

[BritCham visits Congress to explain benefits of UK trade pact with Central America](#)

The visit follows up on the arrival in Congress one week ago of the UK – Central America Association Agreement, sent by the Executive and which became the Law Initiative 56-14. The bill is due to enter the plenary once the Economics Committee gives its favourable views on the Agreement, upon consultation with many other actors.

Congressman Carlos Barreda, President of the Economics and Foreign Trade Committee, chaired the meeting. BritCham was joined by a delegation composed of the British Embassy, the Ministry of Economy, representatives of the Guatemalan private sector and exporters to the UK.

The meeting was an opportunity for delegates to explain to Congress how this new trade agreement will give seamless continuity to Guatemalan exports to the UK reckoned at more than US\$100 million a year and which generates many jobs in the countryside, especially in the harvest of fruits, vegetables, sugar and coffee.

For example, some Guatemalan companies export 100% of their fruit and vegetables production to the UK, i.e. green peas, berries, green beans, avocado, mangos, etc., which most are harvested in large plantation areas of Chimaltenango, Sacatepequez, Escuintla, Verapaces, and other parts of the country. Their products reach supermarkets in the UK and distributors that re-sell to the rest of Europe. UK emblematic products including whisky, pharmaceuticals and tech goods will also enter Guatemala with low tariffs.

The Agreement will ensure continued trade with Central America after the UK leaves the European Union on 31st October. The delegation also explained that the Pact provides a framework for assistance and development through political dialogue, economic cooperation, and future work on important issues like the environment and human rights.

BritCham stressed that it will continue working with Guatemalan and British companies to assess them in the transit to this new trade pact, which is a continuity of the Association Agreement between the EU and Central America. The British Embassy's Trade Office also stands ready to attend enquiries during this transition process.

Norman Laxton, President of BritCham, said:

We urge Congress to speed up the approval of this Agreement. It will ensure Guatemalan businesses and consumers benefit from continued trade with the United Kingdom after the 31st of October. It will also open the door for more investments and projects that

will deliver on our mutual objective of spurring prosperity and reduce poverty.