

International Trade Committee

Oral evidence: UK trade policy transparency and scrutiny, HC 1043

Wednesday 28 November 2018

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Members present: Angus Brendan MacNeil (Chair); Emma Little Pengelly; Faisal Rashid; Catherine West; Matt Western.

Questions 249 - 275

Witnesses

I: Jude Kirton-Darling MEP, Member of the European Parliament for North-East England

Examination of witness

Witness: Jude Kirton-Darling MEP

Q249 **Chair:** Welcome to our second session today, the third panel of the day. We are very grateful that there is a Member of the European Parliament's International Trade Committee with us. We do know who we have here but could you introduce yourself in your own terms, please, for the record?

Jude Kirton-Darling: Yes. My name is Jude Kirton-Darling. I am a Labour Member of the European Parliament for North-East England. I sit as one of the British MEPs in the International Trade Committee of the European Parliament. For the purposes of your perspective on parliamentary scrutiny, I should also say that before I was elected in 2014, I led on trade policy for the European Trade Union Confederation and so have a perspective of how stakeholders engage in trade policy at European level.

Q250 **Chair:** Thank you very much. We had hoped to have Emma McClarkin here too. She was willing to come but her diary and our diaries just did not coincide. I would imagine that your views and hers on general trade policy would be much of a muchness, perhaps with nuanced differences. Would that be fair to say?

Jude Kirton-Darling: Yes, it would be fair to say that in terms of the way that the European Parliament functions and scrutiny, we would be on the same page.

Q251 **Chair:** Just to open that up a bit more in a general question, what role do you find the European Parliament playing in relation to the EU's trade policy? We have seen the EU's trade policy being quite expansive and quite open at the moment, so if you could fill out the blanks for us.

Jude Kirton-Darling: The European Parliament's role has developed quite considerably over the last decade and more, since the Lisbon Treaty. What we saw was that the European Parliament was given a blunt power. Before the Lisbon Treaty, essentially the European Parliament had very little role in foreign affairs or international trade questions. With the Lisbon Treaty, the European Parliament was given a blunt power of consent over international treaties and international trade agreements. Alongside the consent power—basically a blunt yes or no to international treaties and trade treaties—the European Parliament was also given the right to be kept fully informed on the negotiations throughout the negotiations, to ensure effective information flow. From that very basic set of rights, over the last few years—and I would say particularly since 2014 in the context of the Transatlantic Trade Investment Partnership, the negotiations with the US—what you saw was the European Parliament really open up its role and use a lot of informal and formal mechanisms and tools to basically make parliamentary scrutiny a much more alive and



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kicking animal at European level. The European Parliament has essentially fought for its own place in the system and there has been a rebalancing of power between the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council, but it is a mixture of informal and formal powers. If I am fair, part of why that was possible was that with the Transatlantic Trade Investment Partnership, public interest turned to trade policy in a way that we had not seen since the Seattle WTO round and public interest created the leverage for MEPs to increase their insight and their scrutiny over what was being done, making those very blunt powers much more useful.

Q252 **Chair:** Just looking at the process—I am shooting in the dark here and guessing that the EU does not have a trade deal with Bolivia or Ecuador—if that was to come onto the horizon, what would the practice be for the International Trade Committee? I think INTA is the term for it in Brussels. What would INTA do at this stage, with this on the horizon? Who would it meet, what documents would it see, how would it consider them, what would it change in them, how could INTA contribute its views to the wider Parliament? Paint me a picture on that, if you can.

Jude Kirton-Darling: I can use the actual EU trade deal with Ecuador as an example.

Ecuador acceded to the trade deal with Colombia and Peru, which was originally foreseen to be a trade deal with the Andean community when it was first started under Lord Mandelson, when he was Trade Commissioner and these powers were extended. It was clear that the WTO was in flux. The whole global Europe agenda developed and the idea was that the EU was going to negotiate with regions in the world. The EU started negotiating with the Andean community. The community fragmented. There was a deal with Colombia and Peru. During my time in Parliament—in 2015 - 16, I think, but I could be wrong on those dates—Ecuador acceded to the agreement, so it is now an agreement with the three countries of the Andean community.

