

## PRESS RELEASE

### SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT MINISTER LEADS SCDI TRADE VISIT TO INDIA

8 October 2009

The Scottish Government's External Affairs Minister, Michael Russell, will next week (October 10-16) lead a trade visit to India for Scottish businesses keen to strengthen links and develop new markets.

The 21-strong delegation will engage in a series of individual meetings and group events in Delhi and Mumbai. Organisations represented include HSBC, Brodies (Scotland's largest commercial law firm) further education colleges and Scottish businesses operating in a variety of sectors including IT & property development.

**Michael Russell said:** 'With strong existing links between our countries and our economies still growing despite the economic downturn, there are clear opportunities for Scottish organisations to do business in India.'

'I am pleased to lead this delegation as its participants look to build on the long association between our two countries. Trade visits help cement existing ties of friendship and collaboration and I am positive this visit will be of great benefit to both sides.'

The visit has been organised by the Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI) which has 40 years' experience of delivering successful trade visit programmes.

**SCDI Chief Executive Lesley Sawers said:** 'SCDI has a long and successful record in delivering effective and successful international trade visits for Scottish businesses operating at every level and within almost every sector of the economy.'

'A key part of our role is to identify key international growth markets and give Scottish businesses every support as they compete in the world's most dynamic markets.'

'Despite the global economic challenges, India's growth rate is still expected to exceed 5% this year and there are huge opportunities across a range of sectors which could boost Scottish businesses, attract inward investment to Scotland and support sustainable growth within our economy.'

'We are delighted to have Michael Russell leading our India trade visit as this sends out a clear and positive message that Scottish businesses have Scottish Government support at a senior level.'

'Secretary of State for Scotland, Jim Murphy, led SCDI's trade visit to China earlier this year and, once again, ministerial engagement proved an important factor in helping Scottish firms win business.'

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### Comments from businesses taking part in the trade visit:

**John Rendall, CEO, HSBC in Scotland said:** "HSBC is delighted to support the SCDI trade visit to India. If you set India's economic growth against that of the world as a whole, the buzz currently surrounding India is more than justified.

This year, the world's GDP will shrink by 2.3 per cent, whilst in contrast India will enjoy healthy growth of 6.2 per cent. Our prediction is that this trend is likely to continue into 2010, with GDP growth of 8 per cent set against a world GDP growth rate of 2.2 per cent. There are plentiful opportunities for Scottish businesses at this time and a trade visit can really help to lay the foundations to successfully trade with and within this vibrant country."

**Bill Drummond, Managing Partner, at Brodies said:** 'As a leading, client-focused commercial legal practice with a Scottish base, an international perspective and a proposition that we believe will be attractive to Indian businesses investing in the UK, we are keen to share our expertise, improve our knowledge of the drivers of international expansion from one of the world's fastest growing economies, and, of course, enhance our networks and opportunities. We greatly look forward to engaging fully in the SCDI's India trade visit.'

**Ian Kerr, Managing Director of Glasgow-based national investigation agency, ID, said:** 'One of their core services is Brand Protection and we are visiting India to study the early preparations for the protection of the Commonwealth Games brand and the integrity of the retail and manufacturing environment this is set against. Our wide experience of intellectual property enforcement and the experience this visit will provide places us in a position to ensure Glasgow maximises its commercial potential in hosting the Games 2014 Games.'

**Karen Campbell, chief executive of Maxim Office Park, the UK's largest office development outside London said:** "The SCDI's trade delegation programme offers the perfect combination of well-organised and supported core events, together with the freedom to make your own specific appointments with key contacts during the trip. I'm looking forward to a busy and rewarding visit."

### ENDS

For further information please contact Janette Harkess, SCDI Director of Policy & Research, on 0141 352 8558 or at [janette.harkess@scdi.org.uk](mailto:janette.harkess@scdi.org.uk)

### Notes to editors:

The Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI) is an independent membership network which strengthens Scotland's competitiveness by influencing Government policies to encourage sustainable economic prosperity. SCDI has offices in Glasgow, Aberdeen and Inverness. Our membership is drawn from Scottish business, trade unions, public agencies, educational institutions, local authorities, voluntary sector and inter faith groups.



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SCDI's trade visit programme is funded through UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) and managed through Scottish Development International (SDI)

SCDI's first trade mission took place in July 1960 when an 11-strong delegation visited USSR. The India Trade visit will be the 360<sup>th</sup> visit under the SCDI trade visit programme.

### **HSBC Holdings plc**

HSBC Holdings plc, the parent company of the HSBC Group, is headquartered in London. The Group serves customers worldwide from around 9,500 offices in 86 countries and territories in Europe, the Asia-Pacific region, the Americas, the Middle East and Africa. With assets of US\$2,527 billion at 31 December 2008, HSBC is one of the world's largest banking and financial services organisations. HSBC is marketed worldwide as 'the world's local bank'.