



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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BY Carwyn Jones AM, First Minister

Members will be aware that I was in the US last week. The purpose of my visit was to promote Wales and to make clear that we are very much open for business. I visited Atlanta, Cincinnati and Chicago and met a number of companies that have operations here in Wales.

In Atlanta, I met senior representatives of CNN and Valero and hosted a business lunch for the Executive Board of the British American Business Council of Georgia. I met the Mayor of Atlanta and had a meeting with the Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Economic Development, to discuss the great strides which have been made in attracting business investment to Georgia.

In Cincinnati I visited a major facility of GE Aviation to see the latest developments in aero engine technology.

In Chicago, I met with both United Airlines and a representative of Zodiac Seats (UK). Zodiac has recently secured a major contract to deliver high quality bespoke airline seats to United, and those seats are being manufactured in Wales.

I also visited S&C Electric while in Chicago, to see a demonstration of their electric power transmission and distribution systems. During the visit I talked to some of the workers at the company's facility in Swansea who were watching the visit over video link.

In addition, I met representatives of Zimmer Biomet, a leading medical devices manufacturer which has a significant presence in Wales. I was very pleased that the company has announced a further investment at their plant in Bridgend.

In both Atlanta and Chicago I attended receptions to promote Wales that were hosted by the British Consuls-General in those cities. The receptions were attended by a broad range of people with links to Wales or with an interest in learning more about our country.

On the final day of my visit I addressed The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, who invited me to speak on the implications of Brexit for Europe, the UK and Wales.

It was abundantly clear from my visit that the US business community is acutely aware of the potential impact of Brexit on their activities in the UK. I emphasised to the business leaders I met that I shall be pressing hard for a deal that secures unfettered access to the European Single Market. It is vital that investors in Wales can continue to trade freely across the European Union.

It was heartening to hear, from all the companies I met with operations in Wales, how much they valued their workforce and how impressed they are with the skills and commitment of their employees. It is the skills and dedication of our people that will be the foundation of our success as we move ahead through challenging times.