



Department for
International Trade

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Angus Brendan MacNeil MP
International Trade Committee
House of Commons
London
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By email to: trade.com@parliament.uk

14 July 2020

Dear Angus,

Update on negotiations on the UK's future trading relationship with Australia

I am writing to inform you that I will be making a Written Ministerial Statement today to update Parliament on the first round of negotiations towards a UK-Australia Free Trade Agreement (FTA). This marks the next step in my commitment to keep you and your committee updated on trade negotiations, following the publication of our objectives and initial economic assessment on 17 June, and my letter to you at the launch of negotiations.

The UK and Australia conducted the first round of FTA negotiations virtually between 29 June and 10 July. The round included discussions on all areas of a comprehensive trade agreement.

Discussions between negotiators were productive and reflected our shared ambition to secure a comprehensive deal to boost trade and investment between our economies. Teams discussed their respective objectives and agreed a forward plan for future talks.

The UK and Australia are aligned in many areas which will enable us to make quick progress across many chapters. In discussions, both countries emphasised a desire to be particularly ambitious in areas including services, digital trade and wanting to support Small and Medium-size Enterprises to benefit from the opportunities that increased trade provide.

The second negotiation round is currently planned for September, and we anticipate it will again include discussions on all chapters.

The Government is committed to negotiating a comprehensive agreement with Australia and we look forward to making further progress.

The Government further remains fully committed to transparency and will ensure that parliamentarians, UK citizens and businesses have access to information on our trade negotiations. We will make the next statement on progress following the second round of talks.

I would be happy to brief your committee on outcomes from the first round of UK-Australia negotiations, if you feel this would be useful.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth Truss". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "E".

THE RT HON ELIZABETH TRUSS MP
Secretary of State for International Trade
& President of the Board of Trade