

British envoy welcomes home 38 Malaysian Chevening scholars

The cohort of scholars from the 2020/21 academic year completed their post-graduate studies in the UK during the first year of the global Covid-19 pandemic.

In his welcome remarks, Hay congratulated the 38 scholars and said:

The 2020/21 Chevening experience was truly like no other. In addition to achieving academic excellence, the scholars had to overcome the challenges of studying during a global pandemic. With the knowledge and experience acquired in the UK, they are now back in Malaysia and contributing to nation-building.

A British education has always been and will continue to be the top choice for students seeking a world class education. This is reflected in the number of Malaysians studying for a British qualification in the UK and in Malaysia.

The Chevening award is the UK Government's global scholarship programme, funded and administered by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office. This is complemented by generous sponsorships by Malaysian corporate partners including CIMB Group Holdings Berhad, Yayasan Khazanah and the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation. British universities are also providing additional funding in support of the Chevening programme.

The returning batch of Malaysian Chevening scholars from the 2020/21 academic year have graduated from disciplines such as climate change, law, human rights, public policy, arts and journalism. They attended prestigious institutions such as the University of Edinburgh, King's College London and London School of Economics. They now join the 1,800 strong Malaysian Chevening alumni network.

Scholar Fadlyna Ilyani Zulkarim, who attended University of Westminster to obtain an MA in Media, Campaigning and Social Change said:

Even though most of my post-graduate academic experience was online, I still made great connections with fellow Chevening scholars from Malaysia and all over the world. Being the 'pandemic batch' gave us a Chevening year like no other and the international Chevening community had a special bond as we made the most of our situation. We came back to our countries with a Master's degree and a life experience that made us tougher to face whatever that comes our way in the future.

Perak scholar Edmund Ross Williams Hunt who completed an MA in Musical Theatre from Goldsmiths, University of London said:

Chevening allowed me to study musicals in the world's theatre capital, giving me greater access to the best West End shows, which has been a lifelong dream of mine. Through a combination of formal and informal learning, I was able to hone my practical skills and expand my creative abilities, thanks to this scholarship. In a diverse cultural environment, I had the opportunity to work with various talents and learn from some of the best in the business. Furthermore, this scholarship proved that I, as a member of a minority group, could have the potential to succeed academically.

Scholar Tengku Muhd Muzaffar Bin Tengku Muda from Terengganu completed a Master's in Finance at the Lancaster University said:

2021 was indeed a tough year for most if not all. It has unleashed our true potential to strive and survive in the new setting. We learned to appreciate the opportunities more, to enjoy the lessons and engagement with college mates, the Chevening network and local communities. On top of that, the experience of exploring nature and culture was unforgettable too. I brought home nothing but beautiful memories I must say.

[Green trade crucial to economic security and net zero, says International Trade Secretary](#)

- Green trade has key role to play in ending dependence on Russian energy, International Trade Secretary to say in Bloomberg speech
- Nearly £190 million of new loan guarantees announced to power green growth and support 350 UK jobs
- UK Green Trade & Investment Expo to take place in October, building on £9.7 billion green investment secured at 2021 Global Investment Summit

Green trade is crucial to growing the UK's economy, achieving net zero and driving our future prosperity, the International Trade Secretary will say today (18 May).

In a speech at Bloomberg, Anne-Marie Trevelyan will set out the UK's pioneering role in harnessing trade to combat climate change, and how driving

renewable energy can cut reliance on Russian oil and gas and reinforce the UK's energy security.

The UK's green economy is projected to grow by 11% per year out to 2030, and by 2050 over 1.2 million people could be directly employed in low-carbon goods and services sectors – a six-fold increase from today.

The International Trade Secretary will also announce a new Green Trade and Investment Expo in the North East this autumn, hosted alongside the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The Expo will bring together UK businesses and global investors to capitalise on the commercial opportunities from our drive to net zero.

This will build on the £9.7 billion of investment secured for UK offshore wind, hydrogen and electric vehicles at the Global Investment Summit last year.

International Trade Secretary, Anne-Marie Trevelyan will say:

This terrible conflict in Ukraine has underlined what can be achieved through a cohesive global approach. It has also reminded the globe that we must de-Putinise the world's economy.

We are doing this through sanctions, and by cutting off access to the oil revenues that power his war machine. That's why here in the UK, we have announced we will phase out imports of Russian oil and gas.

These past months have highlighted the need to accelerate our journey as a global community away from hydrocarbons. To decisively turn our backs on the era of dependence on polluting fuels, and transition to a Net Zero future.

Trevelyan will also today announce a £138 million loan guarantee for electric power manufacturer Megger, supported by UK Export Finance, the government's Export Credit Agency. The loan will help them in building a new £15 million factory, helping boost exports worldwide and support 350 UK jobs.

Megger provides the electric testing equipment for the UK's power grid to help keep the country's lights on. This in turn is supporting the transition to renewable power which is vital our net zero ambition.

