



Department for International Trade

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Dear Angus,

I am writing to update you and your committee on the first round of negotiations for a United Kingdom (UK)-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Free Trade Agreement (FTA). You will also note the Written Ministerial Statement that I laid in the House today.

A delegation of more than 100 UK officials took part in the first round of negotiations between 22 August and 29 September. The negotiations were conducted virtually and technical discussions were held across 29 policy areas over 33 sessions. In this round of negotiations the UK and GCC discussed their objectives for the FTA, and exchanged technical information.

An FTA will be a substantial economic opportunity, and a significant moment in the UK-GCC relationship. Both sides have committed to secure an ambitious, comprehensive and modern agreement fit for the 21st century.

I will continue to update your committee as the official level negotiations progress. I would like to reiterate the commitment made by my Department to make the Chief Negotiator and relevant Senior Civil Service experts available to brief the committee in private as negotiations progress. I would be happy to talk to your committee if you feel this would be useful.

Best wishes,

THE RT HON KEMI BADENOCH MP
Secretary of State for International Trade and President of the Board of Trade