

A message to Germany



Sir Sebastian Wood KCMG

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British Ambassador to Germany

As I write these words, the House of Commons has just given its approval for a general election to be held on 12 December, and campaigning is already underway. By the time you read this, the election may already have happened. As often happens these days when I write forewords for forthcoming publications, the fast-moving politics in the UK make it hard for me to know exactly what to say.

So let me take a step back from the day-to-day. Irrespective of the ins and outs of exit deals, irrespective of the precise details of our future institutional relationship, the EU will remain the UK's most important economic partner and the UK will remain, along with China and the US, one of the EU's three most important economic partners.

And the UK and Germany will retain a deep and special relationship spanning trade, investment, science, education, foreign policy, defence, security and culture. We will still have hundreds of thousands of our nationals in each others' countries as visitors, employees and family members. We will still have shared interests, a shared future and a shared continent.

And you, the BCCG, have a major role to play in how the UK-German relationship develops. Having just celebrated your 100th anniversary in 2019, you go into this new decade more structured, more focused and more purposeful. I'd really like to see your media profile continue to rise, and your lobbying impact continue to grow. Whether we are reconfiguring the UK-EU relationship, working together to confront challenges to the rules-based international system, or working out how to balance risk and opportunity when we regulate exciting, but disruptive, new technologies and services, our governments will need constructive advice, and sometimes pressure, from the businesses that have the most at stake in our relationship.

I look forward to working with the BCCG in this new decade. Together, we can rise to these challenges and prosper! |

