

# **JOINT DECLARATION ISSUED BY THE REPUBLIC OF COLOMBIA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND**

**2 November 2016**

On the occasion of the State Visit to the United Kingdom by the President of the Republic of Colombia, Mr. Juan Manuel Santos, he and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP, adopted the following joint declaration:

This first State Visit by a Colombian President to the United Kingdom confirms the strength of bilateral relations based on shared values of democracy, prosperity, and respect for human rights.

The visit gave an opportunity to renew the commitment to a broad relationship, where the United Kingdom will support Colombia in its search for and implementation of a sustainable peace. The United Kingdom recognises the efforts of both the President and the people of Colombia to secure a democratic agreement that will end Colombia's internal conflict and help to deliver peace and prosperity to Colombia and the wider region. The United Kingdom will continue to promote international support for the Colombian people through the United Nations Security Council. Through dedicated funding to promote stability and sustainable development, the British Government will work with the Government of Colombia to fund a range of projects by 2020. The British Government has also offered UK Export Finance to help the Government of Colombia finance peace-building projects and support British exports.

The United Kingdom and Colombia's trade and economic partnership has enormous potential for growth, stimulated by the implementation of strategies which support the efforts of private companies. This includes the Double Taxation Agreement signed during the visit. To complement the successful Trade Envoy to Mexico, the UK intends to appoint a dedicated Trade Envoy for the remaining Pacific Alliance countries, including Colombia, to herald potential opportunities that Colombia brings to UK companies. Over the next year, trade missions will follow up the many commercial opportunities for both countries opened up by this State Visit, including UK exports in the transport, healthcare, financial services, oil and gas, mining, education, defence and security, and water sectors.

Both governments reaffirmed their commitment to tackling sources of instability such as organised crime and drug trafficking, which directly impact both societies. Strengthening the decades-long partnership between the UK and Colombia on security, governance and the rule of law will facilitate a stable and secure Colombia that can bring benefits to all its citizens as well as the wider region. Strong public sector organisations are key in delivering services transparently and fairly. The UK and Colombia will collaborate to strengthen the administration of justice and the rule of law against transnational crime. They will also work jointly to implement commitments made at the 2016 London Anti-Corruption Summit.

Bilateral cooperation which promotes sustainable development will strengthen the public sectors of both countries. The joint Newton Caldas Programme will give new opportunities to the UK and Colombian research communities to support the creation of new medicines and other biotechnology based products drawn from research on previously unexplored regions. Supporting the wider "Sustainable Colombia" programme, the UK and Colombia will jointly support the Visión Amazonia initiative to fight deforestation and preserve vulnerable ecosystems for future generations. The Agreement on the Mutual Recognition of Degrees will foster academic mobility and joint scientific research.

The UK and Colombia are like-minded partners across many issues in international fora. The UK and Colombia strive to support each other's multilateral endeavours such as Colombian aspirations to join the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. In the spirit of long-standing bilateral friendship, they committed to strengthen bilateral relations to identify new areas of collaboration. The UK and Colombia will promote contact between governments, businesses, institutions and civil society. Annual meetings will take place between British and Colombian Ministries to review progress made on bilateral relations, including priorities for cooperation.

## **STATE VISIT JOINT UK-COLOMBIAN COMMITMENTS**

To mark the State Visit to the United Kingdom by President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon, the UK and Colombia have agreed the following commitments, to be reviewed annually by a joint ministerial group.

### **1. PEACE-BUILDING**

Goal: Collaboration to help build a peaceful and prosperous Colombia, bringing opportunities for the UK.

#### **Implementation of Post-Conflict plans and strategies**

Through the Conflict Security and Stability Fund, the British Government will continue to support the Colombian Government's preparations and implementation of post conflict strategies such as the Rapid Response Plan and the Demining Initiative, with an additional contribution of £7.5m.

#### **Shared Prosperity in Peace**

The British Government will significantly increase the UK's prosperity programming in Colombia, aimed at unlocking economic opportunities in areas most affected by poverty and conflict by up to £25m.

