



Department for
International Trade



Department for
Business, Energy
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Dear Christopher,

Thank you for your contributions at the first sitting of Committee meeting on the Trade Bill on Tuesday 29 September. You asked why I have been referring to acceding to the GPA on substantially the same terms that the UK had under EU membership and I offered to provide more detail in writing on the reasoning for this terminology.

As you are aware, the UK is acceding to the GPA on the basis of continuity of its existing market access offer. It is however necessary to make certain technical changes to reflect the fact that the UK is no longer an EU member state. For example, we have changed references to the EU to refer to the UK, and references to EU laws to the relevant UK laws.

In addition, the UK has committed to update the list of central Government entities in Annex 1 of its market access offer shortly after acceding to the agreement as an independent party. The update to the list, once made, will reflect the fact that several central Government entities have merged, moved, transferred functions or changed name since the list was originally written. For example, the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) will be removed from the list as it no longer exists. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade will be added, having taken on some of BERR's functions. As an interim measure pending this update, the UK's market access schedule includes a footnote to ensure that successor entities to those listed are covered where functions have transferred from one entity to another entity. The footnote and the update are not intended to alter the overall coverage offered by the UK under the GPA; rather, it will ensure that the offer accurately captures the current configuration of the UK public sector.

Given the technical nature of these changes, whilst we cannot accurately say that the UK is acceding to the GPA on the same terms that we have had under EU membership, we are acceding on substantially the same terms.

I hope that this provides sufficient clarification and look forward to further discussions on the Trade Bill at Committee over the coming days.

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

Your sincerely,

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel, Kt
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