What happens is that the Commission establishes that there is scope for a trade negotiation and that a third country is interested. There is then a process of developing the mandate to negotiate. At the moment, that mandate goes to the Trade Policy Committee of the Council of Ministers and the member states sign off the mandate for the Commission to negotiate. At that point, the European Parliament—

Q253 **Chair:** So the mandate is a creation of the member states.

Jude Kirton-Darling: Yes, at the moment.

At that point, the European Parliament would, in most cases, start to set out its position in a non-binding way. Quite often, and particularly for big partner countries—for smaller partner countries the European Parliament might not focus in the same way—the European Parliament would probably at that point adopt a resolution in the International Trade



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Committee setting out its view on the European Union's mandate for those trade negotiations. At the point, however, that is a non-binding resolution, which can be taken or left by the European negotiators and by the Trade Policy Committee; it is just a view of Parliament on those negotiations.

Q254 **Chair:** The member-state creation of the mandate is primary over the European Parliament?

Jude Kirton-Darling: Yes, currently. Yes.

The European Parliament's work is all done in public, with some exceptions, which I will explain to you. In terms of resolutions and positions, however, everything is done in public. Up until very recently, the draft mandates have been completely secret. The Council has been very resistant to the publication of mandates. The current Commissioner—and this is a sign of the increased transparency on trade policy from the Commission's side—has started publishing draft mandates, even when they are not finalised by the Council Trade Policy Committee.

At this point, the European Parliament would informally set out its position on the negotiations. There would be a resolution. It would go through the INTA Committee, amendments from all groups. Inside the INTA Committee, you would have a rapporteur, who is somebody that is chosen—we have a system of selecting so each political group gets a certain number of reports a year and then a rapporteur is selected from the political group that has won the report. The rapporteur is then responsible for following the negotiations all the way through the Parliament. Each political group would select a shadow rapporteur to be their person who follows the whole process through.

We set out our position on the mandate. We then go into negotiations. Throughout the negotiations, we have a monitoring group, which is chaired by the rapporteur, inside the INTA Committee. The Commission negotiators responsible for the trade negotiations, and anybody else that the Parliament wants to have there, come to report to that monitoring group. The work of that monitoring group, in most cases, is done behind closed doors. It is a space to ask detailed questions of the negotiators.

When the negotiations have completed and the Committee negotiators come back and say, "We have a deal"—taking the example of Ecuador, we negotiated a very contentious issue of bananas, which was one of the big issues relating to Ecuador—when the negotiators say, "We have a deal with Ecuador. We want to put this for ratification", it then leaves the Commission and goes to the Parliament and the Council of Ministers at the same time—there is an informal agreement in the EU system that the Parliament speaks first, and the Governments wait—and the rapporteur who was selected at the beginning of the process would then draft one or two reports. The first report is a very short report, a consent report. It says, "Parliament recommends to adopt—or reject—this agreement". The



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second report is a non-binding report that sets out the reasoning for the position of the Parliament, so a set of recommendations or a set of concerns, things from the agreement that we recognise and welcome. That report goes through the parliamentary system, INTA vote, into the plenary, and the plenary votes on the recommendation from the committee responsible. At any point, however, in the INTA Committee or in the plenary, there can be a motion to amend the consent resolution, which would lead to the rejection of the deal. We have seen that in, I think, three cases. One case that sent the strongest ripples through the trade world was the anti-counterfeiting agreement, ACTA, which was rejected at the end of 2013, the beginning of 2014. That was the first time that the Parliament had used its consent rights in a way that was totally unexpected from the perspective of the member states and the Commission. Since then, the threat and the danger of a parliamentary veto has created the space and the leverage for MEPs to try to influence the negotiations as we go through the process.

In the case of Ecuador, the accession to the free trade agreement was put on the table, we adopted a consent resolution, we adopted a set of recommendations alongside it, and it was accepted by Parliament by a majority.

Chair: Thank you. An interesting and comprehensive answer.

Certainly as a Scottish Nationalist, I am interested by the fact that we might have an intergovernmental starter to this.

Q255 Catherine West: You have already given us a very good example of how influential the Committee is. Pardon my ignorance—obviously we did know once, because Peter Mandelson was one of ours—but who is the current Trade Commissioner? I am trying to think about that role at a national level. We have the Trade Remedies Authority, to which a person has been appointed, but it would basically be a Minister in our context I think. I am trying to imagine the European system but narrowed right down to a national picture.

