



Our ref: MA-EM-0403-20

David Rees AM  
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3 March 2020

Dear Dai,

**International agreements considered by the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee on 13 January 2020 and 10 February**

Thank you for your letters of 21 January and 27 February regarding the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee's (EAAL) scrutiny of:

- the agreement establishing an Association between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Republic of Lebanon;
- the Strategic Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Georgia;
- the agreement establishing an Association between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Republic of Tunisia.
- the agreement establishing an Association between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Kingdom of Morocco.
- the agreement establishing an Association between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Kingdom of Jordan.
- the agreement establishing an Association between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Republic of Kosovo; and

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

●the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Before answering your specific questions I would like to provide some context about the trade policy function within Welsh Government. The function now consists of fourteen people who have been rapidly developing their expertise in an area where the Welsh Government has never acted before. My priority is to focus this limited resource on the pressing issue of assessing the impact of new trade agreements on the economy of Wales.

We are taking a very systematic approach to prioritising our resources on the basis of where our most important markets are. We have prioritised our future relationship with the EU which accounts for 61% of our goods exports and then the USA which accounts for 15% (in the year ending September 2019). Beyond that we have prioritised our focus on those other countries that the UK Government has indicated that it intends to prioritise negotiating new free trade agreements with – namely Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

Turning now to the three agreements EAAL considered on 13 January and the four considered on 19 February. As you are aware these are part of the UK Government's technical exercise to 'roll-over' as many existing EU Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) as possible – known as the Trade Agreement Continuity programme. Our assessment is that the seven countries under consideration account for only 0.2% of total Welsh goods trade in the year ending September 2019.

In answer to your specific questions:

1. I can confirm that my officials continue to have regular contact with Department of International Trade on the TAC programme. We were not involved with the negotiation relating to any of these seven agreements but were informed in advance of the content prior to the agreements being signed. My expectations in relation to our involvement in the Trade Agreement Continuity programme (TAC) negotiations is dependent on what countries DiT classify as falling under TAC going forward. For instance, Canada may well return to the table. If it does I would expect to have the level of involvement we currently do in relation to the priority countries rather than then TAC programme.

2. Regarding an assessment of the opportunities and risks of greater liberalisation of trade in agricultural and fisheries products with the Lebanon. I can confirm that my officials have not conducted an in depth assessment. This has been a deliberate decision on the basis that there is currently very little trade with Lebanon relating to agriculture and fisheries – data shows that the Food and Live Animals sector represents 0.01% of total Welsh goods trade in the year ending September 2019.

Yours sincerely,



**Eluned Morgan AC/AM**

Gweinidog y Gymraeg a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol  
Minister for International Relations and the Welsh Language