

News story: UK is ready to seize Expo 2020 Dubai opportunities

Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman of the Expo 2020 Dubai Higher Committee, welcomed Dr Fox in Dubai and briefed him on the progress in building the Expo site, supported by UK architects and construction firms.

Dr Fox reiterated the UK's support for Expo 2020 Dubai as he handed over its official letter of participation, adding the UK planned to theme its Pavilion around 'Opportunity', focusing on how UK expertise can help spread prosperity across the world.

He emphasised that the UK, as an outward looking country, will use Expo 2020 Dubai as a springboard for strengthening international trade and relations as we leave the EU.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox said:

Expo 2020 Dubai presents exciting opportunities for both the UAE and the UK to strengthen international trade relations as Dubai prepares to welcome 180 nations, and the world's top business leaders and investors.

We have a long history in showcasing the very best innovation and talent on a world stage, starting with the first Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations in 1851. The UK is committed to playing a key role in helping Dubai stage a successful expo. As an international economic department, my department is helping British companies bring their expertise to build pavilions that will be enjoyed by 25 million visitors from around the world.

Our theme 'Global Britain – Innovating for a Shared Future' will set out our outward facing global vision, and further reinforce the many opportunities opening up to us as we leave the EU.

Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum said:

The UAE and the UK are joined by a bond of exceptional, historic relations. This relationship is embodied through the various agreements signed between our countries, from the promotion of investments to air transport and taxation.

The UK was one of the first countries to back the UAE's efforts to host Expo 2020 Dubai and we are grateful for their enduring support, which was reiterated today by Dr Liam Fox. We are looking forward to connecting further with British institutions and businesses as they join us on our journey to 2020 and beyond.

UK's World Expo legacy

The UK hosted the first ever World Expo in 1851 and has played a leading role in Expos over the past 166 years, including at the Expo Milano 2015, where the UK 'Hive' national pavilion won 22 international awards. The Hive Pavilion, which was the UK's top paid-for attraction in 2015 with 3.3 million visitors, has now been erected in Kew Gardens, London, providing education on the importance of conservation.

The UK was one of the first nations to publicly support Dubai's bid to host Expo 2020 and also one of the first countries to publicly announce its official participation.

Prime Minister Theresa May, confirmed the UK would participate in December when she met Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, on the margins of the annual meeting of the Gulf Co-operation Council in Bahrain.

UK – UAE trade and Expo opportunities

The UK and the UAE have strong trade and investment links. About 5,000 UK businesses operate in the UAE and more than 100,000 British nationals live in the country. The UAE is the UK's 12th largest trading partner, and UK exports to the Gulf region were £20 billion in 2015. In finance, UK firms represent 15 per cent of the regulated financial firms in the Dubai International Financial Centre.

British architects and construction firms, including Anglo-Emirati joint venture Al-Futtaim Carillion and architectural company Foster + Partners, are involved in the design and building of some of the pavilions and districts on the Expo site.

Opening on 20 October 2020, the Dubai Expo is projected to attract 25 million visits, with 70 per cent expected to come from outside the UAE – the largest proportion of international visitors in the 166 year history of World Expos. More than 200 countries, companies, charities and educational institutions are also expected to participate.

[Press release: Legal Services are GREAT](#)

The 'Legal Services are GREAT' campaign will target stronger links with emerging and established markets across the world and cement the UK's reputation as the world's pre-eminent legal centre.

The campaign – the latest under the government's prestigious 'GREAT' series –

will highlight the strengths of English law and embed and extend the reach of our legal services to ensure the UK remains the number one place to litigate, resolve disputes and do business.

The campaign was unveiled by Lords justice spokesman Lord Keen at a reception in Singapore this lunchtime.

Lord Keen said:

Our message is simple – the UK is, and will continue to be, one of the pre-eminent legal centres in the world.

Today English law underpins more than a quarter of the world's jurisdictions, and our law firms, courts and exceptional judges are held in the highest esteem right across the globe.

As one of our greatest exports, we want to ensure our legal services sector remains at the very heart of our future as a global, outward-looking, free-trading Britain.

Lord Keen will travel on from Singapore to Sydney in Australia where he will further promote the new campaign while attending the International Bar Association conference.

Secretary of State David Lidington will front a domestic launch event later this year.

The UK legal sector contributed £25.7 billion to the economy in 2015 – double the sum it generated in 2005.

More than 200 foreign law firms from around 40 jurisdictions operate in the UK, while more than a quarter of the world's 320 legal jurisdictions are founded on English common law principles.

And in the 2015 International Arbitration Survey, London was the preferred seat of arbitration for 47 per cent of respondents and English law was the most frequently chosen governing law by a significant margin, selected by four in 10.

Notes to editors

The cross-government GREAT campaign has already been used to promote many UK goods and services, from fashion and food, to engineering and manufacturing. It's a partnership between the private and public sector (previous strands of the campaign have featured brands as diverse as Mulberry, Aston Martin and Tiptree Jams), which has already secured billions of pounds in economic returns for the UK and can be seen in 144 countries worldwide.

The Legal Services are GREAT campaign is part of the government's plan to make the most of opportunities which arise as the UK leaves the European Union and promote an outward leaning Global Britain, which upholds and

underpins the rule of law across the world.

