

CWEIC MEMBER NEWS

Commonwealth Trade a 'Neglected Jewel', UK MP's told

Lord Marland has told an International Trade Committee session of the UK Parliament that Commonwealth trading opportunities remain a 'neglected jewel', especially from a UK perspective.

Speaking in response to a question from Liam Byrne MP, Lord Marland stated that 'huge markets' such as Nigeria, Canada and New Zealand presented relatively easy opportunities for businesses with an enterprising and international mentality.

In the meantime, a policy paper from the Free Enterprise Group has been released to articulate the potential for further free trade agreements between Commonwealth countries, particularly as Britain exits the European Union. The policy paper can be found on the Free Enterprise Group website www.freeenterprise.org.uk

Given that the UK is the largest EU goods export destination for numerous Commonwealth countries – including Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, South Africa,

Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Jamaica – the post BREXIT opportunities are clearly significant.

For the network as a whole, the inaugural Commonwealth Trade Ministers Meeting – to be hosted by the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council in London on 9th-10th March 2017 – represents a huge opportunity for member countries to make further progress in fulfilling the Commonwealth's untapped trade and investment potential.

With over 30 Ministers due to attend alongside a host of private sector business leaders, the Meeting is set to be a momentous occasion in the lead-up to 2018's Heads of Government Meeting and Commonwealth Business Forum.



Parliamentarians urge UK Government to put Commonwealth trade at the top of its agenda.

A Parliamentary debate called by British Conservative MP Jake Berry, saw politicians discuss the fantastic potential offered by the inaugural Commonwealth Trade Ministers Meeting.

Mr Berry praised the efforts of Sir Hugo Swire, Lord Marland, the Maltese Government and the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council for driving this issue by organising the meeting.

He saw the occasion as not only an exceptional meeting of Trade Ministers, but the perfect springboard for a successful Commonwealth Heads of

Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 2018.

The Rt. Hon Greg Hands, the UK Minister of State for Trade and Investment welcomed the spotlight being put on the Commonwealth. He drew attention to the fact that the Commonwealth charter has prosperity at its very centre. Members were "committed to an effective, equitable, rules-

based multilateral trading system" and "the freest possible flow of multilateral trade".

Other notable contributions to the debate included John Howell MP, the UK Prime Minister's trade envoy to Nigeria and Richard Graham MP, the UK Prime Minister's trade envoy to the ASEAN Economic Community.

CommonwealthFirst: Second Cohort launched at Indian High Commission

The Second Cohort of CommonwealthFirst Export Champions has been officially launched at a Roundtable and Reception hosted by the Indian High Commission on February 8th. The Roundtable was addressed by the Indian Deputy High Commissioner to the UK, H.E. Mr. Dinesh K. Patnaik and Manoj Ladwa – a member of CWEICs Advisory Board who led the first CommonwealthFirst trade mission to India in November last year. CWEIC Chairman Lord Marland later addressed the Reception, highlighting the importance of SMEs being willing to trade overseas.



Export Champions from Cohort One related their experience of the programme's first trade mission to India, describing the challenges and huge opportunities they had found doing business there.

Representatives Thompson from education consultancy Hi-impact and operational performance consultancy KM&T described how the mission had opened up an array of new contacts and they were hoping to see new business wins soon.

Following an online application process, the Second Cohort of 26 companies have been selected based on their level of impact, innovation, ambition and ability to succeed across Commonwealth markets. 100 Export Champions will be selected in total over the next two and a half years.

Tonga adopts CommonwealthFirst's what3words as national postal addressing system

Tonga Post, serving 36 islands in the South Pacific, has adopted 3 word addresses to improve national infrastructure. The Kingdom of Tonga is the first country in the region to use the system for postal services.

With 170 islands scattered over 700,000 square kilometres of ocean, delivering anything to anyone is a challenge.

By using what3words, every location in the Kingdom of Tonga now has an instant address. By making

this addressing system part of the country's infrastructure, Tonga Post is helping unlock the region's economic growth and social development.



CommonwealthFirst
**EXPORT
CHAMPION**

This cohort's companies range from designers of aircraft covers and manufacturers of innovative roadside wind turbines to companies able to treble crop yields and convert sports stadiums in to multi-purpose arenas. They are a true testament to the diversity and strength of British business.

Lord Marland promotes Commonwealth markets to Royal Warrant Holders Association



On 22 February, Lord Marland spent the evening with the Royal Warrant Holders Association. As well as sharing his insights on trade, investment and BREXIT, the Chairman was keen to stress the opportunities in Commonwealth markets for Association members.

The Association was formed in 1840, with all members being suppliers to the Households of HM The Queen, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh or HRH The Prince of Wales. More information of the Association or its members can be found on their website www.royalwarrant.org

