



Department for
International Trade



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel, Kt
Minister for Investment
Department for International Trade
King Charles Street
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AH

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

T +44 (0) 20 7215 5000
E grimstone.correspondence@trade.gov.uk
W www.gov.uk/dit

By email: goldsmithp@parliament.uk

17 March 2021

Dear Peter,

Thank you to your Committee and officials for the document entitled '*Scrutiny of international agreements: Strategic Partnership Agreement with Moldova.*' I am writing to offer a response to points raised concerning the Free Trade Agreement between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Moldova (United Kingdom-Moldova agreement).

United Kingdom-Moldova agreement

Moldova is the United Kingdom's 105th largest trading partner, accounting for less than 0.1% of our total trade. Nonetheless, total trade in goods and services between the United Kingdom and Moldova was £400 million in 2019. Our exports to Moldova were £44 million in the same year, with vehicles (HS87, £11 million) being our top export. The United Kingdom's top goods imports were articles of apparel and clothing.

The United Kingdom-Moldova Agreement contains clear commitments to international standards on Intellectual Property, and Geographical Indications, such as Scotch Whisky and Irish Whiskey, which are protected in the Moldovan market.

The sustainability provisions in the EU-Moldova Agreement have in very large part been replicated in the United Kingdom-Moldova agreement. The United Kingdom wants to ensure that economic growth, and development, labour and environmental protection go hand-in-hand.

Consultation

In the Report you welcome HM Government's consultation with all nations of the United Kingdom, her Crown Dependencies and Gibraltar. However, you urge HM Government to also provide clear information as to whether any concerns have been raised and, if so, how they have been addressed.

Throughout the course of the continuity programme, we have held a regular and detailed dialogue, which has included regular Ministerial engagement, including through the Ministerial Forum for Trade and regular correspondence on specific agreements. DIT has also held regular official-level engagement, providing comprehensive updates on negotiations, advance sight of agreement text and support with legislative implementation.

Neither the Devolved Administrations, nor the Governments of the Crown Dependencies or Gibraltar have routinely raised concerns with the trade continuity programme. It is important that any concerns that may be raised are handled in confidence and with discretion. However, we acknowledge the Report's request for more details on the specific nature of any concerns raised and are always looking for ways to further improve Explanatory Memoranda.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the House of Lords Library.

Yours sincerely,

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

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel, Kt
Minister for Investment
Department for International Trade
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy