

Negotiations on the UK's Future Trading Relationship with New Zealand: Update

News story

The sixth round of free trade agreement negotiations with New Zealand took place between 19-30 July 2021.



Both countries are committed to concluding a high-quality free trade agreement (FTA), setting a precedent for high standard FTAs in the future.

We have now provisionally closed nine chapters and one annex in total. In Round 6, significant progress was made in the following areas:

- **Express Delivery Services (Annex):**

These provisions give legal certainty to UK delivery service suppliers by offering reassurance that the regulatory environment provides a level playing field. Securing commitments on this essential part of the supply chain enables smoother delivery of goods between our countries.

- **Anti-Corruption:**

Corruption acts as a barrier to free trade by increasing the cost of doing business. The chapter covers provisions relating to whistleblowing, embezzlement, money laundering, and other areas. Having strong global standards based on an international rules-based approach allows businesses to compete fairly. If businesses cannot compete fairly, the costs are ultimately shifted onto consumers and taxpayers. Doing business with integrity is beneficial to the medium-long term prosperity at both a national and corporate level.

• **Development:**

Trade agreements between two developed economies can impact on developing countries that are not party to the agreement. Development provisions recognise the role that trade and investment can play in contributing to positive economic and social development outcomes; whilst creating opportunities for UK firms and consumers, e.g., lowering prices, and opening fast-growing markets for UK exporters.

Below is a summary list of those areas discussed in the round, with productive discussions in all areas:

- Cross Border Trade in Services (CBTS)
- State-Owned Entities and Designated Monopolies (SOEs)
- Trade and Labour
- Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS)
- Rules of Origin (RoO)
- Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT)
- Consumer Protection
- Domestic Regulation
- International Maritime Transport Services (Annex)
- Investment
- Indigenous Trade
- Digital Trade
- General Exceptions
- Financial Services
- Professional Business Services (PBS)
- Trade Remedies
- Institutional Provisions
- Good Regulatory Practice and Regulatory Cooperation (GRP)
- Temporary Entry of Business Persons
- Intellectual Property (IP)
- Telecommunications
- Trade and Environment

An agreement could see the removal of tariffs on an array of UK and New Zealand exports, such as food and drink, clothing, and manufactured goods.

A free trade agreement with New Zealand will open another important gateway to the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), a £9 trillion free trade area of 11 Asia-Pacific nations, including New Zealand and Australia. Membership will open huge new opportunities for our farmers, manufacturers, and services firms, with two-thirds of the world's middle classes set to be in Asia by 2030.

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PM to call on G7 leaders to step up support for Afghan people

- PM to call on countries to match UK commitments to protect those most in need in Afghanistan and bolster aid to the region
- Leaders set to discuss joint approach to securing a more stable future for Afghanistan
- Meeting follows doubling of UK humanitarian aid spending and the announcement of one of the most generous resettlement schemes in British history

Prime Minister Boris Johnson will call on G7 leaders to continue to stand by the Afghan people and step up support for refugees and humanitarian aid when they meet this afternoon (Tuesday 24th August).

Chairing the meeting, he is expected to urge international partners to match the UK's commitments on aid and the resettlement of those most in need, in order to protect human rights and contribute to the stability of the region.

Leaders are also expected to reiterate their commitment to safeguarding the gains made in Afghanistan over the last 20 years – in particular on girls' education and the rights of women and minorities. Discussions are set to cover ongoing collaboration on evacuation efforts at Kabul airport and longer-term work to secure a more stable future for Afghanistan and ensure any new government is inclusive and abides by its international obligations.

Ahead of the meeting, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Our first priority is to complete the evacuation of our citizens and those Afghans who have assisted our efforts over the last 20 years – but as we look ahead to the next phase, it's vital we come together as an international community and agree a joint approach for the longer term.

That's why I've called an emergency meeting of the G7 – to coordinate our response to the immediate crisis, to reaffirm our commitment to the Afghan people, and to ask our international partners to match the UK's commitments to support those in need.

Together with our partners and allies, we will continue to use every humanitarian and diplomatic lever to safeguard human rights and protect the gains made over the last two decades. The Taliban will be judged by their deeds and not their words.

The meeting will take place by video conference and the NATO and UN Secretaries-General have also been invited to join the discussion.

Earlier this week the Prime Minister set out his five-point plan for addressing the risk of humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.

The plan has five parts:

1. immediately helping those to whom we have direct obligations
2. protecting ourselves against any threat from terrorism
3. supporting Afghan people in the region through humanitarian and development assistance
4. creating safe and legal routes to resettle Afghans in need
5. developing a clear plan for dealing with the new Afghan regime in a unified and concerted way

The meeting of G7 leaders comes after the Prime Minister chaired a meeting of COBR on Monday afternoon where ministers discussed the latest situation on the ground. As of the morning of Monday 23rd, the UK had secured the evacuation of almost 6,000 people out of Kabul since Operation PITTING began last week, which includes British Nationals and their dependants, embassy staff, and Afghan nationals under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) programme.

