



International Trade Committee

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Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP
Secretary of State
Department for International Trade
King Charles Street
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AH

1 February 2021

Dear Liz,

I am writing to seek clarification regarding areas of departmental responsibility following the provisional application of the EU–UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) on 31 December.

I note that during International Trade Questions on 14 January any reference to issues relating to trade with the EU was effectively met with the response that this was not a matter for your department (HC Deb, 14 January 2021, [cols 470, 471, 478, 479, 482, 484 and 485](#)). Ministers referred Members instead to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster / Minister for the Cabinet Office / Chair of the Brexit Business Taskforce (Rt Hon Michael Gove MP), the Cabinet Office or Taskforce Europe (which, I understand, forms part of the Prime Minister’s Office). I further note last Friday’s announcement that “The Prime Minister has appointed Lord Frost as his Representative for Brexit and International Policy and head of a new International Policy Unit in No.10” and that Lord Frost will “help drive through changes to maximise the opportunities of Brexit, including on international trade and economic issues”.

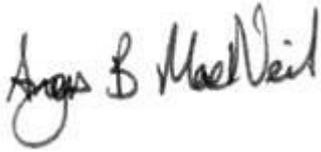
I would be grateful if you could confirm where exactly responsibility currently lies within the Government for trade policy in respect of the EU – and clarify what role your department has in this regard.

Regarding the Brexit Business Taskforce, I note that there is scant information available regarding its remit, membership, meetings and proceedings. I would be grateful for anything you are able to tell me about this body – including what involvement, if any, your department has with it.

Finally, I would also be grateful for clarification on the role of your department’s trade advisors in helping UK businesses to address issues that have arisen in trading with the EU following the provisional application of the TCA.

In accordance with our usual practice, this letter, along with your reply, will be published on the Committee's webpage.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angus B MacNeil". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and 'M'.

Angus Brendan MacNeil
Chair of the International Trade Committee