

Minister denies slashing red tape will lower standards at UK investment summit



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A Cabinet minister has denied that Sir Keir Starmer's plans to slash red tape will lower standards as the [Government](#) seeks to woo investors at a major business summit.

[Technology](#) Secretary [Peter Kyle](#) said that "ripping out" bureaucracy to speed up innovation, as the Prime Minister has promised to do, would not lead to "cutting corners".

The Government is expected to unveil investment deals worth billions in AI, life sciences and infrastructure at its first International Investment Summit on Monday.

Business leaders including five of the world's biggest banks, private equity firms, insurers and tech giants have expressed support for the UK as a stable bet for investment in a letter to the Times newspaper.

But some have suggested that in order to make Britain a more attractive destination post-Brexit, the Government will need to regulate less than the EU.



Chancellor Rachel Reeves has warned of ‘tough decisions’ as Labour says it needs to plug a £22 billion ‘black hole’ in the public finances left by the Conservatives (Stefan Rousseau/PA) PA Wire

Asked whether ministers would be open to doing so, Mr Kyle told BBC Radio 4’s Today programme: “Actually, I would say you need to regulate smartly and you need to regulate creatively.”

Asked whether he believed that was essentially the same as regulating less, he said: “It’s different. You don’t have to cut corners to get innovation through the regulatory landscape.”

Mr Kyle pointed to the Regulatory Innovation Office, which was announced last week and seeks to draw on the learnings of the Covid vaccine taskforce to expedite the deployment of new products, as an example of the Government’s approach.

“Not cutting corners or lowering standards, but making sure that the Government takes on some of the burden of compliance, so that our nation can benefit,” he insisted.

The Technology Secretary downplayed the prospect of concerns among traditional [Labour](#) supporters, including some within the trade union movement, over the Government “speaking the language of the Tories”.

He insisted there would be “high standards” for “everyone who invests and employs people in our country,” citing the recently introduced Employment Bill as an example of Labour’s commitment to workers’ rights.

The summit will see the Government pitch the UK as “open for business” as around 300 industry leaders worth an estimated £40 trillion in assets gather in London’s Guildhall on Monday.

Speakers include Ruth Porat, president and chief investment officer of Google and Alphabet, and David Ricks, chief executive of pharmaceutical firm Eli Lilly.

After a difficult run-up to the summit, which saw the Government embroiled in a row with the Dubai-based owner of P&O ferries which reportedly jeopardised a £1 billion investment, the Prime Minister will promise to “do everything in my power to galvanise growth including getting rid of regulation that needlessly holds back investment”.

In a keynote speech at the summit, he is expected to say: “We have a golden opportunity to use our mandate, to end chop and change, policy churn and sticking plasters that make it so hard for investors to assess the value of any proposition.

“We have the determination, the focus on clear long-term ends, a mission-led mindset that thinks in years, not the days or hours of the news grid, needed to unlock that potential. Do not doubt that.

“We are focusing on investment because the mission of growth, in this country especially, demands it. Private sector investment is the way we rebuild our country and pay our way in the world.”

In a joint letter to the Times that will be welcomed by the Prime Minister, businesses including JP Morgan and Goldman Sachs wrote on Monday: “We are optimistic about the future of the economy, and believe it is time to invest in Britain.”

However, [Elon Musk](#), with whom Sir Keir found himself in a war of words earlier this year due to social media posts made by the tech tycoon about the summer riots, will be a notable absence from the summit.

Mr Kyle denied the Tesla chief had been snubbed because of his criticism of the Prime Minister, who he dubbed “Two Tier Keir”, and insisted he was “absolutely ready to engage” with Mr Musk.

The X owner was widely criticised after promoting false claims on his platform in relation to the widespread disorder across the UK following the Southport stabbings.

But the Cabinet minister said on Monday: “Elon Musk would have been very, very welcome if he had an open investment programme that we could have latched on to,” he said.

“We would love to engage with Elon Musk. If he opens up an investment programme and there is global competition for it – believe me, we will be first in line, I will be first in line knocking on his door to try and get that investment here.”