



**HOUSE OF LORDS**  
European Union Committee

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The Rt Hon Conor Burns MP  
Minister of State for Trade Policy  
Department for International Trade  
Whitehall  
London, SW1A 2EG

24 January 2020

Dear Conor,

**15088/19 - Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) No 654/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the exercise of the Union's rights for the application and enforcement of international trade rules**

**15090/19 - Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, Review of the scope of the Regulation No 654/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014**

Thank you for your Explanatory Memorandum (EM) of 5 November 2019, regarding the above documents. They were considered by the External Affairs Sub-Committee on 23 January 2020.

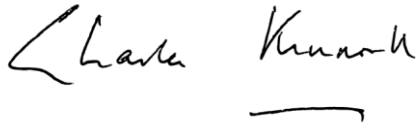
The future of the WTO Appellate Body, and the establishment of any alternative mechanisms for settling trade disputes, are likely to be highly relevant to the UK as it seeks to establish an independent trade policy after Brexit. We note that while this proposal is likely to be implemented after the UK has exited the EU, your Explanatory Memorandum does not elaborate on whether the Government is supportive of this proposal in principle and whether UK officials attended any meetings or working groups at which the proposed regulation was discussed. Could you provide further clarity on the Government's position and the UK's representations, if any, at relevant meetings?

We also note that the European Union has sought to establish alternative interim dispute settlement arrangements with other trading partners, and has so far only been successful with Canada and Norway. Will the Government seek to establish similar alternative interim dispute settlement arrangements with the EU, as part of the negotiations over the future relationship? Will the Government seek to establish interim dispute settlement mechanisms with other future trading partners?

We look forward to receiving your reply before 31 January. In the meantime, we have decided to keep both documents under scrutiny.

I am copying this letter to Les Saunders, at the Department for Exiting the EU; and Edwina Osbourne, DfIT Departmental Scrutiny Co-ordinator.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lord Kinnoull". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Lord Kinnoull  
Chairman of the European Union Committee