The United Kingdom lands in Genoa

On February 10 and 11, Ambassador Jill Morris was in the capital of the North-Western Italian region -Liguria- for the second regional meeting planned for 2020. With these meetings, the diplomatic mission plans to expand the network of contacts and collaboration across Italy.

The UK has a historical attachment to the region of Liguria: the “Gulf of Poets” hosted renowned poets such as Lord Byron, Percy and Mary Shelley, and writers such as DH Lawrence and Virginia Woolf.

Genoa was an essential transit stop in the time of the Grand Tour, which was so dear to the Anglo-Saxons. So much so, that authors like Joseph Conrad and Charles Dickens discussed it in their works.

Moreover, it was an Englishman who 125 years ago founded the Genoa Cricket and Football Club, the current football team of the city. The passion is certainly mutual, as the “Festival della Scienza” (Festival of Science) organised in Genoa, decided to have the UK as a guest country in 2020. During her visit ambassador Morris met Genoa local authorities, academics and university students.

On January 10th she met the Prefect of police, Carmen Perrotta, and then visited Genoa University. At the university she discussed the strengthening of the ties between Italian and British universities with the Dean, Paolo Comanducci.

Afterwards, the ambassador talked to the students about the “Partnership between Italy and the UK in the fight against climate change” in the run up to COP 26 that will be hosted in Glasgow in November 2020.

Later the same day the ambassador met “Il Secolo XIX” Director Luca Ubaldeschi and then was given a guided tour of the exhibit “Bansky and Hitchcock” at Palazzo Ducale. Subsequently, there was a meeting with British citizens living in the Liguria region.

In the evening, the ambassador met Genoa mayor Marco Bucci. Later she hosted an event at “Loggiato di Palazzo Doria Tursi” to which representatives of the local institutions, businesses, and the academic world were invited, and even Liguria regional governor, Giovanni Toti, attended.

The two-day tour continued on 11 Feb with the meeting with Mr. Roberto Andolfi, President of Ansaldo, a corporation that boasts an excellent relationship with the United Kingdom.

This is thanks to both the British Embassy in Rome and the British Consulate in Milan that favoured Ansaldo investments in the UK. Ansaldo was then able to create Ansaldo Nuclear Ltd (ANL) in Wolverhampton, which has a major role in the civil nuclear industry in the UK and in the nuclear submarine programme.

The day continued with the “Italy-United Kingdom dialogue on the regeneration of urban areas through green and blue economy”, which ambassador Morris moderated.

The conference was organised by the British Embassy in Rome and by the DIT Italy in Milan (Department for International trade). During the event, organised with the Municipality of Genoa, British and Italian speakers compared the experience of the capital of Liguria region and that of the main port cities in the United Kingdom. They highlighted models to follow and best practices that might lead to new opportunities for cooperation. The tour ended with the visit to the Rolls Royce plants in La Spezia.

Thanks to cooperation with the DIT, Rolls Royce opened the “Yacht Competence Centre” (YCC) and the “Yacht Customer Care Centre” (Y-CCC) in the North-Western region of Liguria in October 2019. With its famous MTU brand, Rolls Royce plans to expand in the yacht business, and to bring the company closer to its customers. The ambassador was a guest of the President of Rolls Royce for Europe and Northern Africa.

Our message to the world: Britain is open for business

Three weeks ago we delivered on our promise when the UK became a sovereign nation for the first time in 50 years. Today we are setting out the biggest shake-up of the UK’s immigration system for a generation.

For the first time businesses will be able to recruit the most talented people from around the world using a single streamlined points-based immigration system.

Since the dawn of the industrial revolution British business has been global. It is only right that the UK’s immigration system reflects the international diversity of our economic ties across the globe.

Our new fairer system will boost innovation and grant businesses access to the best and brightest from around the world. It will prioritise the skills people have and how they will contribute to the UK’s economy, not where they come from. And it will help restore public trust in our immigration system.

Additional points will be awarded to people who have the most to offer, including those working in occupations where there are real skills shortages.

