



# International Trade Committee

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Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP  
Secretary of State  
Department for International Trade  
King Charles Street  
Whitehall  
London  
SW1A 2AH

31 July 2020

Dear Elizabeth,

Thank you for your response to my letter of 18 June regarding the Committee's role in the scrutiny of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). We welcome your commitment to working closely with the Committee on this important area.

My Committee acknowledges that our approach to scrutiny may well evolve over time, as we gain more experience in this area. However, we consider it would be desirable to establish a clear initial framework for our scrutiny, covering matters raised in my letter of 18 June and your response. We would welcome the opportunity to have a private discussion with you about such a framework. I enclose an initial proposal, which I hope could form the basis of our discussion. We would be keen to discuss with you, for example, our access to information and more details on arrangements for us to report on negotiated agreements.

I would be grateful if you could confirm whether you would be willing to have such a discussion during the first few weeks after the summer recess. If so, I will ask the Committee staff to work with your officials to find a suitable date and time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angus B MacNeil".

Angus Brendan MacNeil  
Chair of the International Trade Committee

## Draft scrutiny framework

<b>Negotiation stage</b>	<b>Committee action</b>
Government launches negotiations Ongoing rounds of negotiations	Committee to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• receive written evidence on negotiations;</li><li>• take public oral evidence on the negotiations (inviting Members of other committees to guest, where appropriate);</li><li>• hold private meetings with DIT officials and Ministers to hear about progress of negotiations;</li><li>• receive written information from DIT, where requested, to be treated in confidence.</li></ul> Committee to focus on key issues identified in evidence.
Final text laid before Parliament	Committee to receive text before it is laid and to produce short report summarising evidence taken and stating whether it thinks an agreement should be subject to a debate in the House. Committee to take evidence on text from Ministers/stakeholders.  Committee not doing comprehensive technical or legal analysis of text but focussing instead on key issues raised in evidence.