Jude Kirton-Darling: There are difficulties in transporting the two across, but at the moment the Trade Commissioner is Cecilia Malmström. She is the Swedish Commissioner.

Q256 Catherine West: She does a lot on competition as well, doesn't she?

Jude Kirton-Darling: She is trade. She is the formal head of the Commission Trade Directorate General. The General Affairs Council is made up of Ministers, who then steer her work and the work of her Commission Directorate.

Q257 Catherine West: A high-profile Commissioner and an active committee: that really does shape the policy doesn't it?

Jude Kirton-Darling: Yes. A concrete example of an area where the European Parliament has definitely had an indelible impact would be investor protection and investment rights. There, the Commission



basically came under enormous fire. In the Lisbon Treaty, the Commission was also given the power, for the first time, to negotiate investment agreements. The first investment agreement that the Commission proposed included an unreformed version of investor-state dispute settlement, which was secret tribunals, multinational companies suing governments. As a result of the mobilisation outside of the Parliament—and I think that is the key thing; when there is public interest it creates leverage for MEPs to influence—the European Parliament was able to push for a rejection of the traditional investor-state dispute settlement system at European level. This was in the context of the TTIP negotiations, but also it came out primarily through the ratification of CETA—the Canada/EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement. The Parliament basically was able to steer and to put innovative changes into a trade deal, which had been finalised, so had reached the point where it had been completed by the negotiators. It was in a period called legal scrubbing and translation. In a UK context, you would probably need the legal scrubbing at the end of a negotiation but not necessarily the translation, unless dramatic things happen in the UK in the future. During that legal scrubbing, through parliamentary pressure, the deal was opened and renegotiated so the investment chapter was completely changed. That is an indication of the influence of the European Parliament over a specific trade deal.

Q258 Catherine West: It strengthened the role of member states, of member Governments, as opposed to corporations.

Jude Kirton-Darling: Yes, that was to completely reform investor-state dispute settlement, to bring it out into a public court setting with appointed judges and the scope for stakeholders to make their case, so a radical change to investor-state dispute settlement, but still privileged rights for multinationals.

Q259 Matt Western: Regarding the European Parliament's role in trade policy, what changes would you like to see in how it works?

Jude Kirton-Darling: From today, from where we are at the moment, there are two main things that could be improved.

The first, around transparency, is probably the easiest. We have been pushing for a long time to increase the transparency of the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers and member states tend to slap a LIMITE stamp on any document that comes through the Council, even if it is just describing when the tea break is in a meeting. They make it confidential, which means it is very difficult for the public to scrutinise the positions of member states in negotiations, and which positions member states are taking in the Council. On trade, because trade agreements and trade negotiations are no longer primarily about tariffs—tariffs are still a big part of them but the vast majority of new-generation trade agreements are focused on regulation and regulation inevitably has a public-interest dimension—we have been arguing very strongly that there needs to be far more publication of EU positions in trade negotiations and



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far more transparency in documents; documents could be much more transparent. There the Commission is moving more quickly than the member states, partly because of the experience of TTIP and the public distrust in trade policy over the last few years.

The second area is around mandates. At the moment, the role of the European Parliament in influencing what trade mandates look like is very limited. That is one area—from your perspective as MPs trying to influence future UK Government negotiations—that is a key point in the process because then you really are shaping trade policy. If you are only coming in through the process but according to somebody else's negotiating mandate, you are trying all the time to rectify things that have already been decided or you are trying to amend things. As legislators, we all know that it is easier to get in at the beginning of the action and avoid some things in the initial text than trying to get things out of the text at the end of the action. The mandate is absolutely crucial in terms of giving a steer to what kind of trade policy we have, whether it is at European level or national level.

Those would be two very practical areas where there could be improvements in European trade policy.

Q260 Matt Western: At the outset you gave us a good description of how things work currently. What learnings have there been, and do you think there is any applicability of the EU model to the UK in terms of how we develop trade policy and the involvement of Parliament in that process?

