Maritime UK partners with the UK Government to launch Britain's first maritime trade mission to China

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- **Event to coincide with triggering of Article 50**
- **Cunard's Queen Mary 2 to act as centrepiece in Shanghai**

As the Prime Minister triggers Article 50, Maritime UK and the UK Government will lead a first-of-its-kind three-day trade mission to Shanghai (28-30 March), aimed at boosting maritime ties between the UK and China.

Attended by senior industry and government leaders from both countries, including Shipping and Ports Minister, John Hayes MP, and Trade Minister, Mark Garnier MP, the mission has been timed to coincide with Cunard's Queen Mary 2 calling in Shanghai. The legendary vessel will be used to promote the UK's world-leading maritime position, and boost trade and investment between the two countries.

"***The UK and China are two of the world's leading maritime and trading powers, and our mission is designed to further strengthen relations between our two countries***," says David Dingle CBE, Chairman of Maritime UK.

"***On Wednesday the Prime Minister will trigger Article 50. More than any industry, maritime has a unique role to play in making Brexit a success***."

"***As Britain goes out into the world, determined to increase exports and sign ambitious trade deals, we have a unique responsibility to make 'Global Britain' a reality, and are ready to do so***," added David Dingle.

The trade and investment relationship between the UK and China has deepened over recent years, and during the visit Maritime UK and the Department for International Trade will be collaborating with the Chinese government to identify new maritime trade and investment opportunities for both the UK and China.

David Dingle, who is also Chairman of Carnival UK adds, "***A significant number of world-leading British maritime companies are already working with China and we are looking forward to opening new chapters in these relationships, and beginning others***."

Following the Shanghai visit, the Maritime UK Chairman and Shipping and Ports Minister will visit Hong Kong to meet with the Hong Kong Shipowners Association.

Maritime critical to Brexit success

Leaving the European Union, the UK will have the opportunity to forge new trade deals with countries around the world, including some of the most exciting, dynamic, and fastest growing economies.

The maritime industry is the engine and enabler of international trade, and as other industries resolve to boost their own exports to make a success of Brexit, the UK maritime industry is ready to deliver British goods to the rest of the world on UK ships and through UK ports.

Directly supporting 500,000 jobs, the maritime industry contributes £22.2bn to UK GDP and drives exports and inward investment throughout the UK.

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Opportunity to speak to David Dingle – Chair of Maritime UK and Chairman of Carnival UK (parent company of Cunard and P & O Cruises)

The UK may be concerned at the possible loss of trading opportunities in Europe, as the British government triggers Article 50 to formally begin Brexit proceedings, but a golden era for trade and investment is being heralded in China.

China is currently looking for UK expertise in marine engineering and manufacturing, shipping, ports and business services to help them realise their ambitious objectives to develop the sector.

What's happening when:
Tuesday March 28 – Maritime trade forum, Shanghai
UK and Chinese government officials and business leaders are meeting in Shanghai on Tuesday March 28 (1300 Shanghai time, 2100 UK time) to plan how to build on the trade and investment between the two countries which has soared over the last few years.

To enhance the relationship Maritime UK, led by the body's chair David Dingle, and the UK government's Department for International Trade are joining up with Pudong New Area for a maritime forum. UK Shipping Minister Mark Garnier MP and John Hayes MP will be amongst the expected 150 guests present.

Wednesday March 29 – UK Maritime Showcase, on board Cunard ship, RMS Queen Mary 2
Chinese government officials and business leaders are being invited aboard RMS Queen Mary 2 for a lunch to showcase the UK's shipping capabilities. A tour of the ship will be followed by speeches highlighting all the UK shipping industry has to offer its counterparts in China.

David Dingle, Carnival UK Chairman, and Chair of Maritime UK says: ***"Today the British Prime Minister is triggering Article 50. More than any industry, maritime has a unique role to play in the global success of Britain following its departure from the European Union and its embracing once again a singular, unfettered role as a global trading leader. We have a unique responsibility to make "Global Britain" a reality, and our being here today demonstrates our commitment to doing so. Whilst leaving the EU the UK will have the opportunity to forge new trade deals including with some of the most dynamic and fastest growing economies. The fact that we stand here today demonstrates our commitment to strengthening the UK-China relationship as we prepare to leave the EU."***

DAVID DINGLE IS AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW IN SHANGHAI ON March 28 OR 29 OR IN HONG KONG ON MARCH 30.

CONTACT: Shout! Communications on 020 7240 9980 or 020 7 240 8852

Other background facts:

- The UK is ranked by The World Bank as one of the easiest countries to do with business with
- The UK has expertise in all areas of shipping: manufacturing, engineering, finance, law and ship broking services.
- The City of London is the world number one centre for maritime business – joined by dynamic clusters in Liverpool, Solent and Scotland as competitive global hubs for maritime business
- The UK government and history is committed to investing in the next generation of maritime professionals; for example the UK invests in the £15m Support for Maritime Training fund which contributes towards the cost of training Merchant Navy ratings and officer trainees.

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