



Introduction by
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It is a real pleasure to be able to welcome President Widodo and his wife Iriana to the United Kingdom. The Prime Minister has visited Indonesia twice over the past four years and this latest engagement very much underlines the importance we place on this relationship.

There are already strong ties between our two nations and we want to build on these in a whole host of areas. Last year bilateral trade between our two countries increased by nearly 4 per cent to £1.62 billion but there is vast potential to increase this even more. When the Prime Minister travelled to Indonesia last summer, he took with him a large delegation of business men and women who wanted to invest in or trade with Indonesia. I'm confident this visit will see deals being signed and relationships established to take us into the next decade and beyond.

This visit gives the UK the opportunity to show President Widodo how much British companies have to offer Indonesia as he seeks to spur growth and invest in infrastructure. British businesses have the engineering, construction and project management skills that can support these aims. Last year we backed this with concrete support by offering £1 billion of credit financing for infrastructure projects in Indonesia. Indonesia is a fast growing economy, set to become the seventh largest in the world by 2030. As the fifth largest investor in Indonesia, this is clearly a country that matters to the UK.

The Indonesian retail market nearly doubled in size between 2008 and 2014 and will be worth almost US\$550 billion by 2016. M&S, Debenhams and Mothercare

are already active in the country and I want others to join them.

As the world's most populous Muslim country, Indonesia is also vital in tackling the threat of Islamic fundamentalism. That's why we and President Widodo will be discussing ways in which the UK can help keep Indonesia safe. With 220,000 UK citizens travelling to Indonesia every year this is as much in our interest as theirs.

Something else we are keen to build on is education. There are around 3000 Indonesian students learning in the UK every year and we want to see that figure increase.

In 2018, Indonesia will host the Asian Games and this is another area in which the UK has huge expertise after our success with the 2012 Olympics. We can offer support on large-scale event management, broadcasting, power, infrastructure and design. I know discussions on this will be on the agenda for President Widodo's visit and hope that we will be able to formalise an agreement.

Indonesia is a large and vibrant country with a youthful population. Around 35 per cent of the current population is below 18 years of age and I am proud to say we have been helping them with their creative industries. In the last four years, through capacity building programmes, the British Council has trained and created opportunities for more than 30 filmmakers and over 40 fashion designers. All now have strong links with the UK in retail with collections in Harvey Nichols and Fenwick and to the film industry via Film London.

These are just a few of the ways in which we are co-operating and this visit will cement an even stronger partnership. **E**