With 4 of the top 10 universities in the world, the UK is a powerhouse of academia and already attracts half a million international students. Our new system will enable those studying here to more easily continue to work and contribute after they have graduated.

In addition to this, our Global Talent visa will provide a fast track route for the world's best and brightest scientists and researchers to take advantage of the billions this government is investing to turn the UK into a science superpower.

And in line with our clear commitment, there will be no specific route for low skilled workers.

Although I have only been Business Secretary for less than a week, this government has collectively spoken with businesses of all sizes, drawing on their expertise to help design the new system. I will continue to do so as it is rolled out.

I am certain businesses share our vision to transform and level up every region of the UK by adapting and investing in domestic skills and technology.

This is vital if we are to deliver a high-skill, high-wage and highly productive economy that benefits all, and ensures the UK remains one of the best place in the world to work, start and grow a business.

In order to support businesses, we will be introducing world leading technology, streamlining visa processes and scrapping the requirement to advertise here before employing a migrant. This will cut the time it takes to bring a worker into the UK by up to 8 weeks.

Our new, fair system will send a message to the whole world that Britain is open for business.

World's first timing centre to protect UK from risk of satellite failure

- £36 million investment in new, world-first National Timing Centre to provide additional resilience to public services and the economy against the potential impact of satellite systems failure
- the centre will aim to provide accurate time to 999 responders and the energy grid without relying on satellite technologies
- a further £40 million will be invested in a new research programme, Quantum Technologies for Fundamental Physics, to help the UK lead the world in unlocking the benefits of quantum technologies

The UK's emergency service responders and other critical services could be set for more resilient time systems through the world's first National Timing Centre here in the UK, Science Minister Amanda Solloway announced today (19 February 2020).

The new centre will see a team of researchers, based at sites across the UK,

work together to make UK public services and the economy less reliant on satellites through a network of atomic clocks – clocks that use atoms and surrounding electrons to keep track of time – housed at secure locations.

The centre will provide additional resilience for the country's reliance on accurate timing which is currently provided by satellite technologies, and underpins many every day technologies including emergency response systems, 4G/5G mobile networks, communication and broadcast systems, transport, the stock exchange, and the energy grid.

All these currently depend on precision timing from these Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS). Satellite based timing from GPS and similar systems is the most common source. If there were a large-scale GPS failure, economic impact to the UK would be £1 billion a day. Therefore additional land-based technologies will improve the UK's resilience and provide important back-up.

Loss of this accurate data would have severe and life-threatening effects, such as on getting ambulances to patients or getting power to homes around the country.

That is why the government is investing £36 million to create the National Timing Centre, which will ensure the UK economy and public services have additional resilience to the risk of satellite failure.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

> Our economy relies on satellites for accurate timing. Without satellites sending us timing signals, everything from the clocks and maps on our phones, to our emergency services and energy grid would be at risk.
>
> I'm delighted that this world-first centre will see our brightest minds, from Surrey to Strathclyde, working together to reduce the risks from satellite failure.

Leading the world in quantum technologies

Alongside investment in the new Centre, the government is investing a further £40 million in a new research programme, Quantum Technologies for Fundamental Physics. This will help the UK take a commanding lead in quantum technologies on the global stage, by ensuring investment keeps step with similar programmes in the US and China.

Researchers specialising in particle physics, astrophysics and nuclear physics will use quantum sensors – which can detect the very smallest particles – to help locate answers to some of the greatest scientific questions of our time, such as how gravity works.

Results may enable researchers to make important advances in quantum technologies and enable UK businesses to use the new discoveries and

developments to create new products and services.

UK Research and Innovation Chief Executive Professor Sir Mark Walport said:

> Our emergency services, energy network and economy rely on the precise time source that global satellite navigation systems provide.
>
> The failure of these systems has been identified as a major risk, and The National Timing Centre programme will help to protect both vital services and the economy from the disruption this would cause while delivering considerable economic benefits.
>
> The Quantum Technologies for Fundamental Physics programme will harness the power of these powerful new technologies to address some of the deepest questions in the physical sciences, bringing together world-leading UK researchers and technologists to make further breakthroughs.

