Meeting between First Minister of Scotland and President Trump

Date: Tuesday 9 September 2025 [2.20-3.10pm]
Location: Oval Office, White House
Attendees: Rt Hon John Swinney MSP - First Minister of Scotland, Donald J Trump - President of the United States, Lord Peter Mandelson, His Majesty's Ambassador to the USA, Marco Rubio - US Secretary of State, [Redacted – name - s38(1)(b)]- Senior Private Secretary to the First Minister, [Redacted – 1 line – s32(1)(a)(i)]

The meeting opened with President Trump welcoming the First Minister and Ambassador Mandelson to the White House. The First Minister extended his gratitude to the President for his time, especially in the context of distressing global events, including the latest bombings in Qatar.

The President reflected on how much he had enjoyed his visit to Scotland in July. The First Minister indicated the visit had attracted a welcome volume of international interest in Scotland. There was a brief discussion about the upcoming State Visit to the UK later in September and the Ambassador updated on the preparations ahead of this. The First Minister also raised the international situation regarding the ongoing conflict in Gaza and Ukraine and stressed the significance, if not uniqueness, of the role of the President in trying to secure a peaceful resolution.

Ambassador Mandelson provided a brief summary of the latest state of play on the US-UK Prosperity Deal due to be announced shortly, as well as progress on the various elements of the US-UK Technology Partnership.

The First Minister set out that the purpose of his visit was to build upon discussions they had in Scotland in July and to make the case for a better tariff deal for Scotch whisky. The First Minister impressed upon the President the unique position of Scotch whisky, and explained the historic relationship between Scotland and the US, and the symbiotic partnership which exists in the barrelling trade. The First Minister highlighted that the US is the largest market for Scotch whisky, worth £300 million per year, and that Scottish distillers spend hundreds of millions of dollars every year buying Bourbon casks from Kentucky in order to store and mature Scotch whisky.

The First Minister was clear that the negations on tariffs are a matter for the UK Government negotiating team, but given that whisky exports to the US were worth almost £1 billion in 2024, the importance to the Scottish economy cannot be underestimated.

The First Minister also spoke about the impact that tariffs were having on the industry from an employment perspective, notably in smaller distilleries in remote areas of Scotland. The First Minister referenced discussions he had had with representatives from the Scotch Whisky Association and the Kentucky Distillers Association earlier in the day, citing examples including distilleries on the Isle of Harris, where tariffs have resulted in lowered production and consequential job losses. The First Minister impressed upon the President the importance of these distilleries as employers in small, remote communities, and the risk that tariffs placed upon their continued operation.

The First Minister stressed that he was determined to do all that he could in order to protect and safeguard the iconic Scottish product, as well as protect jobs.

[Redacted – 3 lines – s32(1)(a)(i)]

[Redacted – 1 line s32(1)(a)(i)]. The First Minister summarised the arguments for a better tariff deal [Redacted – 2 lines – s32(1)(a)(i)].

[Redacted – 5 lines – s32(1)(a)(i)]

[Redacted – 3 lines – s32(1)(a)(i)]

The First Minister thanked the President for his time and ended the meeting by saying that he looked forward to welcoming the President and First Lady back to the UK for the State Visit later in the month.