

Virtual conference for UK-Africa legal services

- Event to boost UK legal services in new and emerging markets
- Discussions will centre on sharing expertise and building lasting partnerships
- Follows first ever UK-Africa online trade mission in December

The one-day event is part of the Ministry of Justice's Legal Services are GREAT (LSAG) campaign that promotes the strength of English and Welsh law, the UK's legal expertise and its world-renowned independent judiciary to some of the fastest growing overseas markets for legal services.

The conference will bring together legal experts from the UK and the African continent, serving as a platform for international collaboration between the regions which generated £160m worth in legal services exports for the UK in 2018 alone.

Delegates will hear speeches from a range of industry leaders, seeking to foster long-term relationships and promote UK expertise on key issues such as legal technology and dispute resolution.

Lord Chancellor, Robert Buckland QC MP, said:

I'm delighted to host this virtual UK-Africa legal services conference, building on the success of last year's trade mission.

Events such as this will make sure we continue to forge vital partnerships to grow the sector internationally, while showcasing the unique expertise and exceptional talent we have to offer.

Legal services contribute a massive £22bn to the UK economy and will be crucial to ensuring we build back better from the global pandemic.

Today's event aims to build on the success of the first trade mission for UK-Africa legal services in December, while further establishing the UK legal sector as the pre-eminent partner of choice for African businesses and law firms.

Legal professionals from across the continent will be in attendance, including Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Malawi, Egypt, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and Angola.

Drawing on his experience in commercial law, both in litigation and international arbitration, Lord Wolfson QC, will give a keynote address to underline the strength of the UK-Africa partnership.

Lord Wolfson QC, said:

I am committed to playing a role in fostering collaboration and mutually beneficial growth between the UK and our overseas partners.

As demonstrated by improving political stability, consistent economic growth and an increased focus on in-demand industries including technology, countries across the African continent will be at the fore of the global economy as the 21st century progresses.

There are many exciting opportunities for us all to seize, which hold the promise of mutual future prosperity.

The online platform will also offer networking opportunities where legal professionals can book virtual 1-1 meetings with their international colleagues.

Meanwhile, Andrew Skipper, Head of the Africa Practice at Hogan Lovells, will chair an 'In-House Perspective' session with General Counsel from some of Africa's biggest corporations.

Andrew Skipper, Head of Africa Practice at Hogan Lovells, said:

It's a pleasure to be part of the Legal Services are GREAT campaign again, following the virtual trade mission last year, that brought together a wealth of legal expertise from across the continent.

This time around, we start the conversation with a view from senior General Counsel as they share their insights from the boardroom and discuss the partnership opportunities on the horizon.

After the past year of uncertainty, we will look ahead to the positive role GCs can play in business growth, capacity building and the promotion of diversity.

The event will be closed by Emily Tofield, Director of Communications at the Ministry of Justice and founder of the Legal Services are GREAT campaign, who

will share some of her highlights and key takeaways from the conference.

Notes to Editors

- Legal Services are GREAT (LSAG) is the UK Ministry of Justice's most ambitious international campaign, promoting the strength of English Law; our world-renowned independent judiciary; and UK legal expertise to an overseas market.
- The aim of the campaign is to facilitate growth for UK legal services in the world's fastest growing markets, expand business networks and generate export wins for our law firms and chambers.
- LSAG is part of the GREAT campaign and uses the strength of a globally recognised, credible and respected brand to communicate the UK is a safe and trusted place to conduct business.
- With a presence in 32 countries worldwide, Legal Services are GREAT is an internationally recognised brand and has completed successful trade missions to Nigeria, Kazakhstan, China and Chile.
- The legal sector brings significant economic benefit to the UK, representing 1.5% of the total UK GDP. It also provides employment for more than 330,000 people.
- In 2018 the UK exported £36,526,000 in legal services to South Africa, £17,110,000 to Nigeria, £8,060,000 to Ghana, and £5,446,000 to Kenya.
- In the past year and a half, the Legal Services are GREAT campaign recorded around £650,000 in export wins, with a further £4 million forecast over the next four years.