



Department for International Trade

George Hollingbery MP

Department for International Trade
King Charles Street
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AH

T +44 (0) 20 7215 5000
E enquiries@trade.gov.uk
W www.gov.uk

Angus Brendan MacNeil MP
Chairman, International Trade Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

26th March 2019

Dear Angus,

As you are aware from previous undertakings provided to Parliament, the Government is working to secure continuity for the effects of EU trade agreements when we leave the European Union. I am writing to inform you that on 22nd March I signed an Economic Partnership Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the following CARIFORUM States: Barbados, Belize, The Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, The Republic of Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Christopher and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The content of the Economic Partnership Agreement was discussed and agreed with all the CARIFORUM States in advance. Some CARIFORUM States were not able to complete their domestic processes in time to sign the agreement on 22nd March but they intend to sign the agreement as soon as they are able to do so.

I also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the same countries. This is a temporary arrangement which will enable the UK to bring the EPA into effect, with those signatory CARIFORUM States that are unable to ratify or provisionally apply it, by exit day should the UK leave the EU without a deal. To facilitate Parliamentary scrutiny of trade agreements, I will place a Technical Note in the libraries of both Houses that provides information on the Government's approach to using such temporary arrangements.

The agreement text will shortly be laid in Parliament with an accompanying Explanatory Memorandum as part of the UK's established treaty ratification process – as set out in Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010. In addition, the Government will publish a report on how the agreement delivers continuity in the UK's existing trade relationship with the CARIFORUM States.

The CARIFORUM-UK EPA replicates all aspects of the existing EPA between the EU and the CARIFORUM States, ensuring continuity for businesses. EPAs are development-focused trade agreements with African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. They aim to promote increased trade and investment by putting our trading relationships with developing countries on a more equitable, mature and business-like footing, supporting sustainable growth and poverty reduction.

EPAs also benefit consumers and workers in the UK by the removal of trade barriers, the promotion of exports from developing countries resulting in wider choice, lower prices, better value and wider ethical choice options.

In the CARIFORUM-UK EPA, the UK commits to providing immediate duty-free quota-free access to goods from CARIFORUM. In exchange, the CARIFORUM States have committed to more gradual tariff liberalisation. However, sensitive products are excluded from full liberalisation.

The EPA allows for both parties to take measures to protect their markets in particular circumstances using the safeguard provisions in the EPA. For example, CARIFORUM States can raise duties or impose quotas on UK imports that cause or threaten to cause disturbances in an economic sector or serious injury to a domestic industry.

The EPA contains provisions on intellectual property and geographical indications, government procurement, competition, services and trade remedies.

The EPA provides a dispute settlement mechanism and the establishment of a number of joint institutions in which both the UK and CARIFORUM States are represented. The EPA envisages development support from the UK to ensure that it is effectively implemented, and that the opportunities it offers can be fully realised by the CARIFORUM States.

We will update you in due course as we sign further continuity trade agreements.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "George". The signature is stylized with a large 'G' and a long, sweeping tail.

GEORGE HOLLINGBERY MP
Minister of State for Trade Policy
Department for International Trade