



Department for International Trade

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Thank you for your letter dated 30th January regarding the amendment to the House of Lord's committee motion tabled by Baroness Smith of Basildon.

The Finance and Constitution Committee's paper Trade Bill LCM provided valuable insight to our consideration of the role of devolved administrations in the Trade Bill and our subsequent engagement with the Scottish Government.

I have noted the recommendations in your report on the role of the Scottish Parliament in future trade negotiations and their particular relevance to the House of Lords resolution. The Trade Bill seeks continuity of existing arrangements and so the role of the devolved legislatures and administrations in the negotiation of new arrangements does not feature in the Trade Bill.

The UK Government is committed to ensuring that future trade agreements deliver for all parts of the United Kingdom and draw on the expertise of each of the devolved nations. That is why we recently committed to establishing a new intergovernmental Ministerial Forum to provide a formal mechanism for Devolved Government Ministers to discuss and provide input to future trade negotiation. It will be a matter for the Scottish Parliament to determine how it will scrutinise the role of the Scottish Government in those arrangements.

I welcome your positive reaction to the Government's commitment to not normally using the powers in the Trade Bill to legislate in areas of devolved competence without the consent of the relevant devolved administration and certainly not without first consulting them. I trust the repeated statements that Baroness Fairhead and I have made in Parliament confirm the Government's ongoing commitment to respecting this important convention in relation to regulations made under the Trade Bill.

I am grateful for your invitation to return to the Finance and Constitution Committee. You will appreciate that there is a significant amount of work going on in Westminster and in my Department but I will endeavour to return to your Committee as soon as possible.



GEORGE HOLLINGBERY MP
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