



Scottish Council for
Development and Industry

PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate release

SCDI celebrates 50 years of pioneering international trade visits: 1960-2010

SCDI, Scotland's leading independent economic development network is tonight (Thursday) celebrating the 50th anniversary of its global trade visits programme.

The first pioneering trade visit took Scottish companies to Moscow in the then USSR in 1960. Since that inaugural visit, SCDI have organised more than 360 trade visits, taking more than 5,000 business leaders to new markets around the world. The visits have allowed Scottish companies the opportunity to enter previously uncharted territory, visiting 50 global markets including Nigeria, Korea and Eastern Europe in the '60s and '70s as well as regular visits to India, the USA and Canada.

Other landmark projects include:

- The first visit from any Western country to the People's Republic of China in 1971
- The official UK trade delegation to New South Wales during Australia's bicentennial year in 1988
- The first Scottish visit to the newly democratic South Africa in 1994

The celebration of SCDI's 50th anniversary of trade visits will take place in the Garden Lobby of the Scottish Parliament, where SCDI will be joined by past Chief Executives and Presidents and former trade visit participants. The gathering will be addressed by former SCDI President, Tam Dalyell.

SCDI Chairman, Robert Armour OBE said:

"Scotland's economy is at a turning point. If, as a nation, we can achieve SCDI's ambition to double the value of Scotland's exports, we will be able to return swiftly and effectively to strong economic growth and prosperity. SCDI's trade visit programme is vital to support Scottish businesses in taking the first steps towards the opportunities for



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success in overseas markets. We look forward to another 50 years of successful trade visits that really deliver for Scotland.”

Tam Dalyell said:

“SCDI’s pioneering trade development work has led the way in providing practical and direct support to small and medium-sized companies across Scotland. The last 50 years of visits have achieved a huge amount for Scotland. It is vital that this programme continues to receive government support to allow Scotland to achieve our potential on the international stage.”

SCDI continues to be recognised as the leading independent organisation supporting Scottish companies to meet their international ambitions, recently organising another global first by beaming speakers live from Hong Kong, Mumbai, New York and Toronto using state-of-the-art Cisco Telepresence equipment at our international conference. In just two weeks time, SCDI will take Scotland’s largest ever trade delegation to India during the second week of the Commonwealth Games.

SCDI’s current trade visit programme is financially supported by Scottish Development International (SDI). Last year, SDI’s £50,000 investment in the programme generated £3.4 million pounds of new business for Scotland.

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Notes to editors

SCDI is Scotland's leading economic development organisation representing 1,200 companies, SMEs, public sector bodies, charities, trade unions and faith groups.

For further information, please contact James Alexander, Policy and Communications Manager on 0776 202 3985.