



Department for
Business & Trade

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Darren Jones MP
Chair, Business and Trade Committee
House of Commons
London
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18 July 2023

Dear Darren,

UK-Turkey Trade Policy Update

I am writing to inform you and your committee that the United Kingdom and the Republic of Turkey will today formally conclude a review of the current trade relationship. The Government intends to build upon the success of the trade relationship with Turkey by confirming its intentions to begin talks towards a new Free Trade Agreement.

The United Kingdom and the Republic of Turkey are significant and close trading partners with a bilateral trade relationship worth £23.5bn in 2022. The UK's current trade agreement with Turkey was signed in December 2020 and is based on the EU-Turkey trading relationship. It predominantly covers industrial goods and provided continuity to businesses and safeguarded supply chains following the UK's departure from the EU.

A review clause included in the current trade agreement committed the UK and Turkey to review the trade relationship by April 2023. This work began last year with both the UK and Turkey concluding there would be value in broadening and deepening the trade relationship. The UK and Turkey will today hold a Joint Committee to formally conclude the review process and move towards renegotiation of the Free Trade Agreement. The Government expects to launch a call for input in the autumn and, following consultation, to start renegotiations next year.

An improved agreement with Turkey is a key part of the UK's strategy to secure advanced modern agreements with new international partners and upgrade existing continuity agreements. The Government remains clear that any deal with Turkey should be in the best interests of the British people and the UK economy. The Government will not compromise on its high environmental and labour protections, public health, animal welfare and food standards, and it will maintain its right to regulate in the public interest. The Government is also clear that during these negotiations, the NHS, and the services it provides is not on the table. This is an opportunity to work towards an agreement that is fit for the 21st century and suited to the modern UK economy.

The Government will keep Parliament updated as negotiations progress. As always, I am aware of the important role that your committee plays in the scrutiny of the Government's ambitious trade agenda.

Work on this free trade agreement is at a very early stage, however my department will make the Chief Negotiator and other relevant Senior Civil Service experts available to brief the Committee in private should the Committee find this helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Huddleston', with a stylized, flowing script.

Nigel Huddleston MP
Minister for International Trade
Department for Business and Trade