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UK-US Economic Prosperity Deal (EPD) – Whisky and Steel Tariffs

Dear Dominic,

I am pleased to update the International Agreements Committee on the UK-US Economic Prosperity Deal (EPD) and recent US tariff reductions.

US tariffs on UK whisky

On Thursday 30 April, President Trump and the US Trade Representative, Ambassador Greer, announced that the US will remove tariffs on whisky produced in the United Kingdom. This is positive news for the UK whisky industry, which exports around £1 billion of whisky to the US annually and supports thousands of jobs across the UK. Under the EPD, the UK has already benefited from a preferential tariff rate of 10% - lower than any other country. The tariff rate will now be reduced to zero, providing full tariff-free access.

The announcement has been strongly welcomed by industry, and we will work with the US Administration to ensure that the UK's whisky industry can benefit from this announcement as quickly as possible. We understand the complexity of integrated supply chains and are committed to ensuring that businesses in Northern Ireland can fully benefit. The UK remains committed to implementing the Windsor Framework in good faith and protecting the UK internal market.

The Secretary of State and I have consistently advocated for lower tariffs on key exports such as whisky to protect vital jobs and iconic British brands while strengthening our relationship with the US.

US tariffs on UK steel

On Thursday 2 April, the US changed Section 232 tariffs on steel, aluminium, copper and their derivatives. The non-preferential rate for core steel, aluminium and most copper products remains at 50%. For certain copper products, the rate has been reduced from 50% to 25% for all countries. In addition, tariffs now apply to the full product value – previously only the metal content was subject to Section 232 tariffs.

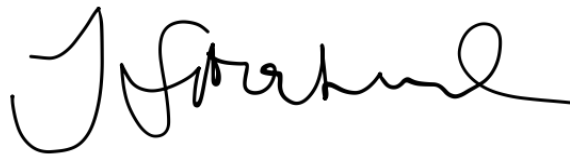
Following intense negotiations last year, the UK was the only country to secure a preferential rate on steel and aluminium. Through our ongoing discussions, the UK has retained its tariff rate for exports at 25% for core steel, aluminium and certain derivative products, and negotiated a preferential rate of 15% for most steel and aluminium derivatives.

The US added additional criteria to access the preferential rates. Steel must be melted and poured, and aluminium smelted or most recently cast, in the UK to qualify. The UK negotiated an amendment to the criteria, ensuring that Tata Steel UK, using steel melted and poured from their operations in the Netherlands, can continue to export to the US at the UK's preferential rate until 1 January 2028. The US Federal Register Notice published on 27 April confirms that steel produced by Tata Steel UK, with melt and pour reported as the Netherlands, will count toward the 95% melt and pour threshold for the preferential 15% derivative tariff.

The Government will continue engaging with the US to seek further tariff reductions and understands the impact of tariffs on business.

Senior officials will be available to provide further briefing on these matters. I look forward to continuing to work closely with the Committee going forward.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Stockwood', with a stylized, flowing script.

Lord Stockwood of Great Grimsby and Cleethorpes
Minister for Investment
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