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News story

Foreign Office Minister Sir Alan Duncan arrives in Argentina for bilateral talks

Sir Alan Duncan becomes the first Foreign Office Minister to visit Argentina since 2009 after arriving in Buenos Aires today

Published 12 September 2016

From:

Foreign & Commonwealth Office (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office>) and The Rt Hon Sir Alan Duncan KCMG MP (<https://www.gov.uk/government/people/alan-duncan>)



Sir Alan's visit follows an improvement in relations between the UK and Argentina since the election of President Mauricio Macri last year. It marks an important step forward following more than a decade of difficulties under the isolationist approach of Argentina's previous government.

During the two-day visit he will attend a Business and Investment Forum being hosted by President Macri in Buenos Aires and hold meetings with several senior government ministers, including Foreign Minister Susanna Malcorra and Deputy Foreign Minister Carlos Foradori.

Prime Minister Theresa May has set out the UK's desire for a new and positive phase of relations with Argentina. Sir Alan's visit will focus on how the two countries can work together on areas of mutual interest - including in trade, culture, science and technology, climate change and combating drugs, crime and corruption.

The UK government has been clear that improved relationships with Argentina will not be at the expense of its commitment to the rights of the Falkland Islanders. The UK is supporting the right of the islanders to establish air links to new countries in the region and to develop their oil and gas industry.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister, the Rt Hon Sir Alan Duncan MP, said:

This is a positive time for the relationship between the UK and Argentina. Our countries have a shared history and many deep links in culture and language. I hope this visit will help take a step forward together.

Argentina has the world's 25th largest economy and there are many areas where our countries can increase ties. I look forward to seeing how British businesses can harness the commercial opportunities in Argentina at the Business and Investment Forum.

Of course, our commitment to the rights of the Falkland Islanders is clear and will not change, and we will continue to support them as they look to develop their economy.

Further Information

Trade between the UK and Argentina is increasing – it accounted for £1.14billion in 2014 and British exports increased by 29% since this time last year – and both governments have already committed to a significant increase.

There are significant opportunities for British business – including in infrastructure, natural resources, agri-business, manufacturing, and financial services. In May, Trade Minister Lord Price headed the first delegation of British companies to Buenos Aires in over a decade and more will follow.

Sir Alan's visit will be the first by a Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister since Lord Malloch Brown in 2009. It will build on the visit by Wales Minister Alun Cairns, who attended President Macri's inauguration last year and celebrated 150 years since the arrival of Welsh settlers in Patagonia.

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