



Department for
International Trade



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

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Dear Peter,

Update on negotiations on the UK's future trading relationship with New Zealand

I am writing to inform you that today the Secretary of State will be publishing an Outcome Statement on gov.uk to update the public and Parliamentarians on the third round of negotiations towards a UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA). On this occasion, as the House is not sitting, we will not be making a Written Ministerial Statement.

The third round of FTA negotiations with New Zealand took place virtually between 25 January and 9 February. Over the course of this round, negotiators carried out over 40 sessions across the Free Trade Agreement. 25 new texts were exchanged before the round – building on the 35 texts shared prior to the second round – allowing for more detailed discussions.

Good progress was made building on the constructive relationship established in the first two rounds. Discussions were pragmatic and identified considerable areas of convergence. Negotiators on both sides continued to recognise high levels of alignment and commonality in objectives; this has led to many chapters moving to consolidated text.

Both sides exchanged their initial goods market access offers before the round. This exchange of goods market access offers is an early milestone, and the speed at which this stage has been reached demonstrates the momentum behind these negotiations.

There continues to be rapid progress on areas of shared ambition, one result of which was the provisional agreement of the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises chapter. This chapter aims to ensure that SMEs will be provided with the information necessary to take informed business decisions and to take advantage of the opportunities created by this agreement. It will also address priority asks of the SME businesses, including increased transparency on rules and regulations, and international cooperation.

We have continued productive discussions on sustainability issues, and shared Environment text on both sides, including on environmental goods and services, which reiterates the opportunity to support clean growth for both countries.

We have seen progress towards agreement on text in a large parts of various chapters notably Customs, Good Regulatory Practice, Rules of Origin and Procurement, with aims


to exchange initial procurement market access offers ahead of Round 4. We have also seen considerable progress made in Competition, Remedies, and Disputes

We have also agreed to several intersessional discussions, to ensure the pace is continued heading into the next round. Discussions on a second market access offer will continue in parallel with discussions across the Free Trade Agreement.

By Round Four, we expect the majority of text proposals to have been tabled. The UK and New Zealand both remain eager to continue the momentum of discussions, and the fourth negotiating round is expected to start in April.

The Government further remains fully committed to transparency and will ensure that parliamentarians, UK citizens and businesses have access to information on our trade negotiations. We will make the next statement on progress following the fourth round of talks.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grimstone', written in a cursive style.

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel, Kt
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