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Dear Dianne,

### **Call for input – Enhanced Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Switzerland**

I am writing to inform you and your committee that I will be making a Written Ministerial Statement today to update Parliament on the launch of our call for input on an enhanced Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Switzerland. This will give businesses, public sector bodies, individuals, and other interested stakeholders the opportunity to provide valuable feedback and highlight their priorities for a closer trading relationship with Switzerland.

The UK has set its sights on the next generation of trade deals to secure closer economic ties with major economies of today and tomorrow. A bespoke deal will secure more access for British goods and services, opening significant new opportunities for UK businesses by boosting trade with Switzerland, worth nearly £35.0 billion a year. It will cement the UK's position as a world-leader in digital and services trade and deliver benefits to the whole of the UK.

The UK's current trading relationship is based on the 1972 EU-Switzerland agreement, rolled over on 1 January 2021. While this includes many provisions on trade in goods, intellectual property and government procurement, it crucially does not contain any agreements for services or digital trade, which account for half of our economic relationship and the realities of the global economy in the 21st Century.

The launch of the call for input is a key step in our joint ambition to renegotiate a high quality and ambitious FTA with Switzerland that reflects our mutual strengths in services, digital trade and innovation. Our trade with Switzerland has increased almost three-fold over the last 20 years, with service exports rising from £2.4 billion in 2000 to £12.2 billion in 2020. An enhanced FTA will serve to better align our economies to increase investment and bring our business links and commercial environment even closer together.

The call for input will ensure our future FTA negotiations with Switzerland are informed by stakeholder needs. The feedback received from stakeholders will be crucial when shaping our mandate, and will inform detailed negotiations preparation, and policy positions. The

Department for International Trade is committed to ensuring future FTAs and their provisions are informed by stakeholder needs and shaped by the demands of the British economy.

The UK and its partners in Switzerland share a desire to develop closer ties. While timescales for the launch of negotiations will need to be agreed with Switzerland in due course, the

Government is committed to transparency and will ensure that your committee, Parliament, the Devolved Administrations, UK citizens and businesses have access to information on our trade negotiations.

Yours sincerely,

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

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel, Kt  
Minister for Investment  
Department for International Trade  
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy