

First Minister visiting Dublin

The Scottish Government has announced that First Minister Nicola Sturgeon is to visit Dublin. She will use the opportunity to highlight Scotland's growing political, cultural and business links with Ireland and explore the potential for further investment.

The First Minister, who will meet with the Taoiseach during the visit and host an investment round table with the Irish business organisation IBEC, will say that Ireland is hugely important as Scotland's closest international trading partner with exports worth £1.5 billion going to Ireland in 2017.

Ms Sturgeon will also visit a schools' project, which uses poetry to connect young people in Dublin and Clydebank.

The First Minister will say: "Scotland is an outward-looking, welcoming, European nation that greatly values the friendship and progressive values it shares with Ireland, and we are determined that relationship will go from strength to strength.

"The relationship with Ireland is of vital importance to Scotland. As our fifth largest export market, business and cultural links between Scotland and Ireland are very important.

"Whatever happens with Brexit, we will not allow it to damage our relationship with our closest partners and friends, and we will continue to encourage trade, inward investment and

international cultural collaboration.”