

CWEIC MEMBER NEWS

Message from CWEIC Chief Executive Richard Burge.

I am hugely excited to have started as Chief Executive at this enormously exciting time for both CWEIC and the Commonwealth. With the momentum created by the Commonwealth Trade Ministers Meeting we now have a rich opportunity to work with our members in establishing an ambitious trade and investment agenda ahead of next year's Heads of Government Meeting in April 2018 and the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in Queensland, Australia.

My priority will be to ensure we are working for our members. I am also keen to ensure our organisation is truly representative of the Commonwealth. I will be travelling to Singapore and Malaysia with our Export Champions next month and will be seeking every opportunity to get out and about across the Commonwealth. It is only as a global network that we can truly unlock the potential of the Commonwealth.

We need to get moving straight away and in the coming weeks I will be seeking to meet as many of our members and wider stakeholders as possible to get your views on how we can better harness the incredible trade and investment potential of the Commonwealth.

I am always happy to receive comments and advice from



CWEIC Board: Richard Burge, Lord Marland, Babatunde Soyoye, Phyllis Muscat, Sir Hugo Swire MP

members, potential members and friends. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly on:

richard@cweic.org. I look forward to hearing about what we can do to help and serve you better.

35 Trade Ministers attend inaugural Meeting at Lancaster House



The first day of the inaugural Commonwealth Trade Ministers Meeting took place at Lancaster House in London on Thursday 9th March with a day dedicated to dialogue with the private sector. Convened by the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council (CWEIC) the day brought together 35 Ministers responsible for trade and investment, representatives from 45 Commonwealth countries and 100 international business leaders. [continue to next page >>](#)

35 Trade Ministers attend inaugural Meeting at Lancaster House (continued)

The objective of the day was to help define an ambitious “Agenda for Growth” to increase intra-Commonwealth trade to US\$1 trillion by 2020 and to identify new opportunities to leverage the Commonwealth Factor; the shared values, language, legal framework and regulatory systems that makes trade costs 19 per cent lower between Commonwealth countries. The core of the day was built around six interactive Roundtables focusing on the six key pillars of the proposed

“Agenda for Growth”: Financial Services, Ease of Doing Business, Technology and Innovation, Business and Sustainability, Creating an Export Economy, Attracting Investment.

We will be actively working with the Commonwealth Secretariat, member Governments and the private sector to take forward the proposals from the Trade Ministers Meeting in the run up to next year’s Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in London in April 2018.

The second day of the event was a closed door meeting of Ministers convened by the Secretary-General, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the CWEIC at Marlborough House.

We hope that Commonwealth trade ministers will agree to meet on a regular basis, and we initially propose that ministers meet on a biennial basis in the run up to each CHOGM.

[Our interim report on the Trade Ministers Meeting can be viewed here >>](#)



Second Cohort of Commonwealth Export Champions

CommonwealthFirst – Cohort Three Recruitment and Trade Mission to Malaysia and Singapore

At the Trade Ministers Meeting we launched recruitment for our third cohort of UK Export Champions. The deadlines for application is 4th June. If you or anyone you know might be interested in the programme there is further information and an online application process at www.commonwealthfirst.org

We are embarking on an ambitious regional roadshow to promote the programme. Birmingham Airport, one of our Export Champions, will be hosting an event on 25th April for the midlands region.

This follows the announcement of our second cohort of Export Champions

last month. **[The Export Champion profiles can be viewed here.](#)**

The second CommonwealthFirst trade mission will be to Malaysia and Singapore during the week of 14th May 2017. If you would be interested in participating please contact Weronika Patyk: weronika@cweic.org