International Insights: UK Consul General Rachel Galloway Highlights Resilient US-UK Partnership at Consular Conversations in Atlanta

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Global Atlanta Consular Conversations series brought together business leaders, international trade professionals and students at the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce in metro Atlanta for an in-depth discussion with UK Consul General Rachel Galloway moderated by Global Atlanta's Trevor Williams.

The event, sponsored by Miller & Martin in January 2026, underscored the enduring economic and diplomatic ties between the United Kingdom and the southeastern United States.

A Decade of Diplomatic Dialogue

Global Atlanta's Consular Conversations series has become a cornerstone for understanding international business relationships in the region. Since launching in 2016 with the UK's consul general as the second-ever guest, the series has grown from an intimate gathering of 18 attendees to a sold-out event that draws representatives from domestic and international companies, technical colleges and law firms specializing in international business.

Miller & Martin has supported the series throughout its 10-year history, reflecting the law firm's commitment to international business and its extensive network through the World Law Group. The firm has maintained close relationships with UK affiliates and British businesses operating in Georgia, making this event particularly relevant to its practice areas.

Rachel Galloway: A Diplomatic Career Forged in Complex Global Challenges

Before assuming her role as consul general in Atlanta in 2022, Rachel Galloway served as the UK's ambassador to the Republic of North Macedonia, where she helped guide the country through its successful NATO accession and name change agreement with Greece. Her diplomatic career has taken her through some of the world's most challenging regions, including deployments to Helmand Province in Afghanistan, work on the Darfur crisis and serving as the UK's lead negotiator on Middle East policy for the European Union.

Galloway began her foreign service career on September 1, 2001, just days before the 9/11 attacks that would reshape global politics. She worked on Western Hemisphere affairs in Washington, D.C., during the early 2000s before volunteering for deployment to Afghanistan. Her career has been marked by a commitment to finding solutions in difficult circumstances, from counter-terrorism policy to peace negotiations.

"You have to continue believing that you can have a positive impact," Galloway said when asked about working on seemingly intractable international problems. "With peace negotiations, you keep trying, and eventually you hope they will stick."

The British Consulate's Mission in Atlanta

The UK maintains eight consulates across the United States, each tailored to the specific needs and industries of its region. In Atlanta, the consulate's work spans several key areas: consular services for British citizens, political analysis and engagement with state legislatures and extensive trade promotion focusing on sectors critical to the Southeast, including technology, financial services and advanced manufacturing.

Last year marked a significant milestone for the consulate as it celebrated 200 years since the UK first opened diplomatic offices in Georgia, originally located in what is now the Oglethorpe Club in Savannah. The longevity of this relationship reflects the deep economic and cultural ties between the UK and the state – with the UK being one of Georgia's top 10 export markets traditionally, according to the Georgia Department of Economic Development.

The consulate's trade team works on both business development and trade policy. Recent accomplishments include negotiating mutual recognition agreements on engineering and architecture certifications that allow professionals to work in both countries without requalifying. Each state must individually agree to these federal-level agreements, and Georgia's participation removes significant barriers for companies moving talent between the UK and the Southeast.

Trade Policy in an Era of Tariffs

The consulate has been particularly active in recent months addressing the implications of tariffs on British companies operating in Georgia. The UK's economic prosperity deal negotiated in 2025 included specific carve-outs and exemptions that directly benefit companies in the state.

JCB, the British construction equipment manufacturer with a facility in Savannah and one of the largest dealers in the Southeast, was among the companies that benefited from these exemptions. The consulate worked closely with affected businesses to understand their needs and communicate those concerns during trade negotiations.

"We've been focusing on what the implications of tariffs are for companies here," Galloway explained. "The exemptions we negotiated gave companies what they needed to be able to operate."

Beyond tariffs, the consulate addresses legislative issues that could inadvertently impact UK businesses or citizens. When the Georgia legislature considered a bill last year that would have designated British consulate staff as foreign agents, the consulate raised concerns about unintended consequences for allied nations.

The Premier League Effect: Soft Power Through Sport

One of the most visible aspects of UK soft power in recent years has been the meteoric growth of soccer in the United States. Galloway, a native of Manchester, has witnessed this transformation firsthand. Twenty years ago, during her first posting in Washington, D.C., almost no one discussed what they call "football" in the UK with her. Today, she can barely step out of an airport without being asked about the Premier League.

"I cannot go anywhere in the world, get in a taxi, and they ask me where I'm from, because I just have to discuss the soccer," Galloway said. "There was one place in the world it didn't happen, which was America. I've come back 20 years later. It's not just that everyone talks to you about it, but there are bars just dedicated to Liverpool, to Manchester United."

Atlanta has become a favored destination for Premier League teams during their US summer tours. The city offers the rare combination of a world-class stadium, enthusiastic sports fans and direct rail service from the airport to Mercedes-Benz Stadium. These logistical details matter when planning international events, and Atlanta's infrastructure has made it an ideal host.

The NBC fan zones have drawn thousands to watch matches on weekend mornings, with Nashville hosting 5,000 fans last year. The consulate sees these events as both cultural exchanges and business opportunities, particularly in the growing sports technology sector.

Galloway noted the cultural learning curve runs both ways. She was struck by the scale of college football stadiums during a visit to the University of South Carolina for a Manchester United-Liverpool match. The stadium, which hosts only six or seven football games per year, has a larger seating capacity than the home stadiums of either Premier League club.

"We can't comprehend college football, the amounts of money, the power of it in the region," she said. "But it's a fantastic opportunity for us to work together."

Sports Technology and Innovation

The intersection of sports and technology represents a growing opportunity for UK-US collaboration. British companies are bringing expertise in wearable technology, artificial intelligence for performance analysis and fan experience innovation to American sports markets.

Hawkeye, a UK firm with offices in Midtown Atlanta, provides camera technology and analytics for both soccer and the NFL. Another London-based company, Team Sports (spelled with a Z "because we're cool for kids," Galloway joked), is partnering with Atlanta tech firms on youth sports applications.

The consulate organized a London technology delegation visit to Atlanta in March to further these connections and explore opportunities in sports tech and other sectors.

Miller & Martin Insights: A Stable Foundation for Transatlantic Business

Kevin Abernethy, a government affairs, corporate and litigation attorney at Miller & Martin, emphasized the importance of the US-UK relationship for the firm's practice and clients. With clients and affiliations with UK law firms through the World Law Group, Miller & Martin closely monitors developments in transatlantic trade.

“As the consul general pointed out, there’s a trillion dollars of trade between the United States and the UK. We have English clients and an English firm we’re affiliated with. So, we’re obviously very interested in monitoring that, but we were encouraged to hear that the United Kingdom is also very focused on that, and wants to not only maintain it, but enhance it.”

Abernethy highlighted the reinforcement of the long-standing relationship between the two countries as his primary takeaway. Despite recent headlines about international affairs, the fundamental bond remains intact and continues to drive economic partnership.

“I liked to hear the consul general reinforce the strong, long-standing relationship between the United States and the UK,” he said. “Despite maybe some recent turmoil in the news and international affairs, that bond is still very much intact.”

When asked about advice he would give businesses navigating the current international environment, Abernethy pointed to the consul general’s own emphasis on fundamentals: jobs, economic development and education. He cited Georgia Governor Brian Kemp’s track record over the past seven and a half years as an example of how focusing on these core issues can produce results regardless of headline noise.

“Don’t let events of the day obscure the larger picture in history,” Abernethy recommended. “People see context and the larger picture. And not to let a headline here and there that’s still important disrupt what’s been a very successful partnership.”

The World Cup and Beyond

As the United States prepares to co-host the FIFA World Cup 2026, the UK consulate sees opportunities to deepen sports-related business ties. The growing American appetite for international soccer, combined with British expertise in stadium management, broadcasting technology, and fan engagement, creates natural areas for collaboration.

The consulate will continue working on trade policy issues, mutual recognition agreements in additional professional fields and supporting British companies considering expansion in the Southeast. With over 200 years of diplomatic presence in Georgia and a trillion dollars in annual US-UK trade, the relationship shows no signs of slowing.

For businesses interested in UK trade opportunities, the British Consulate in Atlanta provides resources and connections to support transatlantic commerce.

Global Atlanta’s Consular Conversations series is presented and sponsored by Miller & Martin PLLC. The series provides a platform for foreign diplomats to discuss their countries’ economic priorities and bilateral relationships with the United States.



Football, Fintech and a Trillion in Trade: British Consul General on Why It’s Vital to Safeguard the ‘Special Relationship’

Event Recap: Consular Conversations OTP – United Kingdom