



Department for Business & Trade

Lord Johnson of Lainston CBE
Minister for Investment and Regulatory
Reform
Department for Business and Trade
Old Admiralty Building
London
SW1A 2BL

Lord Purvis of Tweed
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

T +44 (0) 20 4551 0011
E minister.investment@businessandtrade.gov.uk
W www.gov.uk/dit

10 January 2024

Dear Jeremy,

Thank you for your participation in the debate on the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) Bill on 14 December. I am following up to provide further response on your remarks regarding potential impacts of the Bill on the trade of developing countries, particularly in West Africa.

You raise an important wider issue regarding the potential impacts of FTAs on our trade preferences with developing countries. You mentioned our vital efforts to support development through trade, including our Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS), which benefits 65 countries that collectively export over £20bn in goods to the UK each year.

Our Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) also provide duty-free quota-free access to the UK market to 33 developing nations in Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific, including Ghana, Cameroon, and Côte D'Ivoire. As you highlighted, bananas are a particularly important commodity in these three countries, and access through our EPAs has helped them to grow their share of the UK banana market – to around 11.5% of all bananas now sold here, according to Afruibana, an association of African fruit producers.

The UK imports circa 1 million tonnes of bananas each year from across the world, with the market access provided for bananas in CPTPP small relative to the total size of the market. There remains a lot of room for our banana-producing EPA partners in Africa and the Caribbean to capitalise on their tariff-free access, which we will continue to support through our EPA arrangements and regular dialogue.

We recognise the need to closely consider potential impacts on developing countries as we continue to evolve our trade policies and take forward FTA negotiations. We continue to balance the domestic interests of UK consumers and businesses, and delivering on our FTA agenda, with maintaining a strong commitment to support developing countries and reduce poverty through trade. The Government publishes its assessment of potential impacts on developing countries for all of our new free trade agreements as part of the Impact Assessment.

I hope this is useful. I would be very happy to meet with you to talk in more detail about this issue, and my team will be in touch to arrange a suitable time.

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

With very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Johnson', with a horizontal line underneath.

Lord Johnson of Lainston CBE
Minister for Investment and Regulatory Reform
Department for Business and Trade