The National Physical Laboratory CEO Dr Pete Thompson said:

> We are proud to be leading the way in providing trusted and assured time and frequency. The work undertaken by the team here has ensure the National Timing Centre programme will provide huge benefits to society, whilst underpinning secure applications in the future.

Today's £76 million investment furthers the government's commitment to significantly boost R&D investment across every part of the UK, including funding transformational technologies and increasing the number of researchers.

The funding is provided through the Strategic Priorities Fund, which supports high-quality discipline research and development priorities, with investment also going towards autonomous systems and national collections.

Notes to editors

The centre is not a physical building, but a group of researchers based across several locations. Those locations are the University of Birmingham, the University of Strathclyde, University of Surrey, BT Adastral Park, Suffolk, BBC, Manchester, and the National Physical Laboratory in Teddington.

The investment will build a resilient network of clocks across the UK. It includes £6.7 million which will be made available via Innovate UK funding calls to SMEs and industry to innovate around timing and clocks.

The UK's current dependence on satellite technologies has been identified by the government as a potential security risk if a satellite were to experience a failure. The Blackett Review in 2018 looked at the UK's vulnerabilities to

over-reliance on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS).

Total investment through the National Quantum Technologies Programme is set to pass £1 billion since its inception in 2014.

The investment has secured the UK's status as a world-leader in quantum science and technologies, keeping pace with the US and China.

The Quantum Technologies for Fundamental Physics programme will be led by UKRI's Science and Technologies Facilities Council and will demonstrate how quantum technologies can be applied to address fundamental physics questions.

About the Strategic Priorities Fund

The £830 million Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF) supports high quality multidisciplinary research and development priorities and is delivered through UK Research and Innovation.

Climate change: risks and opportunities

Correspondence between Pete Searle, Director of Private Pensions and Arm's Length Bodies to Charles Counsell, Chief Executive of The Pensions Regulator.

The correspondence follows on from the publication of the UK government's Green Finance Strategy in July 2019. It sets out the department's view on integrating climate change risks and opportunities into The Pensions Regulator's activities and The Pensions Regulator's response.

Douglas Ross comment on new points-based immigration system

We will build an open, outward-looking United Kingdom – a nation which draws on a global pool of talent and expertise, and values a person's skills more than what country they come from.

The new system announced today will make sure our economy attracts and retains the best talent from around the world, welcoming people to Scotland and the whole UK based on how they can help grow our country.

For our Universities and high-tech sectors, this will open the door to more skilled staff. We have also recently confirmed a new graduate route which will allow international students to stay in the UK for two years after they finish studying. It will make the UK's offer even more competitive and make it easier for international students to secure skilled jobs in the UK.

The new system will also reduce the salary threshold, which is again good news for Scotland. As an MP for a rural constituency I know there are challenges that communities in rural Scotland are facing, particularly the reliance on low-skilled and seasonal migrants. Although remote areas are not unique to us in Scotland.

To further support this sector, we are quadrupling the Seasonal Workers scheme for agriculture from 2,500 to 10,000 places which is important for our vital agricultural sector. Expanding this pilot will help us assess and inform future decisions of our immigration system.

But we also need to consider why people leave these areas which is more important than bolstering local communities with uncontrolled migration. The Scottish Government has significant devolved tools at its disposal to attract people to parts of Scotland and we encourage them to start delivering on this.

The Scottish Government have been campaigning for a different immigration system that goes against the recommendations of the independent and impartial Migration Advisory Committee. Applying different immigration rules to different parts of the UK would create additional burdens for business – and build borders within the UK.

Our points-based immigration system will deliver what businesses in Scotland have asked for and work in the interests of the whole of the United Kingdom.

What we need to do now is continue to work, with the Scottish Government, to ensure Scotland is an attractive destination for workers from around the world, so that we continue to build our economy.