



Business and Trade Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

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HE Hon Ralph Goodale, PC
Canada House
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Dear High Commissioner

As the parliamentary body responsible for scrutinising the UK Government's trade policy, the Committee that I chair has taken a keen interest in the negotiations with Canada over a new free trade agreement.

Last week, following the news that the UK had paused these negotiations, I raised on the floor of the House of Commons the matter of the temporary provisions on cumulation of origin under the current UK-Canada agreement, which are due to expire at the end of March. The Secretary of State for Business and Trade, Rt Hon Kemi Badenoch MP, responded that trade negotiations with Canada "have not broken down", despite the pause. She stated "We have an ongoing rules of origin discussion"; and, referring to now-expired temporary tariff rate quota provisions under the current trade agreement, she said "We are having multiple discussions with Canada on cheese" (HC Deb 29 January 2024 [c657](#)). However, it has since been reported, on the basis of comments by an unnamed senior official at Global Affairs Canada, that no such discussions have in fact been occurring ("Kemi Badenoch accused of covering up exports cliff edge", POLITICO, [31 January 2024](#)).

I would be grateful if you could confirm, on the record, whether there have been any discussions between the Canadian and UK governments on cheese tariff rate quotas or cumulation of origin since the reported date on which the UK paused negotiations on a new trade agreement (namely, 25 January).

Yours sincerely

Chair of the Business and Trade Committee