Megger Group's Chief Financial Officer, Jeremy Simpson, said:

UKEF has recognised that Megger is a growing company based in the UK, that designs and makes high value-added products with strong global exports, and growth prospects in new markets.

The UKEF loan guarantee will help us to invest in more smart electricity technologies, to help grid operators with their aims to

increase efficiency and save them and consumers money.

Today, the International Trade Secretary will also announce a £50 million UK Export Finance-backed loan guarantee for construction company Mace to bolster its growing export business.

The loan includes sustainability targets to incentivise the company's transition to net zero and green growth. It will enable Mace to continue supporting environmentally friendly infrastructure projects and create new, green jobs.

Mace's Chief Financial Officer, Richard Bienfait, said:

We are delighted to be entering into this agreement with UK Export Finance, which will support our growth overseas and our important sustainability priorities. Mace is committed to ensuring that we do everything we can to pursue a sustainable world – and this landmark financing arrangement reflects that ambition.

Green trade presents a major opportunity for the UK, creating high-value jobs in the low-carbon economy and fuelling technological innovations that can be exported worldwide.

The global market for low-carbon exports is projected to reach almost £2 trillion by 2030, and in her speech, Trevelyan will set out how the UK can take advantage and “reap the rewards of global green growth”.

The International Trade Secretary will continue:

Delivering net zero is not just in the world's environmental interest but it is in our economic interest too.

The financial case for green trade is very clear. The global market for low-carbon exports is growing rapidly. By 2030, it's projected to be worth almost £2 trillion.

A potent combination of ambitious entrepreneurs, high ambitions and steadfast and determined government backing, has put the UK in a leading position to take a first mover advantage here.

This translates into some exciting opportunities for us. Quite simply – green trade spells green jobs.

Business and Energy Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

Now more than ever we need innovators, wealth creators and risk-takers to invest their billions into new British industries to create hundreds of thousands of jobs and shore up our energy

security – all the more important as Putin wages his illegal war in Ukraine.

With investment opportunities worth up to £100 billion up for grabs, our Expo later this year will fly the flag for Britain as we look to accelerate our plans to generate more home-grown clean energy and boost British manufacturing.

£50 million data innovation hub for manufacturers to accelerate digital tech

- £50 million data innovation hub at Ulster University to support UK manufacturers to accelerate development of digital technologies
- dedicated grant funding will be provided to manufacturers to implement expert recommendations from data scientists
- adoption of digital technologies such as Industrial Internet of Things and artificial intelligence is key to driving manufacturing productivity, sustainability and competitiveness

UK manufacturers are to have their productivity and competitiveness boosted thanks to a new data innovation hub and testbed led by Ulster University, Industry Minister Lee Rowley announced today (Wednesday 18 May).

The £50 million Smart Manufacturing Data Hub (SMDH) will support small and medium size manufacturers to capture and better utilise their data, helping them increase productivity, growth and sustainability. Businesses in sectors spanning from food and drink, aerospace and many more will be supported to develop, test and adopt the latest data-driven technologies.

Nearly 10,000 manufacturers are expected to benefit from the hub and 13,000 jobs will be supported, helping to boost economic growth and level-up regions across the UK. The hub will be supported by £20 million from the UK government backed Made Smarter Innovation Programme, along with £30 million of business co-investment.

UK Industry Minister Lee Rowley said:

As we embrace the digital manufacturing revolution, it is vital manufacturers across the UK can capitalise on the productivity and growth gains that come with the adopting the latest data-led digital technologies.

The Smart Manufacturing Data Hub, backed by £20 million of government funds, will support companies to implement cutting edge production and process techniques themselves, helping bring the next generation of products to our shelves in a more efficient and sustainable way.

The hub will host an online Manufacturing Data Exchange Platform that will enable companies to submit their manufacturing data and receive recommendations in return, helping to improve their products and processes. A dedicated £5 million fund will then provide companies with grants to make further improvements in areas of critical importance to their business.

Virtual manufacturing testbeds will allow companies to create a 'digital twin' to simulate the implementation of digital technology on their own processes, harnessing data from other manufacturers that have already adopted the technologies to encourage investment.

The SMDH will also provide manufacturers with expert analysis of their emissions and energy data from support staff specialising in data analytics and engineering, which will help them target reductions in waste, energy use and ultimately improve sustainability.

Pro Vice Chancellor Research at Ulster University Professor Liam Maguire said:

Made Smarter provides the opportunity for innovative collaboration that will be transformative in driving industry competitiveness. At Ulster University, we have a strong track record of collaboration; using our research and technology to act as a catalyst for change, innovation and positive economic, social and environmental impact. Made Smarter is another important project in the broader realisation of the Derry and Strabane City Deal agenda, further enhancing the attractiveness of investment and driving economic growth.

