

UK PM Trade Envoy Strengthens Trade and Investment Partnerships with the Philippines

Richard Graham MP, the UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the ASEAN Economic Community, undertook an official visit to the Philippines last 14-18 February 2022. The purpose of the visit was to promote trade and investment ties between the UK and Philippines, and to explore new areas of mutual collaboration and prosperity as the world recovers from the pandemic.

Throughout the week, Mr Graham called on DOF Secretary Sonny Dominguez, DTI Secretary Ramon Lopez, DND Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, DOTR Secretary Arthur Tugade, DOE Secretary Alfonso Cusi and Makati Mayor Abby Binay. Mr Graham also reconnected with senior business leaders, including the British Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines and the Makati Business Club, for a useful exchange of business and market insights. Along with the promotion of collaborations in sustainable infrastructure and in technology, green finance and UK Export Finance, Mr Graham reiterated the UK's continuing commitment to increased trade between the UK, the Philippines and the ASEAN region.

Together with DOTR Secretary Tugade, Mr Graham witnessed the launch of education and training partnerships between the Philippine Railways Institute and the UK National Skills Academy for Rail, and between the Philippine Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) and Solent University. The signed MoUs will support the high-level skills requirements in rail and maritime to strengthen the future workforce in the transport industries.

As the Chairperson of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, Mr Graham, together with British Ambassador Laure Beaufils, visited Cotabato City in support of our work with the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao on the peace process under the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) Programme.

Mr Graham also met with the Department of Science and Technology and the Philippine Space Agency to celebrate the success of the Filipino engineers who underwent training on satellite system design at Surrey Satellite Technology Limited in the UK in 2021, and to show appreciation of the continued engagement of the Philippine Government with the UK on space initiatives, and other aspects of technology and innovation.

UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy Richard Graham, said:

I remain more convinced than ever that the direction of the Philippines is very positive and that what we can do together, the UK and the Philippines, whether on economic dialogues, liberalizing trade, opening up opportunities for foreign investment, bringing in

new technologies, helping the Philippines to be more sustainable in its growth on clean energy, there is so much we can do. I leave with a very strong feeling that our two countries together are just going to grow even closer.

Richard Graham is the Conservative Member of Parliament for Gloucester. He began his business career with the Swire Group, as General Manager for Cathay Pacific in the Philippines. He has also worked in the UK Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office and was previously posted in Kenya and China.