



The Rt Hon Greg Hands MP
Minister of State for Trade Policy
Department for International Trade
King Charles Street
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AH

18 June 2018

Dear Greg,

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS AND EXCISE

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the House of Lords' EU External Affairs Sub-Committee. On 6 June I met with representatives of the Scotch Whisky Association who raised with me concerns about what the UK's departure from the EU might mean for the protections currently afforded to Scotch Whisky by EU geographical indications (GIs). Scotch Whisky – like other products that enjoy protection as a geographical indication – not only benefits from legal protections, but also from added value that, in turn, benefits producers and their suppliers.

I would therefore be grateful if you could provide answers to the following questions, which I am also copying to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, as well as the Department for Exiting the EU for information:

First, how will existing GIs be retained with the EU after the end of the transition period? For example, will they form part of a UK-EU trade deal, or will the UK seek to register GIs with the EU as a third country? Also, does the Government envisage that the GIs registered in the EU will be protected in the UK after Brexit and, if so, how?

Second, are there plans for GIs to be an integral part of trade negotiations with those countries with which the EU already has preferential trade agreements? If not, why not?

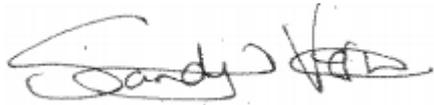
Third, will GIs feature in trade negotiations with any other countries with which the UK may wish to sign an FTA agreement in future?

Finally, I'd be grateful if you could provide an update on any assessment that has been done on the impact of Brexit on UK excise goods and whether the Government will be seeking continued access to the EU's Excise Movement and Control System (EMCS).

I look forward to receiving a response to the questions on these important issues. I'd be grateful if it could be provided within 10 working days of receipt of this letter.

I am copying this letter to the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, as well as John Leach and Craig White, Scrutiny Coordinators, DEFRA; the Rt Hon David Davis MP and 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 'Sandy Verma', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Baroness Verma
Chairman of the EU External Affairs Sub-Committee