The UK has already doubled the amount of humanitarian aid to the region, committing up to £286 million with immediate effect, and last week we announced a new bespoke resettlement scheme. This programme will be one of the most generous in British history and is set to relocate up to 20,000 vulnerable Afghans.

[**Afghanistan: UK Minister for Human Rights, South Asia and the Commonwealth to address UN Human Rights Council**](#)

News story

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon will address the UN Human Rights Council tomorrow on Afghanistan.



Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister for Human Rights, South Asia and the Commonwealth and the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, will virtually address the UN Human Rights Council and hold urgent discussions with humanitarian partners about the situation in Afghanistan.

The UK's Minister for Human Rights, South Asia and the Commonwealth will make a statement on Tuesday morning at an emergency session of the UN Human Rights Council focussed on Afghanistan.

Speaking on behalf of the UK, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad will say:

Over the last twenty years, the UK and our NATO allies have worked to promote human rights in Afghanistan, especially for women and girls.

Twenty years ago almost no girls went to school, and women were banned from positions of governance. Now, 3.6 million Afghan girls are in school, and women hold over a quarter of the seats in Afghanistan's parliament. Maternal mortality has almost halved, and infant mortality has decreased faster than in any low income country.

These gains must not be reversed.

The Taliban need to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Lord (Tariq) Ahmad is expected to speak with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet. He will underscore the UK's commitment to protecting the human rights of the Afghan people.

The Minister will also meet with key humanitarian partners – including leaders from the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the International Organisation for Migration, the UN High Commission for Refugees and the UN Population Fund – to discuss the humanitarian emergency in Afghanistan.

Last week the UK supported a UN Security Council statement which called for all parties to allow immediate, safe and unhindered humanitarian access for humanitarian agencies and actors providing assistance in Afghanistan. Lord

(Tariq) Ahmad's discussions in Geneva with humanitarian partners will focus on what more the international community can do to ensure this remains the case.

Background

- The Human Rights Council will hold a special session on 24 August, to address the "serious human rights concerns and situation in Afghanistan". The special session is being convened following an official request submitted jointly by Pakistan, Coordinator of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and Afghanistan. The United Kingdom supported the request for a Special Session. The Special Session can be watched live via UNTV.

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[PM call with US President Joe Biden: 23 August 2021](#)

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to US President Joe Biden.



The Prime Minister spoke to US President Joe Biden again this evening on the situation in Afghanistan, ahead of tomorrow's G7 meeting.

They discussed the ongoing efforts by the UK and US to coordinate the rapid and safe evacuation of our nationals and those who previously worked with our governments from Kabul International Airport.

The leaders agreed to continue working together to ensure those who are eligible to leave are able to, including after the initial phase of the evacuation has ended.

The Prime Minister and President Biden noted the importance of concerted diplomatic engagement to secure the progress made in Afghanistan and prevent a humanitarian crisis.

They committed to driving international action, including through the G7 and UN Security Council, to stabilise the situation, support the Afghan people and work towards an inclusive and representative Afghan government.

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Summer start for new winter maintenance base

It may be the middle of summer but today work has started on a new maintenance compound to help keep East Yorkshire's roads open and safe throughout the winter.

The £3.6m National Highways site is being built at Green Park Business Park just off the M62 at junction 38 near Newport.

The compound will house a salt barn capable of holding 3,500 tonnes of salt, a workshop for vehicle maintenance, storage for snowploughs and other equipment, and a single storey office.

Three gritters will be based there, responsible for salting more than 70 miles of the M62 and A63 from Hull docks in the east to Ferrybridge, West Yorkshire, to the west. There will also be parking for 21 cars and ten bicycles and electrical vehicle charging points will be installed.

The compound will also be used as an equipment store and for the deployment of year-round maintenance activities such as roadworks, grass cutting and litter picking.

These activities currently operate from a leased depot at nearby South Cave. The new compound is part of a move to bring more sites into National Highways ownership to ensure value for money.

National Highways regional director for Yorkshire and the North East Simon Boyle said:

We are delighted to be starting work on this new facility that will help keep road users safe in the grip of winter.

Just as South Cave does now, the Green Park location will give us good access to the M62 and A63 meaning we can respond to conditions

quickly and efficiently, salting these key strategic routes at optimum times.

South Cave has served us well but having a new site under National Highways ownership means it is more cost effective to our business and therefore to the taxpayer. The contract to design and build the compound has been awarded to Kier, a leading provider of construction and infrastructure services.

Alan Smith, operations director for Kier Places, said:

This new building will house vehicles, salt and other maintenance products to allow National Highways to effectively maintain local roads and support road users in east Yorkshire.

Over the duration of this project, we will be utilising modern methods of construction and we are proud to be working with a number of local and skilled supply chain partners to help us deliver this important new infrastructure.

Construction is not due to impact traffic on either the M62 or local roads and is expected to be complete in May 2022.

National Highways operates its winter maintenance service from 1 October to 30 April each year.

Read more about [how we keep road users safe and moving throughout the winter](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.