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## **UK AND AZERBAIJAN COMMIT TO FRESH PARTNERSHIP ON RENEWABLE ENERGY**

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The UK and Azerbaijan have committed to renew combined efforts to tackle challenges facing the energy sector, including building on growing renewable energy sectors in both countries.

In trade talks in London this week (Wednesday 22 May), the two nations agreed to further strengthen their existing trade relationship.

Trade Policy Minister, George Hollingbery co-chaired the largest ever UK-Azerbaijan Joint Intergovernmental Commission (JIC) alongside Azerbaijan's Minister of Energy, Mr Parviz Shahbazov.

The talks explored opportunities to strengthen and build on trade ties, with a particular focus on the emerging renewables markets as well as the challenges currently facing the energy sectors in both Britain and Azerbaijan. The Ministers agreed the need to diversify economies, invest in green energy and build renewable capabilities. Minister Hollingbery also outlined the UK's expertise in this sector.

The UK is a world leader in the renewables sector and clean energy production and has reduced emissions faster than any other G7 country. With world-leading capabilities in areas including offshore wind, green finance and waste management the UK stands ready to support Azerbaijan in diversifying its economy.

Azerbaijan is an important trading partner for the UK, with total trade between the UK and Azerbaijan worth over £1 billion in 2018, an increase of 66.4% on the previous year. This highlights potential opportunities for both British and Azerbaijani businesses, consumers and exporters.

Trade Policy Minister, George Hollingbery said:

This week I co-chaired the third meeting of the UK-Azerbaijan Joint Intergovernmental Commission, as we seek to strengthen our trade and investment relationship.

Azerbaijan is one of the world's fastest growing economies and a key trading partner, with over 400 British businesses currently doing business in Azerbaijan.

The UK is committed to strengthening trading ties between our two nations as we look to take control of our own independent trade policy for the first time in over 40 years and today's renewed commitment around renewable energy is an encouraging first step.

The UK is already the single largest investor in Azerbaijan, contributing 51% of total investment in the region and is well placed to increase business in the region.

In addition to energy firms, a variety of British business including SNC-Lavalin Atkins, a leading engineering solutions provider, are already successfully trading the region.

Exports of goods and services involved in the sector, including advanced engineering, project management services and specialist manufacture for complex equipment was worth over £644million in 2018 alone.

James Todd, Atkins Azerbaijan Country Manager said:

Azerbaijan represents an exciting market for Atkins as we seek to use our multi-discipline expertise and local partnerships to add value across sectors, from city master planning to renewable energy development.

We've had strong growth over the past three years and expect this to continue into the future, supported by a growing economy, a strong support network of UK businesses and an increasing market appetite for services well aligned with our expertise.

The UK and Azerbaijan already enjoy a strong political and commercial relationship and UK businesses are ideally positioned to work with Azerbaijani partners to support our shared interests including investment in research and development and the promotion of renewables, agriculture, healthcare and education.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-and-azerbaijan-commit-to-fresh-partnership-on-renewable-energy>

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