



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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TITLE *Promoting Wales internationally around St David's Day*

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Increasingly the Welsh Government invests effort and energy into using St David's Day as a vehicle for promoting Wales around the world. Our message is that Wales is open for business and has proven an attractive location for investors and visitors from across the globe. We work closely with UK embassies and consulates to access resources and to ensure the best opportunities to promote Wales.

I hosted a reception at Lancaster House for the Diplomatic Corps in London. Guests included businesspeople, opinion formers and Welsh Members of the Lords and Commons.

I then visited Washington and New York where I held meetings with investors and the British American Business Association. During my visit, GE Aviation announced a new 20 million pound investment, with support from the Welsh Government, for the maintenance and repair of the next generation GE9X engine in Nantgarw. This project will safeguard over 400 jobs. I was pleased also to meet Wheelabrator Technologies, which has begun construction of a waste to energy facility in Deeside. This investment will deliver several hundred jobs during the construction phase and around 40 permanent jobs when the plant becomes operational. In Pennsylvania I visited a facility of IQE, a company headquartered in Wales, and a global leader in advanced compound semiconductors. The Welsh Government is supporting IQE in its work with Cardiff University and others to help establish a world-leading compound semiconductor cluster here in Wales.

In Washington I met Congressman Mike Conaway, Chair of the House Agricultural Committee, to make the case for exporting Welsh lamb to the US and to discuss wider prospects for our agricultural sector. I was also pleased to meet the Friends of Wales Caucus and to host a St David's Day reception on Capitol Hill for political and business figures. In New York, I was privileged to ring the closing bell of the NASDAQ Stock Exchange, a unique way to raise Wales' profile among the US business community. I hosted a further reception for business contacts in the city. In total, over 550 new and safeguarded jobs were announced during the course of my visit. These commitments,

alongside others, demonstrate the strength of our business relationship with American firms.

The Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Infrastructure visited China, accompanied by a trade mission and a cultural delegation. He hosted St David's Day receptions in Chongqing and Shanghai. During his visit he met Acerchem International which is creating 38 high calibre skilled jobs through establishing an R & D facility at the Institute of Life Science at Swansea University, with Welsh Government support.

The Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs visited Dubai where she attended the Gulfood Trade Show to promote Welsh produce. She also attended business meetings and hosted a St David's Day Reception to promote Wales as a business partner. Her visit coincided with a week of performances by the WNO at the Dubai Opera House – an excellent example of using Wales's first class cultural offering to promote Welsh business.

The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government hosted a reception in Brussels. He held meetings with representatives from EU institutions and the UK's Permanent Representative to the EU, Sir Tim Barrow, to discuss priorities ahead of negotiations to leave the EU.

In addition, Welsh Government officials co-hosted receptions at British embassies in Dublin, Paris, Madrid and Rome. Welsh Government overseas representatives, working with British embassies, staged events in Japan and India and elsewhere, supplied by Welsh produce. The Welsh Government and the FCO also co-operated to promote Wales through social media channels.

It has never been more important to raise Wales' international profile. We have had significant success in attracting investment and visitors to Wales, and we support Welsh businesses in their drive to export more of their products and services. Wales is a globally facing nation and in future the Welsh Government will do more, not less, to promote our country and the economic opportunities available to us. Now more than ever, we need to be confident about our place in the world and to be proactive in making the case that Wales is a great place to visit, study and invest.