



HOUSE OF LORDS
European Union Committee

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The Rt Hon Baroness Anelay of St Johns DBE
Minister of State
Department for Exiting the European Union
9 Downing Street
London, SW1A 2AS

14 September 2017

Dear Joyce,

Brexit: trade in goods

Thank you for your letter of 16 August, enclosing the Government's position papers on customs arrangements and on Northern Ireland and Ireland. The letter was considered by the EU External Affairs Sub-Committee on 14 September.

We are disappointed that the Government continues to delay its formal response to the Committee's report, *Brexit: trade in goods*. This response is now four months late.

You stated to the House on 17 July, and in your letter of 16 August, that the purdah period was the reason for the delay. We draw to your attention that there have now been several months since the end of purdah. During the debate on the report, on 17 July, you stated you had seen a draft response to the report and you gave "a commitment to the House to get that draft into final form as soon as is humanly possible". However, we are still yet to receive the response a further two months on.

While the Committee will indeed consider the Government's position papers with interest, these are not a substitute for a formal written response to our report. Your letter states that "we intend to send you a response to the Committee's report once all the policy papers have been published". We do not believe that the Government's response to *Brexit: trade in goods* should be delayed by your schedule of publication of these position papers. However, given that this is the approach you have taken, please provide us with the date on which the final position paper will be published, which we will take to be the date on which we will receive the response to *Brexit: trade in goods*.

I am copying this letter to The Chair of the Commons European Scrutiny Committee, Lynn Gardner, Clerk to the European Scrutiny Committee; Les Saunders, DExEU; Richard Cleary and Michael Shantry at the Department for Exiting the EU, and Chris Taylor at the Department for International Trade.

Baroness Verma
Chair of the EU External Affairs Sub-Committee