

UK and Kenya sign trade agreement

The UK has today (Tuesday 8 December) signed an Economic Partnership Agreement with Kenya. The deal was signed in London by International Trade Minister Ranil Jayawardena and Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Trade, Minister Betty Maina.

This trade agreement will ensure that all companies operating in Kenya, including British businesses, can continue to benefit from duty-free access to the UK market.

It will support jobs and economic development in Kenya, as well as avoid possible disruption to UK businesses such as florists who will be able to maintain tariff-free supply routes for Kenya's high-quality flowers.

Top goods imports to the UK from Kenya last year were in tea, coffee and spices (£121 million); vegetables (£79 million); and live trees and plants, mostly flowers (£54 million).

The UK market accounts for 43% of total exports of vegetables from Kenya as well as at least 9% of cut flowers, and this agreement will support Kenyans working in these sectors by maintaining tariff-free market access to the UK.

It will also benefit many of the approximately 2,500 UK businesses exporting goods to Kenya each year, including many UK suppliers of machinery, electronics and technical equipment, where continued tariff-free access will be guaranteed.

As one of the largest economies in East Africa, Kenya is an important trading partner for the UK.

This deal also recognises the importance of the wider region, and the agreement is open for other members of the East African Community to join.

International Trade Minister Ranil Jayawardena said:

I am delighted that today we have signed a trade agreement with Kenya. This deal makes sure businesses have the certainty they need to continue trading as they do now, supporting jobs and livelihoods in both our countries.

Today's agreement is also a first step towards a regional agreement with the East African Community, and I look forward to working with other members to secure an agreement to forge ever-closer trading ties.

Minister for Africa James Duddridge said:

This agreement will provide the strongest possible platform for the United Kingdom, Kenya and, ultimately, the whole EAC, to expand our trade relationship in future.

We will use this agreement as the catalyst to deepen our mutual prosperity alongside the other areas of cooperation in our Strategic Partnership with Kenya that includes security, sustainable development, climate change, and cultural pillars.

Notes to Editors

- The deal is a translation of the terms previously agreed between the EU and the East African Community (EAC) and includes clauses to allow other East African Community states to join in the future.
- The provisions of the Economic Partnership Agreement will apply from 1 January 2021
- In under two years, the UK government has signed or agreed in principle trade agreements with 55 countries. Total UK trade with these countries was worth £170 billion in 2019.
- This agreement is the sixth we have secured in Africa, covering 14 countries. Source of trade statistics: ONS UK total trade: all countries, non-seasonally adjusted April to June 2020; HMRC Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics, September 2020.