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Dear Angus,

Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) Accession

Further to my letter dated 3rd February, I am pleased to be able to inform you that the United Kingdom has substantially concluded negotiations to accede to the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).¹ The final round of discussions took place in Vietnam, with officials from all eleven member countries taking part in the talks. This milestone is set to be publicly announced in the early hours of Friday 31st March. As the conclusion of negotiations has taken place during a parliamentary recess it has not been possible yet to make a statement to the House. However, I will ensure that the House is updated when Parliament returns and I will provide further opportunities to speak to me and my officials about the deal.

Joining CPTPP will link the UK to one of the most dynamic trading areas in the world. This is a key aim of the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy. CPTPP membership will help the UK engage more deeply with the region, both on trade and from a wider foreign policy perspective.

It puts the UK at the heart of a dynamic group of countries as the world economy increasingly focuses on the Indo-Pacific region. CPTPP membership will provide new opportunities to sell more of our high-quality goods and services to a market of over 500 million people with a GDP of £9 trillion. The blend of advanced and emerging economies within the agreement are already an important source of demand for high quality products, which will increase as those economies grow further.

Our membership will enable us to shape the future of the agreement, increasing our influence, and that of the wider bloc, in setting the rules of the global economy so they benefit open and fair economies in a network of countries committed to free trade. That means encouraging robust standards which level the playing field and help prevent unfair and coercive trading practices.

¹ CPTPP members: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Mexico, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam.

Every part of the UK is expected to benefit from CPTPP membership. The UK's accession to CPTPP could boost UK GDP by £1.8 billion and increase UK real wages by £800 million in the long run according to our published scoping assessment.

Over 99% of current UK goods exports to CPTPP members will be eligible for tariff-free trade once we have joined. New tariff reductions will boost export opportunities for domestic firms. Firms will benefit from the streamlining of customs procedures, with closer cooperation between authorities making the transfer of goods across borders. Our world leading services industry will also stand to gain – with modern rules in the sector providing greater transparency and predictability.

In a historic first, joining CPTPP means that we will have a Free Trade Agreement with Malaysia for the first time, giving businesses far more access to an economy worth £271 billion in GDP in 2021.

Membership of CPTPP will provide the UK with a powerful means to engage with the Indo-Pacific region. It will enable the UK to engage with a range of countries on key environmental issues such as climate change and biodiversity, whilst also giving us the opportunity to help shape global trading standards.

Over the course of negotiations, the UK has taken important steps to protect its interests. We have ensured that we will maintain our membership of the European Patent Convention. In addition, protecting the NHS is a fundamental principle of our trade policy and it was at no point on the table over the course of negotiations.

We have also been careful to consider the interests of our domestic agricultural sector. The protections the UK has negotiated mean that increased access to the UK market for sensitive agricultural produce will be staged over a significant period. For example, beef imports will take a decade to reach their full quota. And we have kept our word and not allowed our food standards to be up for negotiation. Neither hormone-fed beef or chlorinated chicken will be permitted in the UK.

The agreement text will now be subject to a legal review in preparation for signing the agreement. After this, the Government will commission the Trade and Agriculture Commission to prepare its advice on the agreement's impact on the environment and animal welfare. The agreement will then be formally laid in parliament and subject to the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act (2010) process.

I am pleased to share with you the negotiation conclusion document, in advance of publication on Friday. Please note this document is strictly embargoed until the public announcement on Friday morning. I will continue to update you and your committee at appropriate junctures over the course of the accession process – this includes the offer of a private briefing with the Chief Negotiator, Graham Zebedee. My Department and I are committed to being transparent and keeping Parliament appropriately updated on our ambitious trade agenda.

Best wishes,



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