

File name: Chapter_9_-_Princess_Anne_Keynote[1].mp3

Moderator questions in Bold, Respondents in Regular text.

KEY: Unable to decipher = (inaudible + timecode), **Phonetic spelling** (ph) + timecode), **Missed word** = (mw + timecode), **Talking over each other** = (talking over each other + timecode).

Moderator: And now I'm honoured to welcome our special guest, Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, to the stage.

HRH The Princess Royal: Ministers of State, my lords, ladies and gentlemen. Well, thank you for your invitation to join you here today at this extremely important Northern Ireland investment summit, and to the Department of Business and Trade, the Northern Ireland Office, and Invest Northern Ireland, for this innovative idea and bringing it to fruition. But more importantly, it was not difficult to get me here, 'cause I like coming to Northern Ireland. I'm delighted that so many have responded to those invitations to join them here for the summit, and for those of you who have been doing business here, I'm sure you'll be very important to encouraging others, and for those who haven't, I suspect, at least I rather hope, that you'll also become regular visitors like the rest of us. This summit is also taking place on the 25th anniversary year of the Belfast Agreement, and that was an extraordinary achievement for Northern Ireland because it helped to lay the foundation of the prosperous and the more peaceful Northern Ireland that we see today, and it's something that I've been able to experience through regular visits to all parts of Northern Ireland, and to all sizes of businesses, within Northern Ireland. So I'm particularly pleased to see that that has been recognised in this way because Northern Ireland is home to an ambitious, artistic and educated population, with two world-class universities and a talented and well-educated workforce, with expertise ranging from cybersecurity to CGI. Across the board, there's quite a wide range. I know a lot of people think of Northern Ireland as being a hotbed of agricultural activity, and that is true.

Have you ever been in a modern tractor? They're extraordinary bits of kit, so from tractors to trams, to refrigerators to defibrillators. Every single day, people across the world benefit from the innovation, creativity and the drive that is so deeply rooted in Northern Ireland and its people. As I say, I've had the pleasure of visiting many of those companies, and I would include things like life rafts and medications in that list of innovative businesses that have a worldwide reputation. This creativity and ambition to innovate really isn't just about Belfast, it is the whole of Northern Ireland, and it's something that is advanced by the businesses who join us from Derry, Londonderry, Kilkeel and Ballymena, to name just a few, and I could go on. Now, to some extent, because you've already been here for a little while, you probably know all that, so what will this summit do for those of you who have come, both from Northern Ireland and from overseas? I hope that the first-, the key to this is the opportunity to actually meet, to get together as individuals. Somehow, it's a reassuring concept after the-, the pandemic and living online, that meeting people, and particularly in business, is still the key to doing good business and having long-term relationships. And there are questions. You'll have quite a few of them, I expect, so where better to ask them than here?

Who to ask, I think pretty well everybody is probably here who you could want to ask those questions of, and I hope, above all, that you will remember, this is a slightly personal experience here, but you will remember to ask the question that you really wanted to ask when you first came, which is not always the question you remember to ask by the time you've left, but hopefully you will do that, and that the success of this summit will be based on the answer that you will get, which I-, that may depend on a number of issues, but I hope above all, you will all be able to go back to your businesses, knowing that there is more you can do here in Northern Ireland, as business relationships, and particularly wanting to do more business in Northern Ireland. So thank you for joining us here today. I'm very much looking forward to meeting some of you later, and I really hope that Northern Ireland become a regular part of the next chapter of your own stories. Thank you.

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