UK-led international summit sets new horizons for innovation

Initiatives agreed by 7 nations at today's Agile Nations conference, spearheaded by the UK, range from improving cyber-security in the Internet of Things – where everyday items are equipped with computing devices to connect them to the web – to greater collaboration on experimental approaches to regulation like the use of 'sandboxes' – where ground-breaking products are tested under supervision.

The Agile Nations – made up of the UK, Denmark, Canada, Italy, Japan, Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) – account for 15% of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP). These countries were also joined by observer member Finland who is contributing on an ad hoc basis.

Launched in December with the support of the World Economic Forum and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the network's mission is to make it easier for businesses to introduce and scale innovations across markets while upholding protections for citizens and the environment.

Business Minister Lord Callanan said:

> Unleashing innovation and entrepreneurship will be key as we look to build back better from the pandemic, and the UK is ready to work with like-minded countries to make this happen.
>
> The projects agreed today will blaze a trail for regulators around the world, promising new opportunities on the horizon for our most innovative businesses, helping them thrive across borders.

As inaugural chair of the group, the UK led today's event, which saw Business Minister Lord Callanan and international counterparts agree to an ambitious programme of 10 projects, including:

- to bolster access to justice, the UK's Solicitors Regulation Authority will lead a project aimed at helping create a global market for legal services
- the UK, Canada and Singapore will work together to iron out potential cyber-security issues in the 'Internet of Things'
- to tackle food production challenges in countries that face water scarcity, the UAE will lead a project developing standards around the use of treated waste-water in agriculture

The projects will see the Agile Nations work together to share cutting-edge ideas and evidence, test new solutions, and identify new opportunities to encourage innovators and entrepreneurs.

Over recent weeks, the UK has also made significant domestic strides to refine regulation and foster a dynamic economy. This includes setting out bold strategies and proposals on:

- [artificial intelligence](#) to supercharge its place in the UK economy, to grow investment, support research and development, and boost the nation's skills – setting the standards for other countries to follow
- [transport](#) to unleash the UK's potential as a world leader in future technologies like autonomous maritime vessels, self-driving cars and drones by modernising outdated EU vehicle standards
- [farming](#) to reform the regulations around gene-edited organisms, which will enable more sustainable and efficient farming and help produce healthier and more nutritious food

The members of the Agile Nations are:

- UK (Chair - Lord Callanan, Minister for Business, Energy and Corporate Responsibility)
- Singapore (Low Yen Ling, Minister of Trade and Industry & Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth of Singapore)
- Canada (Tina Green, Assistant Secretary, Regulatory Affairs, Treasury Board of Canada)
- Italy (Camilla Sebastiani, Chief of Policy, Cabinet of the Minister for Technological Innovation and Digital Transition)
- Japan (Seitaro Fujita, Deputy Director-General for IT Strategy, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan)
- Denmark (Tatiana Juel, Representative from Danish Business Authority, Ministry of Industry, Business and Financial Affairs)
- UAE (Noora BinKalban, Project Manager, Ministry of Cabinet Affairs, Prime Minister's Office)
- OECD (Miguel Amaral, Senior Policy Analyst, Public Governance Directorate)