The SMDH will first be accessible by small and medium size manufacturers in Northern Ireland in the coming months, before going live for companies across the rest of the UK. The programme will be supported across the rest of the UK by 12 delivery partners, including the University of Cambridge Institute for Manufacturing, Industry Wales and Scottish Engineering.

The funding comes as part of the £300 million Made Smarter Innovation Challenge, a collaboration between UK government and industry designed to support the development and increased use of new and existing industrial digital technologies, including artificial intelligence and virtual reality.

The challenge aims to deliver a resilient, flexible, more productive and environmentally sustainable UK manufacturing sector. It will also develop new technologies that can be exploited commercially across the manufacturing industry, worldwide.

Today's announcement builds on the government's Help to Grow schemes, which are helping smaller businesses to boost their productivity with training and software that is proven to get results.

[Calling for rapid progress on the formation of a stable government in Iraq: UK Statement at the UN Security Council](#)

Thank you, Mr President, and I'd like to thank the Special Representative and Ms Edwar for their briefings.

The United Kingdom commends the continued work of the Special Representative and the whole Mission in Iraq— you have our full support.

The UK urges Iraq's political leaders to work together swiftly and peacefully to form a government which delivers in earnest for the Iraqi people. A government that can address and tackle the considerable challenges that Iraq faces, including on security, climate change and economic reform.

On security, the UK reiterates, in particular, its condemnation of the Iranian ballistic missile attack on Erbil on 13 March. Our support for the security and stability of the state of Iraq remains steadfast.

On climate change, we welcome the efforts of the Government of Iraq to mitigate the worst effects of climate change, as we've heard about today, including the recent creation of a committee to oversee the preparation of national strategies. We thank UN agencies for their continued support on climate change and urge regional neighbours to engage with the Government of Iraq on water security.

On economic reform, Iraq's economy faces significant structural risks. Urgent reform is necessary so that Iraq is able to provide livelihoods and essential services for the next generation of Iraqis. A new government would be able to accelerate and implement Iraq's ambitious economic reform agenda and prioritise improving Iraq's business environment.

We also remain concerned at the continued displacement of approximately 1.2 million Iraqis. We urge a new government to work closely with the Humanitarian Coordinator to prioritise the reintegration of Iraq's remaining IDP's – including ensuring civil documentation for all displaced persons so they can access their rights and services.

We welcome the first meeting between the Federal Ministry for Oil and the

Kurdistan Regional Government, following the federal Supreme Court's oil and gas ruling. We encourage continued dialogue on this to find a sustainable solution.

We would also like to thank the Special Representative for her update on missing Kuwaiti and third country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property. This is an important issue and we commend the Special Representative for maintaining her focus on it.

Mr President, all of the challenges we've heard about today require the formation of a stable government in Iraq, and so I'd like to finish by reiterating the importance of rapid progress on this.

I thank you.

Addressing the challenges to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals

Madam President, Secretary-General,

The world is facing a critical juncture. We are significantly off track from achieving the SDGs. At a time when the world should be fully focused on recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and fighting climate change, almost every UN Member State is now suffering because of Russia's war. At a time when 43 million people were already one-step away from famine, Russia is blocking the exit routes for Ukraine's grain. Russia's appetite for war is taking food off the world's table and causing energy prices to spiral – hitting the world's most vulnerable the hardest.

Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals is under serious threat.

Earlier this week the UK released its strategy for international development. It sets out how we will work to prevent the world from bearing the consequences of the Russian invasion for generations to come and maintain focus on the SDGs. The strategy focuses on many priorities for which the UN are essential delivery partners, including protecting women and girls from violence and fulfilling their right to an education, fighting climate change and delivering life-saving humanitarian aid. An agile, robust and effective UN Development System is a key partner in tackling these global challenges.

We are encouraged by the progress implementing the Development System reforms highlighted in your report. However, there is still more to do.

First, the UN should redouble efforts to strengthen coordination between the

UN's humanitarian, development and peace operations. The Afghanistan Transitional Engagement Framework and corresponding aid architecture is a positive model of coordination across operations. We hope to see greater coordination between agencies on analysis, planning and delivery of cross-cutting programming, including the use of collective outcomes.

Second, the Development System should redouble efforts to reduce duplication and promote efficiencies in the field. We noted that less than half of UN country teams and contributing countries reported reduced duplication. Moreover, we were alarmed to read that only 28 per cent of UN Country team members shared their country programme documents for review with the Resident Coordinator. We call on all agencies to ensure their programme documents are shared with the Resident Coordinators for confirmation of alignment with the Cooperation Frameworks.

And third, the strong leadership of the Resident Coordinator and Heads of Agencies on the ground is especially critical. We seek your commitments to reducing the gaps in transitions between Resident Coordinators. We also seek commitment from the Agencies that their representatives in country are working collaboratively with Resident Coordinators in support of the reforms.

While we acknowledge and welcome the process of the UN System, we realise that donors have an active role in supporting the system to embed these changes at a country level. We similarly commit to strengthening our support for the system to implement these changes at the country level.

Thank you.