



APPG Africa meeting with Minister for Trade & Industry Ghana (CHOGM fringe activity)

Tuesday 16th April 2018, 1.30pm, CR 3A

Chaired by Lord Chidgey (Co-Chair of APPG for Africa) and attended by Adam Afriye MP (Trade Envoy to Ghana), James Duddridge MP (Former Minister for Africa) & representative from Chi Onwurah MP's office

Ghana delegates

1. Hon. Alan Kyerematen- Minister of Trade and Industry
2. Anthony Nyame-Baafi- Ministry of Trade
3. Samuel Yaw Nana Adutwum- Ministry of Trade
4. Anthony Pile- Blue Skies Company
5. George Kporye- Golden Exotics
6. Kofi Addo- Ghana High Commission
7. Keith Saddler- MD of CFUK, main distributors of bananas and pineapple from Ghana.
8. Gifty Klenam- Ghana Export Promotion Authority
9. Eric Amoako Twum- Ghana Export Promotion Authority

- **Lord Chidgey** as meeting Chair opened the meeting and welcomed guests and provided background and context on the work of the APPG for Africa.
- He set the intention of the meeting commenting that the UK-Africa trade post Brexit an ongoing priority of the APPG and that the APPG's last report advocates strongly that interim measures be put in place to ensure a continuity of trade between the UK and African countries that have been party to an EPA with the EU but also believes that Brexit provides an opportunity for the UK to recalibrate its relationship with African countries by trading arrangements that support African regionalism, value chains and industrialisation.
- He hoped that the meeting would provide an opportunity to hear from Ghana's Trade Minister of this subject to better inform the APPG's work in this area.
- **The Minister for Trade & Industry in Ghana, Hon. Alan Kyerematen**, spoke on behalf of the delegation and explained they were trying to better understand what a post-Brexit trade framework between the UK and Ghana could be. What is the UK's strategic direction post Brexit reading Africa? Ghana is currently partner to the ECOWAS Economic Partnership Agreement with the EU which currently dictates the terms of trade between the UK and Ghana.
- He observed that it seemed the UK was aiming to have an EPA plus arrangement as a way to ensure there is no disruption to those trading arrangements but he gently questioned the effectiveness of EPA's in supporting industrialisation and questioned whether rolling over EPAs would therefore pose a problem.
- He said that civil society has many issues with EPAs which creates challenges but said that whatever the architecture for Ghana-UK trade post-Brexit it is important that it does not create barriers for the private sector- Ghanaian companies and foreign investors.
- Regarding the role of the commonwealth, he said he was unsure of what role there would be for the commonwealth trading relationship post-Brexit and questioned whether the UK was more driven to use commonwealth infrastructure post Brexit. He recognised this was an important strategic option



to be considered given that the commonwealth contains 2 billion people and that trade is cheaper between them.

- He also drew attention to the recently signed Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement and its intentions to form a single market and said there was an opportunity for the UK to engage and shape the dialogue around this.
- **Lord Chidgey** responded that the APPG for Africa fully supported the African single market plans and recognised the need for greater investment for Africa's internal infrastructure to build regional value chains and inter-regional trade. He also mentioned the need to modernise the legal and regulatory infrastructure to ease trade.
- He added that the former Australian Prime Minister had said at CHOGM that Australia was considering a trade agreement with the UK eventually which suggested the UK was not a priority.
- Drew attention to the fact that in previous meetings between the APPG for Africa and UNECA they have advocated that the UK not roll over EPAs but introduce an interim Generalised Scheme of Preferences before negotiating an agreement with an African Customs Union.
- **Anthony Pile of Blue Skies Company** introduced Blue Skies as the first provider of pre-cut packaged fresh fruit retailers in the UK (now provide to 15 retailers in the EU). They have 9 factories and 1 on the way (3 in Ghana, 1 in the UK, 1 in Brazil, 1 in Egypt and 1 in South Africa).
- He said more retailers were currently undertaking value chain analysis to see how low they can get their prices to increase their profit margins.
- Blue skies wanted to know either there would any change in tariffs that might disrupt their supply chains- e.g. in one product they might use mango from Ghana and melon from Egypt and deliver both to France.
- He added that EU leadership in food standards means they have competitive edge.
- **George Kporye of Golden Exotics & Keith Saddler of CFUK** as Ghana's banana industry representatives expressed concerns over the tariff changes and a lack of continuity. 50-60% of Bananas from Ghana come to the UK.
- **Lord Chidgey** commented that whilst the current EPA guarantees that market access for Ghana's bananas depending on the sector and region Free Trade Agreements don't always have that desired result and sighted the experience of the Caribbean bananas following their free trade agreement with the EU.
- **Adam Afriyie MP (Trade Envoy to Ghana):** Under the Beyond Aid initiative the UK Government have committed £125 million a year for projects which support infrastructure. He added that over the past 12 months Ghana is increasingly seen at the "gateway to Africa" due to its political stability.
- On Brexit, he said there was zero intention for the UK to introduce tariffs for developing countries. He said the arguments that was being had was over creating open terms and making trade arrangements better.
- **Lord Chidgey** asked about the importance of securing substantial increases in investments in Ghana.
- **Mr Afriyie** responded that the UK had doubled UK Export Credit Finance for Ghana and that there were large consortia in the UK working on Ghana's rail network. £2-3 billion has been for the



western railway. However, he said opportunities for investments of this scale in Ghana were not clear enough.

- **James Duddridge MP, Former Minister for Africa** made a closing comment about how much Ghana's business environment had drastically improved recently.
- **The Chair, Lord Chidgey** then thanked all the attendees and brought the meeting to a close saying that the matter of UK-Africa trade post-Brexit would be continued to be followed up by the APPG for Africa.