of state presence and the persistence of violence in these areas risk undermining the peace process if people lose faith in the state's ability to provide safety and economic opportunity.

Secondly, Mr President, we concur with the Secretary-General's call for increased coordination across state institutions. A coherent and holistic approach to tackling security and development issues in former conflict areas is vital. The peace with legality plan recognises the need to coordinate implementation with other policies on security, drugs and protection of leaders. Bringing these plans together and, most importantly, delivering them will be crucial to preventing renewed cycles of violence.

I'd like to conclude also by thanking Jean Arnaud, the previous Special Representative for his significant contribution to Colombia's peace process. And once again to reiterate our full support to the new Special Representative and our full support to the Colombian Government Minister. We are fully committed to working with you and the rest of the Council as you work towards securing a lasting and sustained peace.

Thank you very much Mr President.

[News story: New appointments to Marine Management Organisation board](#)

Defra Ministers have appointed Bill Dickson, Peter Judge and David Lyall to the Board of the Marine Management Organisation.

Board members provide non-executive leadership challenge and support to the executive through regular Board meetings, committees and groups.

The Marine Management Organisation is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) established in April 2010 and given powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. The MMO has a wide range of responsibilities, which

include implementing plan-led marine management, licensing marine works and managing UK fishing fleet capacity and UK fisheries quotas.

All appointments to the Marine Management Organisation are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. The appointments comply with the Code of Practice of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

There is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if significant) to be declared. All three appointees have declared that they have not taken part in any political activity in the past five years.

Marine Management Organisation Board members receive remuneration of £11,804 per annum based on a time commitment of 3 days per month.

Bill Dickson

Bill Dickson is currently Vice Chairman of the Broads Authority. Bill has spent most of his career abroad as a diplomat, latterly as part of the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group for the Handover of Hong Kong, HM Consul-General in Northern Iraq, and then HM Ambassador to Mongolia. Until recently he was Chief Executive of Independent (UK) Exports Ltd, Director of UK Operations at MongoliaNation, and a partner in International Export Partners.

Peter Judge

Peter Judge is currently the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) at the North East Combined Authority and, amongst other non-executive roles, is Non-Executive Chair of the South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute. Prior to this, Peter was the HM Attorney General of the Falklands Islands and South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands.

David Lyall

David Lyall is currently a Trustee at Action Foundation and is part of the Senior Leadership Team at City Church, Newcastle. David is on the board of North Star Housing Association. He is the former Chief Information Officer at HCA/Homes England.