

38-Person Trade Mission Arrives From Britain

By [The Moscow Times](#)

November 24, 2010

The  Moscow Times

British Business Secretary Vince Cable arrived in Moscow on Wednesday for a three-day visit that will include talks with Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin in what is being billed as Britain's biggest-ever trade mission to Russia.

Cable is accompanied by 38 senior figures from top British companies including Barclays Capital, Royal Dutch Shell, AstraZeneca, Rolls-Royce, Rio Tinto and British Airways, the British Embassy said.

On Friday, Cable and Kudrin will chair the Intergovernmental Steering Committee, a body that meets annually in Britain and Russia to address economic and cultural issues. This week's meeting will focus on the international business environment, small and medium-size enterprises, financial services, high-tech industries, Olympic legacy, energy and energy efficiency, the embassy said in a statement.

Since the inauguration of Britain's new coalition government in May, Cable is the second high-level British minister to visit Russia following Foreign Secretary William Hague in October. The visit takes place less than a month after President Dmitry Medvedev met British Prime Minister David Cameron at the Seoul G20 summit on Nov. 11 and invited him to Russia next year.

Despite political disagreements, Russia and Britain have strong economic ties. More than 600 British businesses already have a base in Russia, and Britain's investment in Russia stands at about £11 billion (\$17 billion), some 15 percent of total foreign investment, making Britain the biggest foreign investor in Russia.

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