UK prosperity programming will tackle the barriers to economic growth by helping to: increase agricultural competitiveness, develop better cities, tackle corruption, build stronger institutions and stimulate large-scale investment in infrastructure to link urban and rural areas. This will directly benefit more than 3 million people in Colombia's poorest regions, and help support international export and investment opportunities in the region of £6bn, relevant to 2,500 UK companies.

#### **Financing peace-building projects**

The two governments will establish a working group, to explore how the British Government's appetite of up to £1bn of UK Export Finance limits could be used to support peace-building projects with UK content such as reliable renewable electricity for over two million Colombians living in off-grid areas, remote healthcare and the provision of safe drinking water.

#### **Long-Term Links with Northern Ireland**

The Northern Ireland Cooperation Office and the Colombian Government will share expertise on peace-building, including through education and security.

### **2. TRADE AND INVESTMENT**

Goal: Increase bilateral trade and investment

#### **UK Trade Envoy to Colombia, Peru and Chile**

Building on the existing UK Trade Envoy to Mexico, the UK intends to announce an envoy to the remaining Pacific Alliance countries, in recognition of shared economic values of openness and free trade, and the opportunities that Colombia and other Pacific Alliance countries bring to UK companies.

#### **Double Taxation Agreement (DTA)**

The UK and Colombia will sign an agreement to facilitate cross-border trade and investment by eliminating the prospect of double taxation to the benefit of businesses in both countries. The DTA will also assist in tax administration, helping to counter tax avoidance and evasion. This will create a more stable and predictable environment to businesses wishing to operate across borders, as they will know the basis on which they will be taxed and that disputes can be settled in a robust manner.

#### **Improving Colombian Rail Infrastructure with UK expertise**

With the support of UK prosperity programming and UK rail industry partners, the two governments will work closely together to define a vision for the future of Colombian freight rail.

### **3: SECURITY, JUSTICE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE**

Goal: Strengthen justice and the rule of law, while working together to combat corruption

#### **Serious Organised Crime**

Reinforcing decades of bilateral cooperation tackling the most serious and organised criminal groups engaged in transnational crime, the UK will assist in the strategic development of Colombian Criminal Investigation agencies. The UK and Colombia will also share best practice in order to improve coordination and strategic planning across Colombian ministries with a stake in criminal justice policy. This will enable Colombia to enhance operational and institutional structures to deal with shared post-conflict security challenges as well as supporting Colombia as a vital global partner in combating crime and insecurity. As malicious cyber activity poses an increasing threat to the security of our citizens, both governments will work to deepen cooperation on cyber security.

#### **Justice**

To promote a more efficient criminal justice system, the UK will provide advice to the Colombian Government on criminal justice policy, including enhancing asset recovery capability.

#### **Transparency**

The Colombian Government will implement commitments made at the London Anti-Corruption Summit of May 2016, including (i) announcing a new Whistleblower Protection Act, fulfilling a commitment made at the United Kingdom's Anti-Corruption Summit; (ii) a commitment to work with the UK to progress work on beneficial ownership and asset recovery; (iii) the UK will provide support through the Behavioural Insights Team to anti-corruption strategies in Colombia.

### **4. EDUCATION**

Goal: Increase links across academia

#### **Mutual Recognition of Degrees**

The UK and Colombia will sign an agreement which will facilitate procedures for the recognition of higher education diplomas obtained in each country, based on the quality assurance systems of both countries. The document signed during the State Visit is an overarching Memorandum of Understanding, which will be followed by annexes describing how it will work in practice. The agreement will enhance the value of a UK degree in Colombia and vice versa.

### **5. SCIENCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Goal: Research and expertise to tap into Colombia's megadiversity in a sustainable way

#### **Colombia Bio(diversity) Research**

The UK and Colombia will jointly fund research by Colombian and British organisations into sustainable exploitation of Colombia's vast biodiversity. The four-year programme will provide an opportunity for world-class UK experts and Colombian peers to work together in one of the most unexplored and biodiverse regions of the world, until recently very difficult to access due to Colombia's internal conflict.

#### **Peace and Environment**

The UK and Colombia will work together to implement COP21 commitments and develop post-conflict environmental initiatives in areas such as preventing deforestation and land degradation.