

A strengthening relationship

By **ALDERMAN ROGER GIFFORD**

LORD MAYOR OF THE CITY OF LONDON



ROGER GIFFORD was born in 1955 and was educated at Sedbergh and Trinity College, Oxford. Following a career in finance, becoming Country Head of SEB, he was elected Lord Mayor in 2012. He is involved in a wide range of charitable causes with an emphasis on education and music.

As a gateway between Europe and Asia, Kazakhstan is an important strategic partner for the UK. My predecessor as Lord Mayor, Sir David Wootton, demonstrated the importance the City attaches to this relationship by visiting Almaty and Astana, and the City of London is committed to strengthening further this relationship. We are committed to supporting the Prime Minister in his own efforts to further deepen those ties, particularly as Kazakhstan gears up to host Expo 2017.

The UK has long been one of the largest investors in Kazakhstan, and bilateral trade with Kazakhstan is growing rapidly; UK exports to Kazakhstan grew to £530 million and UK imports to £459 million in 2011, up 124 per cent from 2010. Our strong exports in machinery and specialised equipment for the oil and gas, power generation, mining and manufacturing sectors are an excellent example of how trade with the UK benefits both our countries. The growing number of Kazakh companies looking to list on the London Stock Exchange exemplifies the clear role London's markets can play in Kazakhstan's continuing growth.

That is one example from the whole range of services provided by the City of London – the whole cluster international business expects of a global financial centre. Kazakhstan's booming mining industry needs the support of specialised financial and

professional services to best harness the opportunities for expansion and raising capital, and London has the knowledge and skills to provide this. London is also home to expertise in all aspects of infrastructure, from planning, financing, delivery and management over the whole of a project's life cycle – with UK demonstrating those skills in abundance through the phenomenally successful London 2012 Games. The UK and the City of London want Kazakhstan to see us as its partner of choice and we are ready to help turn Kazakhstan's plans into reality.

As the world grows ever more international and trade continues to globalise, the ever growing emerging middle class in countries such as Kazakhstan will demand access to high quality banking, insurance, professional and legal services – and this means there will be growing opportunities for partnerships between UK and Kazakh firms to provide these. This is a partnership that will be led by the people of Kazakhstan and for the people of Kazakhstan. The UK is just as keen to see more Kazakh firms put down roots in London, and to expand their UK operations. With our strong historic ties with Kazakhstan, our ideal position as a trading platform for both Asia and the Americas and our role as the gateway to Europe, Kazakh firms looking to expand should look no further than London.



Astana – Kazakhstan's iconic capital city and host of EXPO 2017

The development of stronger business links between Kazakhstan and the UK builds on the already strong educational links shared by our two countries. The British education system is admired the world over, and we will welcome hundreds of thousands of overseas students each year. I am delighted that some of our greatest educational institutions are establishing new campuses in Kazakhstan to give more young people the opportunity to attend the UK's elite universities. A growing world market for financial and professional services needs a well-educated, highly motivated workforce, rooted in the right values and with an international outlook. This is a partnership that promises much – and that can deliver over the long term.

That openness to talent and commitment to diversity lies at the heart of London's international outlook. This is the city of 300 languages and 270 nationalities. Our outlook is global, but we recognise too that Europe is

still our largest market. We are pro-Europe and pro-reform – and fully support the UK's Government's approach to reform. We benefit from being the gateway to a wider region and this will continue to be the case for the foreseeable future. The successful negotiations undertaken by the UK government on banking union and the EU budget underscore how we continue to play an influential role in this debate on Europe's future.

The UK and Kazakhstan already enjoy the foundation for a long term partnership for prosperity. That partnership, between Government and between business will strengthen and deepen. Kazakhstan has made huge progress. It is story of success and of vision. And as it continues to establish itself as an economic and political force on the world stage, the UK and the City of London can stand alongside it as a partner and a friend, creating jobs, growth and prosperity. **E**

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About the Lord Mayor and the City of London Corporation

The City of London Corporation looks after the City of London on behalf of all who live, work and visit the city, divided into three main strands: promoting the city as the world leader for financial services, providing high-quality policing and local services for residents and providing arts, culture and green spaces to London as a whole. The City of London also works in partnership with neighbouring boroughs to regenerate the surrounding area, and its charity, the City Bridge Trust donates more than £15 million annually to charity.

The Lord Mayor is the head of the City of London Corporation. The Lord Mayor's main role is as a dedicated ambassador, supporting and promoting the

City as the world leader in international finance and business services. The Lord Mayor spends part of the year's mayoralty on an international visits programme in which he leads delegations of senior business representatives to meet those at the highest levels of government and industry in overseas countries, selling the city as a place to do business and promoting its expertise. This role is enhanced by the entirely non-party political nature of the Lord Mayor's office and of the City of London. The Lord Mayor's activities reflect not only the ceremonial and diplomatic importance, but the Lord Mayor's position as a trusted spokesman for the business and financial community. **E**



The Lord Mayor Roger Gifford waves from the State Coach during the Lord Mayor's Show 2012