

Strengthening ties at all levels

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MICHAEL REED began his career at Franklin Templeton Investments, where he held several senior management positions and led the successful establishment of the first foreign-owned, independent asset management company in Korea. He went on to become Chief Executive Officer of Standard Life Investments (Asia) Ltd for four years, before joining Fidelity Worldwide Investment in his current position as the company's Country Head in Korea. He is also a member of the company's Asia Pacific Management Committee, and Chairman of the British Chamber of Commerce in Korea.

Oxford University's Radcliffe Camera: Korea's appetite for education offers excellent opportunities for the UK's world-class universities

President Park's State Visit could not have been timed any better: this year marks 130 years of relations between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Korea. Ties between the two countries are stronger than ever, reflected in robust trade that now exceeds £7 billion.

The figures speak for themselves. Over the next five years, the South Korean economy is set to make the 10th-largest contribution to world growth. That's as much as the United Kingdom, and more than France or Italy.

As the 12th-largest economy worldwide and the fourth largest in Asia, South Korea is a dynamic and vibrant place to do business. Its 50 million-strong population is increasingly wealthy, savvy, and out to buy the best. The EU-South Korea Free Trade Agreement, which came into effect in July 2011, combined with a passion for UK goods, makes the country among the most lucrative and exciting overseas markets for British companies.

Bilateral trade between the United Kingdom and South Korea has rapidly increased since the FTA: South Korean exports to the UK increased by 15 per cent, while UK exports to South Korea by 30 per cent in 2012. We expect more dynamic growth in coming years and expect Korea-UK trade to double by 2020.

The United Kingdom is one of the leading business locations in the world and the number one destination for inward investment in Europe. The opportunities across a range of sectors are truly outstanding. Both Seoul and London are committed to developing low-

carbon, green-growth economies. And the global focus on the UK in 2012 only added to Korean consumers' enthusiasm for British products and brands.

A rich and diverse market with world-class industries including life sciences, ICT, creative, aerospace and automotive engineering, the United Kingdom offers an attractive location for businesses with easy access to customers, product innovators, suppliers and partners.

At the same time, a growing number of UK based enterprises are successful in South Korea: Homeplus (Tesco) has successfully penetrated the challenging and intensely competitive retail market. Standard Chartered, HSBC, Fidelity, Schroders and other UK-based financial institutions offer a diverse range of products for Korean investors, despite the challenges posed by complex and strict regulations. AstraZeneca and GlaxoSmithKline have established a strong foothold and offer quality products for Korea's rapidly ageing population.

From fashion to green energy, British companies are working together with Korean partners to make further inroads into respective markets.

Our high-end fashion designers boast of record profits with high spending and sophisticated Korean consumers ready to pay for quality. Other companies such as Weir and Edwards have set up manufacturing units in South Korea, proving that Britain's advanced engineers can, and do, still make it big in the Far East.

Opportunities in education

Korea's population is highly educated. A full seven per cent of the country's entire GDP is spent on education and nearly three quarters (74 per cent) of South Koreans undertake postgraduate-level study. This creates excellent opportunities for UK educational institutions. South Korea is one of the largest education markets in the world. English-language training, including training delivered via e-learning, offers considerable opportunities. British English, our accent and linguistic expertise are held in high regard.

The Korean government has emphasised the growing importance of the English language in education, and unveiled a roadmap to revamp the nation's public English education provision. This has influenced not only students, but also employers, who wish to strengthen their employees' English language skills as a result of globalisation.



English education for pre-school children in South Korea is carried out on an industrial, nation-wide scale. This is delivered through a wide variety of media, including: language institutions, group or one to one lessons, study materials, over the telephone and over the internet.

Many Korean companies are keen to improve their employees' English language skills and help them reach global standards to access English-speaking markets.

South Korea's e-learning market is one of the most promising niche areas in the educational tools and services industry. The Korean e-learning market was worth approximately US\$2.2 billion and had an annual growth rate of 7.4 per cent in 2011 according to the Korean National IT Industry Promotion Agency (NIPA).

Thanks to Korean government initiatives in IT infrastructure and support for the development of IT industry, e-learning education has become a viable option for many Koreans.

Over 82 per cent of Koreans currently own a PC and there are more than 38 million South Korean internet users. According to NIPA, in 2011 49 per cent of internet users used some form of e-learning and as many as 74 per cent of elementary, middle and high school students are believed to use the technology.

Mutually rewarding cultural ties

The "Korean wave" refers to the phenomenon of Korean entertainment and popular culture rolling over the world with pop music, TV dramas, and movies. Also known as "Hallyu" in Korean, the term was first coined by the Chinese press in the late 1990s to describe the growing popularity of Korean pop culture in China.

Over the last decade, Korea has emerged as a new centre for the production of transnational pop culture. Korea's success as a cultural exporter is often attributed

to its high quality cultural products, incorporating Western elements while never losing its edge through its re-creation of traditional Korean values and cultural identity. Inter-Asian cultural affinity and a lower cultural barrier among Asians to relate to its content also play a significant role in the proliferation of Korean culture overseas.

Meanwhile, Britain continues to project a positive influence around the world, thanks to movies such as James Bond, Harry Potter and Sherlock Holmes, as well as fashion brands like Burberry, Barbour, and Vivienne Westwood. British pop culture has captured the imagination of young Koreans, and continues to gain popularity post the 2012 London Olympics.

In the past, South Koreans would select the United States as their destination to learn English, but in recent years, the United Kingdom has exercised a greater pull. London has become the hottest destination for students who want to learn English not only for higher education but also areas such as culinary, art, fashion, and music: As a truly international and cosmopolitan city, the capital is seen as offering a wider range of opportunities to experience the history and culture of the UK, as well as providing exposure to a global mix of cultures and influences.

Building on strong foundations

This year marks 130 years of diplomatic ties between our two countries. In 2013, high-ranking government officials from the UK in the areas of education, energy, foreign affairs, commerce, and defence visited Korea with specific objectives to discuss, returning to the UK with detailed outlines for cooperation. The governments of both countries have pledged to work closely together to maintain such good relations as well as furthering efforts to expand more trade, investment and exchange in all areas. E

Korean exports to the UK are expected to increase 15% by 2010, while UK exports to Korea are expected to increase by 30%



The 2012 London Olympics: British pop culture has captured the imagination of young Koreans since the games