



Department for International Trade

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

T +44 (0) 20 7215 5000
E truss.correspondence@trade.gov.uk
W www.gov.uk/dit

Angus Brendan MacNeil MP
International Trade Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Angus,

29 July 2020

Update on negotiations on the UK's future trading relationship with New Zealand

I am writing to inform you of the progress of the first round of negotiations towards a UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA). I am also placing a copy of the outcome statement for the first round of talks in the House library. 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 New Zealand conducted the first round of FTA negotiations between 13 and 24 July. Negotiations were conducted virtually and covered a comprehensive set of discussions across areas of a trade agreement. Teams discussed their respective negotiation objectives and agreed a plan for future talks.

We are now one step closer to an ambitious, wide-ranging FTA with one of our oldest friends. An FTA with New Zealand will bring investment, better jobs, higher wages and more affordable prices just when we need them the most. Both teams of negotiators recognised the unprecedented circumstances we find ourselves in and reiterated that more global trade is essential to support post-Covid economic recovery, in both countries.

Discussions between negotiators were productive and reflected our shared ambition to secure a comprehensive deal to boost trade and investment between our like-minded economies and laid the foundation for the UK and New Zealand to achieve high-quality outcomes across the agreement.

The UK and New Zealand are aligned in many areas which will enable us to make good progress across many chapters. Both countries emphasised a desire to be particularly ambitious in areas including digital trade, boosting cross-border trade in services and investment, reducing uncertainty and burdens on exporters from customs and procedures, and promoting good regulatory practices.

Discussions also provided an opportunity to consider working together across the agreement to support important agendas such as women's economic empowerment, trade and development, climate change, indigenous trade, clean growth and ensuring small and medium-sized enterprises can benefit from the FTA.

The Government is committed to negotiating a comprehensive agreement with New Zealand and we look forward to making further progress. The second round of talks is currently planned to take place in October.

The Government 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-New Zealand negotiations when the House returns from recess, if you feel this would be useful.

The department is hosting an MP briefing session on our free trade negotiations on 8 September at 16:00-16:30. Please RSVP to parliament@trade.gov.uk to receive a virtual invite.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Truss', is centered on the page.

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