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THE PRIME MINISTER

I am sorry that I cannot be with you today for this year's Parliamentary Links Day and I congratulate the Royal Society of Biology for organising this event once again on behalf of the science and engineering community. I welcome the presence in the House today of so many distinguished scientists and engineers from such a wide range of the UK's most prominent scientific societies.

Your theme for today of *Science and the Industrial Strategy* is very timely. Government has always had a crucial role in supporting scientific research and the technological advancements that flow from it. In the last few years, government support has helped create new landmark institutions, like the Francis Crick Institute - Europe's biomedical research facility – and the Aerospace Technology Institute in Bedford.

And in the Industrial Strategy, we have made a commitment to take our support for UK science and technology to another level. We have already invested £7 billion in new public funding for science, research and innovation: the largest increase for 40 years. And we have set the goal of research and development investment reaching 2.4 per cent of GDP by 2027. That could translate to an additional £80 billion investment in the ideas of the future over the next decade.

Scientific progress has always been an international endeavour. I know how deeply British scientists value their collaboration with colleagues in other countries through EU-organised programmes. And the contribution which UK science makes to those programmes is immense. That is why I have made clear that it is in the mutual interest of the UK and the EU for the UK to have the option to fully associate ourselves with the excellence-based European science and innovation programmes.

We cannot predict the future or guess what technological or scientific breakthroughs might lie just around the corner. But we can observe the long term trends that are shaping change in our world today, and ensure we capitalise on the opportunities that these trends create, shaping the jobs and sectors of the future. That is why our modern Industrial Strategy identifies four Grand Challenges for the UK economy: the growth of Artificial Intelligence; the new demands and opportunities created by the ageing society; the spread of new technologies to promote clean growth; and the transformation in transport systems that will result from the development of autonomous and electric vehicles. By channelling our efforts into meeting these Grand Challenges – building on our strengths in science, innovation, and commerce – we can develop technologies to export around the world, we can grow whole new industries that bring good jobs across the UK, and we can achieve tangible social improvements for everyone in our society.

Parliamentary Links Day is an important event on the Parliamentary calendar and I wish you success in your deliberations today.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'I. R. M. J.', written in a cursive style.