



Department for Business & Trade

Lord Johnson of Lainston CBE
**Minister for Investment and Minister for
Regulatory Reform**

Department for Business and Trade
Old Admiralty Building
Admiralty Place
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2DY

The Rt Hon Lord Peter Goldsmith KC
Chair, International Agreements Committee
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

T +44 (0) 20 4551 0011
E Johnson.correspondence@businessandtrade.gov.uk
W www.gov.uk/dbt

24 May 2024

Dear Peter,

I am writing to update you and your committee on negotiations for a free trade agreement (FTA) between the UK and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the UK and India.

UK-GCC FTA

Technical discussions for an FTA between the UK and the GCC took place between 13 and 23 May 2024. The discussions were hosted in Riyadh and held in a hybrid fashion. A number of UK negotiators travelled to Riyadh for in-person discussions, with others attending virtually.

Discussions in Riyadh built on previous sessions held at official and Chief Negotiator level over the last few months and allowed us to make good progress across several areas of the agreement.

Discussions focused on the FTA's market access schedules, particularly for goods and services. In many areas, the negotiations are at advanced stage, and we continue to seek and secure provisions that go beyond the GCC's best precedent.

An FTA between the UK and the GCC represents a substantial economic opportunity with total trade worth £59 billion according to latest figures.

UK-India FTA

UK officials undertook technical talks for the fourteenth round of the UK-India Free Trade Agreement negotiations between 10 January and 24 May 2024. As with previous rounds, this was held in a hybrid fashion. A number of UK officials travelled to both London and Delhi for in-person negotiations, with others attending virtually.

As a result of this and previous rounds, the majority of chapters have now been provisionally closed and further progress has been made across all outstanding areas including in goods, services, and investment.

The UK-India trade relationship was worth £39 billion in 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.

His Majesty's Government remains clear that any deal signed will be in the best interests of the British people and the United Kingdom economy. We will not compromise on our high environmental, public health, animal welfare and food standards, and we will maintain our right to regulate in the public interest. We are also clear that during these negotiations, the National Health Service, and the services it provides is not on the table.

My Department will continue to engage with the committee following the general election.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dominic', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Lord Johnson of Lainston CBE
Minister for Investment and Minister for Regulatory Reform
Department for Business and Trade