

UK and Tunisia sign continuity agreement

The UK government has signed a trade and political continuity agreement with Tunisia in London today.

- Trade between the UK and Tunisia was worth £378 million in 2018.
- The UK has now secured trade with countries accounting for £100 billion.
- The agreement will ensure British businesses and consumers benefit from continued access to the market after we leave the EU.

The British Ambassador to Tunisia Louise De Sousa signed the agreement with the Tunisian Ambassador to the United Kingdom Nabil Ben Khedher.

Welcoming the agreement, UK Minister for the Middle East Dr Andrew Murrison said:

The signing of this agreement demonstrates the UK's commitment to Tunisia, working together to support our shared long-term ambitions for a deeper economic partnership.

Tunisia represents opportunities for UK companies and this agreement gives exporters and consumers the certainty they need to continue trading freely and in confidence as the UK prepares to leave the EU.

The Agreement will ensure British businesses and consumers benefit from continued trade with Tunisia after we leave the European Union. It provides, among other trade benefits, tariff-free trade of industrial products together with liberalisation of trade in agricultural, agri-food and fisheries products.

This will further help to strengthen the trading relationship between the UK and Tunisia, which was worth £378 million last year, an increase of 3.0% on the previous year.

In addition to growing trade, today's agreement seeks to deepen UK-Tunisian cooperation across foreign policy, economic, social and cultural ties. The Agreement provides a framework for policy dialogue and to strengthen cooperation on important issues like education, trade, environmental and human rights matters; reaffirming Britain's commitment to a close relationship with Tunisia and North Africa.

Minister of State for Trade Conor Burns said:

The UK government is committed to ensuring that businesses are fully prepared for Brexit. Today's signing ensures that UK and

Tunisian businesses, exporters and consumers can continue to trade freely after the UK leaves the EU on 31st October.

I am confident that this agreement will usher in a new phase of greater cooperation between our two countries and help pave the way for increased bilateral trade and investment in the future.

Notes to editors

- This agreement will be subject to the domestic parliamentary procedures in both the UK and Tunisia before it is brought into force.
- This agreement is designed to take effect when the EU-Tunisia agreement ceases to apply to the UK.
- The UK has now secured agreements with countries that accounted for £100 billion of trade in 2018.
- Trade between the UK and Tunisia was worth £378 million in 2018.
- Statistics sourced from ONS 'UK total trade: all countries, non-seasonally adjusted January to March 2019 release'. Figures relate to 2018.
- Under the new agreement UK consumers will continue to benefit from lower prices on goods imported from Tunisia, such as textiles and clothing. Consumers in Tunisia will continue to benefit from lower tariffs on products such as machinery and mechanical appliances produced in the UK.
- The UK-Tunisia Association Agreement replicates the effects of the existing trade and non-trade provisions as far as possible. It will come into effect as soon as the existing EU-Tunisia Association Agreement ceases to apply to the UK.