[Press release: Service enabling faster UK border entry expanded to 15 new countries](#)

From today (5 October), frequent travellers to the UK from 15 new countries are eligible to apply for membership of the service, which brings the potential for improved trade and tourism links.

The new countries to be covered by the service are Andorra, Bahamas, Botswana, Holy See (Vatican City), Macao, Maldives, Monaco, Namibia, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Seychelles, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Tonga and Trinidad & Tobago.

They join countries such as the United States, Australia, Canada and Japan who are already benefiting from the service.

Last month, the service – which had previously only been open to adults – was also expanded to the 0 to 17 year old dependants of members, which enables families to access the benefits of the service in order to travel more easily together.

Immigration Minister Brandon Lewis said:

Registered Traveller is one of the many ways in which the government is making it easier for businesses across the world to do business with the UK.

With over 81,000 members signed up to the service already, I look forward to watching the service grow in the future.

Registered Traveller allows approved members, who have undergone advanced security checks, faster entry at the UK border through access to the ePassport gates (if they hold an ePassport) or the UK/EU passport lane.

To be eligible to apply, passengers must hold an eligible passport and have a visa or have visited the UK at least 4 times in the past 2 years.

More information and application forms can be found on the [Registered Traveller pages](#).

[Press release: Mark Field visits Sri Lanka to discuss reconciliation, demining and the illegal wildlife trade](#)

During his two day visit he will meet Minister of Foreign Affairs Tilak Marapana, Minister of Finance and Media Mangala Samaraweera, Leader of the Opposition R. Sampanthan, Speaker of Parliament Karu Jayasuriya and Chief Minister of Northern Province C. V. Vigneswaran.

In Colombo he will meet with families affected by enforced disappearances from both the north and south of the country, and hear of their concerns and their hopes for the Office of Missing Persons. He will also meet UK and Sri Lankan education institutions at the British Council to discuss education, and the UK's world-leading role in transnational learning.

In northern Sri Lanka, the Minister will visit a UK-funded demining operation and meet families living on land cleared of mines. He will speak with British demining charity the Halo Trust and hear how UK support for demining has enabled displaced families to return home. He will also visit the British Council teaching centre in Jaffna where he will talk with young people about their aspirations for the future and the importance of education.

Mr Field said:

The UK and Sri Lanka are long-standing friends, and we are committed to supporting Sri Lanka achieve its commitments on reconciliation and human rights. I welcome the Sri Lankan government's commitment to reconciliation and strengthening democracy. I am looking forward to talking with the government and affected communities about the additional steps that are needed to deliver long-term peace and stability for all Sri Lankans

Having hosted the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 2013, Sri Lanka is an obvious partner in defining and driving a shared vision of the Commonwealth, to ensure it is fitted to deliver for all its member states into the future. The UK will host an ambitious and dynamic Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting 2018, with the purpose of ensuring that the Commonwealth remains on a path that is relevant for the 21st century.

I commend the authorities and all those in Sri Lanka working hard to combat the Illegal Wildlife Trade, and hope to encourage plans to conserve Sri Lanka's unique and beautiful environment.

Follow Foreign Office Minister Mark Field on Twitter @markfielduk

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[News story: Research into national curriculum testing at key stage 2](#)

Ofqual has today (5 October 2017) published [an evaluation of the Standards and Testing Agency's \(STA\) approach to developing key stage 2 reading and maths tests](#), alongside a review of evidence relating to the accessibility of the 2016 key stage 2 reading test. 2016 was the first year of a new suite of tests, which assessed the new primary national curriculum.

The main report evaluates STA's approach to ensuring effective coverage of the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the new English reading and maths curriculum. It finds that STA's approach is robust and compares favourably to approaches taken in similar tests internationally, while acknowledging that there are aspects of maths and reading that cannot straightforwardly be tested.

The subsidiary review summarises a wide body of evidence and data relating to the accessibility of the 2016 reading test, acknowledging concerns raised by teachers at the time. While standards were set appropriately in 2016, the review suggests that the test seemed to be more challenging than the sample materials provided and a significant minority of pupils did not finish the test. The 2017 reading test did not raise similar accessibility concerns, nevertheless, the review suggests areas that could benefit from further consideration by STA.

Dr Michelle Meadows, Deputy Chief Regulator, said:

We are reassured that STA's approach to sampling from the national curriculum is robust. We have identified specific questions that we will continue to discuss with the STA, to help them to enhance the validity of the reading and maths tests, over time, for all pupils.

In regulating national assessments, Ofqual's objectives are to promote standards and confidence in statutory early years assessments and national curriculum assessments such as those at key stage 1 and key stage 2. We focus on the validity of assessment, in particular, on technical aspects such as test development, standard setting or marking. We also monitor wider activity, such as delivery and risk, at a high-level and we provide advice to inform future approaches to assessment. Whilst we do not approve decisions made by the Standards and Testing Agency, our regulatory review can provide

independent post-hoc assurance about assessment quality.

We do not have a role in deciding whether or not there should be particular statutory assessments, or in curriculum policy, accountability policy or internal school assessment.

More information on Ofqual's specific powers and duties in relation to national assessments can be found in our [Regulatory framework for national assessments](#).