



# HOUSE OF LORDS

European Union Committee

House of Lords  
London  
SW1A 0PW

Tel: 020 7219 5864  
Fax: 020 7219 6715  
euclords@parliament.uk  
www.parliament.uk/lords

Viscount Younger of Leckie  
Government Whips Office  
House of Lords  
London  
SW1A 0PW

3 March 2020

Dear James,

Thank you for your message in respect of the UK-US Free Trade Agreement, and the helpful report published by the Department for International Trade on 2 March 2020.

As you will be aware, the Liaison Committee recently agreed to the establishment of a new Treaties Committee, which until the end of 2020 will be established as a sub-committee of the European Union Committee. We hope that this new sub-committee will be up and running in the next few weeks, and I envisage that it will be tasked with scrutinising any UK-US FTA on behalf of the House of Lords.

In that context, I note the re-publication of the DIT paper Public consultations on trade negotiations with the United States of 18 July 2019. Paragraph 39 contains a restatement of the Government's commitments to parliamentary engagement with committees, contained in the paper published on 28 February 2019, while paragraph 40 contains a commitment to provide, among other things, access to sensitive information which is not suitable for wider publication, alongside private briefings from the negotiating team.

I welcome this constructive approach from the Department of International Trade, which is also very much in line with the recommendations that the EU Committee made on treaty scrutiny in its Lessons Learned report of 27 June 2019. I hope you will agree that it would be useful for officials now to begin discussions on how these mechanisms will work in practice, and once the arrangements for establishing the new sub-committee are firmed up, for us also to meet.

I am copying this letter to Baroness Berridge, Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Department for International Trade.

Lord Kinnoull  
Chair of the European Union Committee