Jude Kirton-Darling: I gave evidence to the Trade Bill Committee when the Bill was going through earlier in the year. At that point, the real concern was the absolute absence of a role for Parliament at the moment in Government proposals. Because trade policy is not about just tariff reduction, but is about questions of public choice in regulation, it absolutely demands that there be active parliamentary scrutiny. Obviously in parliamentary scrutiny, you have to have a system that gives space on the one hand for the public to be able to see what is going on, so transparency. In the case of documents, for example, my view is that the rule should be that you publish unless you have an express reason why you are not publishing, rather than the current situation, which is the exact opposite. In terms of all of Parliament, you would need to have a broad level of transparency about what is going on but then there will certainly need to be structures put in place to allow proper scrutiny of negotiators. In some cases, that has to be done in a more confidential scene because obviously negotiations are negotiations and there are things that can be said in a more closed forum that cannot be said in an open forum. To give you a concrete example of that, the first time I really saw reading rooms in the European Parliament was in the TTIP negotiations, where, because of pressure, there was a lot of transparency over what was being negotiated. All the EU's texts were put to all MEPs and MEPs could go and read them. What was the most useful thing in the reading room, however, was not necessarily any of the legal



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texts but was the detailed read-out from the negotiators that they reported back to the central Commission team, so you had a detailed report from every part of the negotiating team after each round. That gave you the colour of the negotiations. The WTO operates in a different way in terms of transparency. It is very difficult in bilateral negotiations, if the other partner does not want things to be public, to get things like consolidated texts into the public domain. Through reading rooms and the equivalent that we have of monitoring groups around trade negotiations however, you do have the scope to have smaller concentric circles. You have a broader transparency for the full Parliament and then set up a system that would allow a more detailed discussion. How that would work in the UK system has to be a bit imaginative, I think, because there are the questions of the devolved Administrations, and some areas covered by trade agreements are devolved powers in the UK, devolved deals, so you would have to have the scope to have the devolved Administrations also represented in some way if you were setting up that form of an equivalent of the Trade Policy Committee in the UK.

Q261 Chair: I am cognizant of your time. There are four areas that we want to touch on in the next 17 minutes. You mentioned mandates. Is there a tension—certainly there is from the UK tabloids, which have probably led the UK to the current mess—that there is a creeping super state if Parliament were to have more of the mandate rather than the member states, is that a tension for normal EU members as opposed to that being just a UK discussion?

Jude Kirton-Darling: No. It is fair to say that in the EU system there are inherent tensions and turf wars over powers and that there are member states that would prefer to go back to the old system of them having all the responsibility on international trade agreements and the Parliament having none. Once you give the Parliament the right over consent, by nature you are already opening up the role of the European Parliament in trade policy. It is a natural evolution to make that meaningful by giving a voice in the formulation of trade policy at the beginning as well.

Q262 Emma Little Pengelly: It is really interesting to find out a bit more detail about the way things work in a practical sense. It is also interesting because presumably this will also apply to the EU UK negotiations.

I want to touch on one point. You talked about the reading room aspect. It is anticipated that that is what is going to happen with trade negotiations going forward, so the Parliament does not have a role in setting the mandate but there is communication of that, or publishing of that, and throughout that process there would be documents made available to parliamentarians through any trade negotiation.

Jude Kirton-Darling: If I put it into the context of the future relationship negotiations, it is a very live debate in the European Parliament at the moment. The anticipation is that the International Trade Committee would take responsibility for the trade part of the future



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mandate. In that context, we already have a rapporteur selected in the trade committee, who is leading on the negotiation.

Q263 **Emma Little Pengelly:** Who is that?

Jude Kirton-Darling: At the moment it is a German Christian Democrat MEP. She is responsible for shepherding through. It may be that there is a slightly different dimension to the negotiations because up until now, with the Withdrawal Agreement, the EU side has been extraordinarily transparent—everything has been pretty much published and most has been in the public domain. It will be interesting to see if there is a creep back and if more goes behind closed doors as we go into the trade negotiations with the future deal, but the model that I have described would probably be the model.

Q264 **Emma Little Pengelly:** In terms of the reading room aspect, is that confidential? So you can go in and read these documents, but are you allowed to discuss what those documents say or is it on the condition that what you read is confidential and just for the information of members?

Jude Kirton-Darling: We only had the reading room in relation to the TTIP negotiations. Standard INTA practice is that INTA MEPs are subject to access to greater amounts of information from the Trade Policy Committee. We are sent information that we know we are not allowed to circulate, but it is sent to our offices so we can talk about it within our office teams and use the support of our office teams and our political groups, secretariats and so on. Once you get into reading rooms it becomes quite difficult from the perspective of an elected representative because you go into a room with nothing and you have to interpret what you are reading. How I found it personally with TTIP was that it was the combination of the reading room and the monitoring group that worked quite well. In the monitoring group, you had the chief negotiators coming into Parliament. It was a closed-door meeting. Only MEPs and the political staff of the Parliament were in the room. The MEPs will have had access to the reading room and then we were able to question the chief negotiator. Even if you don't say, "I read, in this document, A, B, C and D" by hearing the response from the chief negotiator, you can deepen your understanding of what you have read in the reading room, if you like. The European Parliament, by its nature, and the way that we work, because all of the work is done in the policy committees, we have all become more expert in the areas that we are following. You do build up a kind of level of nerdiness, which is very popular among ourselves, but not necessarily popular with friends and family.

Emma Little Pengelly: It is potentially an interesting aspect because for example with Northern Ireland as part of the UK we will have a political party that straddles both aspects of the EU UK negotiation because there will be, for example Sinn Féin MPs, MEPs, who will get access to that confidential material on that side but they are also elected representatives in Northern Ireland, which is part of the UK. I think it is quite an interesting dynamic. I am not sure if there is a precedent for



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that anywhere else, where you have somebody elected in a party and also operating within a potential trade agreement partner and the EU.

Chair: Do you mean Sinn Féin?

Emma Little Pengelly: Yes. They would have access to both, potentially.

Q265 **Catherine West:** You have groupings within the European Parliament, so sometimes it does not come down to the individual party but it is a grouping that you are in. Is that correct?

Jude Kirton-Darling: Yes.

Q266 **Faisal Rashid:** The groupings consist of political groups do they not?

Jude Kirton-Darling: We have political groups in the European Parliament, in which all UK parties are a member of a group. The Sinn Féin MEPs sit in the United Left political grouping. In the International Trade Committee, there are no members at the moment from Sinn Féin, north or south, but potentially you could imagine in the future that the United Left political group would decide to put an Irish Republic Sinn Féin MEP into the International Trade Committee. It is a really interesting example.

Chair: Knowing Sinn Féin—

Jude Kirton-Darling: It is interesting because it is the position that all British MEPs have been in for the last few years. We will have a meaningful vote on the UK Withdrawal Agreement, however it is termed, because the European Parliament will vote on it.

Q267 **Chair:** Will it get through the European Parliament then?

Jude Kirton-Darling: That is to be seen. I think a lot of people are watching London first. We will vote after it has been voted in Westminster. The timetable anticipated at the moment is that the European Parliament would vote in February. That gives you a lot of time to do other things.

Chair: So the two votes have to happen.

Q268 **Emma Little Pengelly:** Presumably then, because of what you said, because of the way that works, the European Parliament potentially could change the agreement. If there is agreement between the EU and the UK in terms of the actual trade agreement that requires the vote of Parliament, Parliament could potentially change aspects of it.

Jude Kirton-Darling: The European Parliament cannot amend agreements, or only in extraordinary circumstances. The example of Canada was an extraordinary situation where there was a real danger of a veto. Also the Wallonian Parliament did call in their veto at that point. At that point, it created the space for an amendment. It is very, very unusual that that would happen. My guess is that if you get to the point of a plenary vote, in most cases people already anticipate what the



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answer will be. However, the difficulty with the Withdrawal Agreement is that the closer you get to the European elections, the more unpredictable the European Parliament is because MEPs are either retiring, are not standing for office, and they do what they want because they do not have to answer to anybody, or they are running in campaigns and campaigns can be taken over by very small issues that become big issues. In the past it has been in that period of campaigning that trade agreements have been rejected.

Q269 **Chair:** So French fishing interests could take over, or Spanish grumbles about Gibraltar could take over, after the UK Parliament, let's just say, after a second vote, were to let the deal through. It is theoretically possible that the European Parliament could say, "No deal" and there would be a hard Brexit a few weeks later, in March.

Jude Kirton-Darling: I came to talk about how trade negotiations are done, but if you are interested—

Q270 **Chair:** My question was a gross liberty. We will move on.

Jude Kirton-Darling: You are treading into the Brexit Select Committee's territory, I guess, but the reality is that the European Parliament has a meaningful vote, it is a majority of one, and it is the final vote. At the moment, it is unlikely but politics is very volatile at the moment so it would be dangerous to say that it was a complete impossibility.

