

For immediate release

UK-France Business Forum calls for PM Sunak and President Macron to back business at upcoming UK-France Summit

London & Paris, 1st March 2023 – In a newly released letter addressed to Prime Minister Sunak and President Macron, the UK-France Business Forum calls for measures to foster Franco-British business and commercial priorities, including asks to facilitate cross-border mobility, tech and climate collaboration.

France and the UK are both within the other's top 7 trading partners, so encouraging economic links between the two is a key priority for the bilateral Chambers of Commerce, which jointly launched the UK-France Business Forum at the British Ambassador to France Dame Menna Rawlings' Residence in July 2022.

The Forum held its second meeting on 7th February at the Residence of the French Ambassador to the UK, HE Ms Hélène Duchêne. At the meeting, over 20 senior representatives from French and British companies and key business organisations agreed on the recommendations of the Forum within three core areas: cross-border mobility, climate transition and technology & innovation.

The Forum calls for measures to facilitate cross-border mobility, which has become more limited on the back of Brexit. The Forum has recommended the introduction of a range of measures to reduce friction at the border, notably through digital controls and trusted traveller schemes. The recommendations also call for both governments to explore policies to facilitate the current business visa process and to implement youth mobility initiatives, creating economic opportunities for young people.

On climate transition and technology, the Forum highlighted the necessity for the UK and France to further collaboration. The Forum set out recommendations to create cross-border taskforces in carbon-free energy and the circular economy to unlock private sector investment. Moreover, Forum members are keen for UK and French Governments to explore synergies between London Tech Week and VivaTech, two flagship tech conferences taking place in the UK and France in June 2023.

Thierry Drilhon, President of the Franco-British Chamber of Commerce & Industry, said: *“The UK-France Business Forum aims to enhance business-to-business dialogue, foster cross-Channel commercial opportunities, strengthen business relationships, and increase potential for more business between France and the UK. We have focused on executable solutions to ensure that business and our governments can work together to create the best architecture for the next phase of economic relations between our two countries.”*

Fabienne Viala, President of the French Chamber of GB and Chair of Bouygues UK, added: *“We firmly believe that close business-government cooperation is crucial to strengthening the Franco-British trade and investment landscape. The Forum has put a strong emphasis on practical and workable solutions, which we hope our governments will take into account. We look forward to continuing to find new innovative ways to overcome Franco-British challenges.”*

The UK-France Business Forum is a joint initiative by the French Chamber of Great Britain and the Franco-British Chamber of Commerce. It is endorsed by the British Embassy in France and the French Embassy in the UK and has garnered extensive support from major French and British businesses, as well as the CBI and MEDEF.

The Forum convenes twice a year, alternating between Paris and London, with working group meetings in-between. The next session is due to be held in June or July 2023 in Paris.

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Notes to editors:

The letters addressed to President Macron and Prime Minister Sunak are accessible in English and French [by clicking here](#).

About the [French Chamber of Great Britain](#):

The French Chamber was established in 1883 to improve the commercial and industrial relationships between France and the UK. Today we are a network of over 400 French and international multinationals and SMEs with significant investment and operations in the UK. We are part of the network of International French Chambers of Commerce and Industry, spanning 125 Chambers in 95 countries, and more than 33,000 businesses. Our mission is to strengthen business relationships and encourage partnerships between French and British business to support growth and investment across the UK; promote the positive contribution of French business to the British economy, and assist French businesses entering the UK market through a range of business services.

About the [Franco-British Chamber of Commerce & Industry](#):

Founded in 1873, the Franco-British Chamber of Commerce and Industry is the oldest international Chamber of Commerce in Europe. It is celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2023. The Chamber offers its members – French and British companies of all sizes and from all business sectors – a wide range of services to help them develop their cross-channel business. Located rue de Londres in Paris, the Franco-British Chamber is a powerful business network that helps and connects companies. Its member-to-member Business Connect service allows for a privileged and efficient relationship.

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