



Department for
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18 December 2023

Dear Liam,

I am writing to update you and your Committee on the thirteenth round of the UK-India Free Trade Agreement negotiations. You will also note the Joint Outcome Statement issued by the UK and Indian Chief Negotiators which can be found [here](#).

A delegation of UK officials undertook technical talks from 18 September – 15 December. As with previous rounds, this was conducted in a hybrid fashion - a number of UK officials travelled to both London and Delhi for negotiations and others attended virtually. Negotiations in this round were focussed on issues including goods, services, and investment.

The UK-India trade relationship was worth £38.3 billion in the 12 months to June 2023. An ambitious and comprehensive deal will strengthen the economic links between the UK and India, boosting the UK economy and bringing benefits to UK businesses, families and consumers.

We will not compromise on our high environmental and labour protections, public health, animal welfare and food standards, and we will maintain our right to regulate in the public interest. We are also clear that in this negotiation, as with all our FTA negotiations, the NHS and the services it provides are not on the table. Finally, any agreement will be consistent with the points-based immigration system. There are no plans to change our immigration policy to achieve this Free Trade Agreement.

My department continues to welcome your interest in the Government's FTA programme, and I remain committed to the transparency and scrutiny of new trade deals, while ensuring Committees and all Parliamentarians are appropriately informed.

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.

The fourteenth round of negotiations will take place in January 2024.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Hands', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

The Rt Hon Greg Hands MP
Minister of State for Trade Policy and Minister for London
Department for Business and Trade