Q271 **Emma Little Pengelly:** I think it is an interesting question, not just about the withdrawal deal, though, because obviously fishing will feature in terms of the substantive trade deal. We can all already see that that is heating up.

None of that is my intended question. My intended question was about the transparency that you have seen in the European Parliament structures. Is it something that you would recommend to be brought over into the new UK trade policy or is there any element of it you would bring in? You have talked about some of the limitations. What would you like to see brought in? Based on your experience, what do you think could be improved upon in terms of our new UK trade policies?

Jude Kirton-Darling: At the very minimum, the current situation should be replicated. At the very minimum, there should not be a step backwards in terms of parliamentary scrutiny and transparency. That would be really retrograde.

There is scope for Parliament to have a far more active role, as I mentioned around mandates. There would be scope for Parliament to influence the direction of trade policy. Trade policy is not just negotiations; it is also legislation. We have trade defence or trade remedies legislation, but there is also other legislation. The EU has unilateral trade legislation, things like regulation on due diligence in conflict minerals and due diligence in timber. There is scope to improve



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on all those standards and to have a very progressive agenda. The starting point, however, has to be no retrograde steps. You would want Parliament to have a fully functioning means of scrutinising negotiations from before the negotiations start, right through the process, and then at the very least have a vote, not a negative vote but a positive vote, on any trade negotiations that concluded in agreements.

Q272 **Chair:** Do you think Parliament should have to formally approve mandates?

Jude Kirton-Darling: I think that would be so for the European Parliament and that that is something that certainly you should be pushing for.

Q273 **Catherine West:** You mentioned that before your current role, you had done some work with trade unions. I am curious about the involvement of trade unions and where they come in. When we went to the US to collect evidence, some of the Democrat Senators said that had they involved trade unions earlier, they might not have got to the position they got into on NAFTA, which became very complicated, because if they had had working people standing up for the current agreement much earlier on, it might have helped. When is the entry point for trade unions to be consulted, to be part of the discussions, and almost to help get through, trade deals that are in the interests of working people.

Jude Kirton-Darling: Trade unions, consumer organisations, civil society organisations in general: the more integrated they are into the system and into policy formulation, and the sooner, the better the outcome, I suspect.

Interesting work has been done in terms of social acceptance. If we want trade deals to really represent public interest and not just specific vested interests, you do have to engage those parties. There are different ways to do it. In the same way that I talked about concentric circles for parliamentarians, you could also create concentric circles for non-governmental organisations, trade unions, and business, to engage in negotiations.

Chair: Faisal, do you want to come in?

Faisal Rashid: Thank you, Chair. That was my question. You started with trade unions. My focus was on business groups and civil society, which you have just answered, so thank you very much for that.

Q274 **Chair:** What is your view on the roles of the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee in the formulation of trade policy?

Jude Kirton-Darling: At the moment, they are purely consultative. Their impact, I would have to be honest and say, is limited, because it depends on the goodwill of the European Commission to take on their concerns. There is an arbitrariness in the system in that respect. Because it is



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purely consultative, it very much depends on the chief negotiator and the negotiating team around a particular negotiation as to whether they are willing to engage proactively or not. At European level, we can see examples among the Commission's chief negotiators of those who take the proactive view that you should engage as many people as possible to get that broad social acceptance of a final deal and those who are more traditional and take the view that the only people you have to please are the member state Governments and everybody else can fall by the wayside.

Q275 Chair: I am going to ask a question and anticipate your answer, just for the sake of time. You can agree or disagree.

Would you think the best practice is for the civil society groups, for trade unions, for anybody with a stake in this, to be involved early? Is that your feeling?

Jude Kirton-Darling: Yes, absolutely.

Chair: Thank you very much. You have been absolutely fascinating and interesting. We should perhaps recommend you to the Department for International Trade, when your time is available, to go and help them, shall we say.

We are very grateful to you for staying at Parliament here in Westminster today. I know you had the Lords Constitution Committee earlier today. If that Committee received half the information that we received this afternoon, it will have done very well.

Thank you for your time. We did say we would let you go at 1655 and it is 1655 right now. We do keep our promises on the International Trade Committee.

Jude Kirton-Darling: That is very important. Trust is the key to getting good trade deals.

Chair: Thank you.