



Department for International Trade

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25th February 2021

Dear Neil,

The Statutory Trade and Agriculture Commission (TAC)

Thank you for your letter dated 14 December 2020, and for your time at our meeting on 28 January 2021.

I am pleased you welcome the Department for International Trade's work to support transparency and scrutiny with Parliament through our arrangements with the International Trade Committee (ITC) and International Agreements sub-Committee (IAC). Similarly, I welcome your support for the statutory Trade and Agriculture Commission (TAC). In reaching these important developments I have been pleased to draw on your constructive engagement.

In your letter you requested DIT commit to allowing EFRA 'advanced access to all assessments on the impacts of FTAs before they are laid in Parliament.' As discussed on 28 January, the timeframe for this expert advice will be inherently fluid and dependent on the timeframe of the particular agreement and negotiation.

It would not be appropriate for me to commit to share the work of the statutory TAC before it is laid in Parliament. However, in your capacity as Chair of the EFRA Committee, my Department will provide you with confidential access to treaty text relating to agriculture at the same time that text is shared with the ITC and IAC. Please note the access to treaty text arrangement with these Committees is, at this time, limited to the US, Australia, and New Zealand agreements and CPTPP accession.

My Department is currently working to ensure the statutory TAC is operational in time to analyse and advise on the first future trade agreement which will be within the statutory TAC's purview.

As an expert committee, it is my intention that the statutory TAC comprises technical experts in the policy areas outlined in the Trade Bill.

As you know, agri-product regulation and trade law and policy expertise will be critical elements. I would like to thank you for your thoughtful suggestions on candidates for the new body, and I will take these into account during the appointments process in line with established protocols.

Kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Truss', is centered below the text 'Kindest regards,'.

THE RT HON ELIZABETH TRUSS MP
Secretary of State for International Trade
& President of the Board of Trade