Scotland is a country famed for the beauty of its landscape and the influence and drive of its people. They have always looked out beyond their borders, which explains their remarkable impact across the world.

It makes Scotland a fitting place to host this important and unique global summit, attended by the leaders of the G8 countries but also those from the major emerging economies and African nations. And it also means that the eyes of the world will be on Gleneagles this week.

I welcome the interest and international attention and the hope for concrete progress on some of the most pressing challenges facing our world. In particular, we want to reach international agreement on the need to tackle climate change and energy security in partnership with major emerging economies, and help Africa become a stable and more prosperous member of the international community. These are the priorities I have chosen for Britain’s G8 Presidency, which have been welcomed by my G8 colleagues. These are both challenges of huge importance to today’s and future generations. On both, we need to act now and together. They are problems beyond the power of any single country, no matter how powerful, to tackle on their own.

What is required is global action and, above all, international leadership, which the G8 is uniquely placed to give.