

First Minister to address STUC

The First Minister, John Swinney, is to address the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) annual congress in Dundee on Monday.

His speech to the [conference](#) will call for the UK Government to fully support Scottish industry, and will warn that a UK industrial strategy is needed to help show that “Scotland is open for business”.

The First Minister is expected to say: “The current global uncertainty is unprecedented, and we are braced for further shifts in security and the economic global order.

“At a recent roundtable I hosted with business and trade union leaders, I welcomed the recognition that we need to adapt to the changing economic landscape. We must have an approach that shows Scotland is open for business. There are investment opportunities out there and we must realise them.

“We must ensure we have the highly-qualified and skilled workforce needed to make Scotland an attractive place to invest – and investors need to know what we expect in terms of fair work and workers’ voice. My government will do its utmost to make that happen.

“At the same time, the UK Government must also play its part and develop an industrial strategy for the whole of the UK – one that recognises all that Scotland has to offer and agrees to invest in that. Put bluntly, UK industrial support cannot stop at the border.

“Stepping in to save British Steel in Scunthorpe – an industrial site of national significance – is commendable. The Scottish Government is committed to securing a just transition for Grangemouth, with the workforce at its heart. So, if British Steel is to be nationalised to protect its future, there must be a willingness to intervene to secure the future of Grangemouth.

“We need the UK Government to take action to minimise the potential harms from the current volatile economic situation. This includes the removal of the self-imposed economic straitjacket of the chancellor’s fiscal rules, working more closely with the EU and reversing the increase in employers’ National Insurance contributions.

“And there must be a willingness to intervene to protect key Scottish industrial sites. My Government recognises the importance of doing so and we will be willing partners in acting to protect Scottish industry in tough times.”

Scottish Labour

But Anas Sarwar Leader of the Scottish Labour Party says that Mr Swinney must use the opportunity to apologise for the two decades of leadership without an industrial strategy causing missed opportunities and decline.

Scottish Labour say that some of the key SNP industrial failures includes standing idle for years while the Grangemouth oil refinery was wound down – and insisting that exploitative zero-hours contracts are a positive destination for young Scots.

Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar said: “The SNP government with John Swinney at its heart have spent the last two decades in power without a plan and without a clue over how to support Scotland’s workers.

“On the SNP’s watch, jobs and investment have been exported from Scotland with foreign companies and governments benefiting from our natural resources while Scottish industry and communities suffer.

“Through inaction and incompetence the SNP has broken Scottish industry with workers being left to pick up the pieces of government failure.

“When John Swinney appears before the STUC today he must give a fulsome apology for his government’s anti-worker actions and total failure to support Scottish industry.

“Unlike the SNP, Scottish Labour believe that Scottish workers and industry should come first.

“That’s why we will strengthen supply chains to help bring jobs to Scotland and act to ensure young Scots have the skills they need to flourish.

“We will end the celebration of exploitative zero-hour contracts and deliver the high-skill, high-pay jobs we need – that is the new direction Scottish Labour will deliver.”



First Minister John Swinney after the General Election speaking at Port of Leith Distillery. Edinburgh Picture Alan Simpson