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British Ambassador Peter Mandelson Outlines Vision for Stronger UK–US Partnership

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British Ambassador to the United States (US) Peter Mandelson has emphasised the need for a renewed and modernised partnership between the United Kingdom (UK) and the US, focusing on trade, technology, and shared strategic goals in an increasingly competitive global environment. Speaking at an event hosted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Mr Mandelson discussed how both nations can adapt their historic alliance to meet the demands of rapid technological change and shifting economic priorities.

Mr Mandelson, who assumed his role as UK Ambassador to the US in February 2025 following his appointment in December 2024, brings extensive experience in trade and international relations. He previously served as European Commissioner for Trade from 2004 to 2008 and held senior cabinet positions under former prime ministers Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. Drawing on this background, he called for deeper collaboration between the two countries to address the challenges posed by economic nationalism, evolving trade relationships, and the accelerating pace of innovation.

Central to his remarks was the role of advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), in shaping the future of global competitiveness. Mr Mandelson stressed the importance of balancing innovation with appropriate regulation, ensuring that both nations remain at the forefront of technological development while safeguarding ethical and security considerations.

Dr Leslie Vinjamuri, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, moderated the discussion. Dr Vinjamuri, who joined the Council in 2025 after directing the US and the Americas programme at Chatham House in London, noted that the Ambassador's comments come at a time when governments worldwide are grappling with how to manage emerging technologies responsibly.

Mr Mandelson underlined that while the UK and US share a deep-rooted history of political, economic, and cultural ties, the nature of their cooperation must evolve. He argued that future success depends on combining resources, expertise, and innovation to strengthen supply chains, open new markets, and bolster security partnerships. Such efforts, he said, would not only reinforce the so-called “special relationship” but also ensure both nations maintain a competitive advantage in the global marketplace.

The Ambassador also highlighted the importance of people-to-people connections, including academic exchanges, research collaborations, and business partnerships, as vital elements in sustaining long-term cooperation. He pointed to the role of think tanks, trade bodies, and policy institutions in fostering dialogue and generating solutions to shared challenges.

In conclusion, Mr Mandelson characterised the UK–US relationship as one of adaptability and resilience. By working together on issues ranging from technological breakthroughs to fair and open trade, he argued, both nations can navigate the uncertainties of the modern era while shaping a future that reflects their shared values and mutual interests.

This event marked one of Mr Mandelson’s first major public addresses since taking on his ambassadorial role, offering a clear indication of his intent to prioritise innovation, collaboration, and strategic alignment in transatlantic relations.