



Department for
International Trade



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

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The Rt Hon Lord Goldsmith QC
Chairman
International Agreements Committee
House of Lords
London
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30 June 2020

Dear Peter,

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

I am writing to inform you that I will be making a Written Ministerial Statement today to update Parliament on the second round of negotiations towards a UK-US Free Trade Agreement (FTA). This marks the next step in my commitment to keep you and your committee updated on trade negotiations, following publication of our objectives and initial economic assessment on 2 March, my letter to you at the launch of negotiations on 5 May, and my letter on 18 May to provide an update following the first round of negotiations.

From 15-26 June, the UK and US conducted the second round of FTA negotiations and continued a detailed discussion of legal text. Talks continued to be positive and constructive, with progress made towards a comprehensive trade agreement. Discussions spanned the majority of areas covered by the FTA, with further sessions coming over the next two weeks on the remaining major policy areas ahead of the third formal round of talks. This follows almost 20 intersessional meetings held in between rounds one and two.

There was good progress on a dedicated SME chapter. This included agreement that the next formal UK-US SME Dialogue will be held in Boston in October 2020. On professional business services, both sides agreed to go further than existing precedent and agree provisions that reflect the strength of the UK-US relationship. UK negotiators also underlined the importance of high ambition on services, with financial services particularly vital to any final agreement.

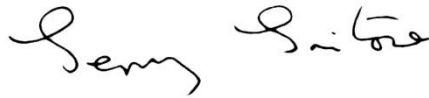
The Government is clear there is no set deadline for this agreement. Any deal the Government strikes must be fair, reciprocal and ultimately in the best interests of the British people and the economy. Furthermore, the Government remains clear on protecting the NHS and not compromising on the UK's high environmental protection, animal welfare and food safety standards.

The third negotiating round is expected to take place at the end of July.

The Government remains fully committed to transparency and will ensure that parliamentarians, UK citizens and businesses have access to information on our trade negotiations.

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

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grimstone', written in a cursive style.

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel, Kt
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