

Liz Truss opening statement at International Trade Committee

Good to be here to give an update on our trade negotiations as we continue our journey as an independent trading nation.

This government is determined to deliver tangible economic value for communities across the entire country through new and enhanced trading relationships. We will also make sure that our trade is values driven and presents the best of Britain to the world.

That is exactly what we've done in our deal with Japan, which, as the Committee will know, has been signed in the period since I last spoke to you.

The Japan deal is a watershed moment for Britain on digital, data and services and in some areas goes beyond CPTPP. For example, it puts forward important principles on net neutrality and anti-data localisation.

It helps advanced manufacturing including in parts of the country like the Midlands and north of England that will support livelihoods.

It puts in place better arrangements for business travel, the creative industries and financial services.

Food and drink sections that protect tariff advantages and go further in recognition and protection of iconic British products

Some people said we would not be able to achieve the same as the EU because we were smaller.

In fact, we have protected all the existing benefits and gone further.

We have continued the tariff reductions on over 99 percent of our food exports that are not under quota, currently worth around £130m, including cheddar cheese, beef, higher value pork which see tariffs reduce down to 0%, 9% and 0% respectively over time.

If we hadn't done this Japanese consumers would be paying tariffs of 29.8% on cheddar, 38.5% on beef and 4.4% on pork on 1st January. Again, this protects livelihoods and communities.

For the 1%, or £1m worth of exports, that are subject to tariff rate quotas, for example stilton cheese and cake mixes, we have secured access to the EU quota which should have enough availability until 2024 – after which we have commitments for larger access under CPTPP.

It's important to note that no importer will have to pay up front and we have agreed a simpler process with Japan for access to the quotas than under the EU agreement.

What's more we've gone beyond EU on Rules of Origin, these changes will allow up to £88m of UK exports to receive preferential tariffs in Japan and so could increase the volume of trade in areas like textiles, confectionary and biscuits.

We've also helped British importers – get lower cost access to car parts and electronic goods, making our manufacturing more competitive and helping diversify away from riskier countries.

Today we publish four documents on Geographical Indicators, Rules of Origin, Agri-food and digital and data to give more detail to those who are interested.

We've achieved positive agreement on the environment and on women's economic empowerment showing what we can achieve when we work with like-minded allies. I know many members of the committee share my deep commitment to these causes.

The overall benefits are estimated at £15bn additional trade but don't believe this fully captures the opportunities of digital trade nor the impact of innovation. That's why we've commissioned Professor Tony Venables of Oxford University to update our trade modelling for the modern age.

I also want to take a moment to thank, again, the patriotic team of outstanding civil servants who made this deal possible. Their hard work is historic and the benefits of their work will be felt across the country.

We are in negotiations with Canada, Australia and New Zealand which will deliver further gold standard provisions. And I congratulate the government of New Zealand on their recent election which I hope will help pave the way to a deal. This month we will kick off our latest round of talks with Australia.

We're making good progress with US and round five of negotiations has now concluded, putting us in an excellent position to continue talks once a final result of the election is known.

Ultimately, we want to secure access to the Trans Pacific Partnership. Together with the United States this would be unprecedented and deep access to over 40 per cent of global GDP worth £27tr.

Because, down to TPP, of common rules of origin, common standards on services and tech and a common rules-based approach – this would be more than the sum of its parts. It would mean freer trade for British businesses and more resilient supply chains backed by a strong trade agreement.

This, Chair, is the beginning of what independent life can look like. This is the UK helping set global rules with like-minded democracies.

[Joint statement on US Withdrawal from the Paris Agreement](#)

Government response

The UNFCCC and the Governments of the UK, Chile, France and Italy have issued a joint statement on the US Withdrawal from the Paris Agreement.



**UN CLIMATE
CHANGE
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UK 2021**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY

There is no greater responsibility than protecting our planet and people from the threat of climate change. The science is clear that we must urgently scale up action and work together to reduce the impacts of global warming and to ensure a greener, more resilient future for us all. The Paris Agreement provides the right framework to achieve this. Our efforts must include support for those countries and communities at the frontline of climate change. It is vital that we take renewed action to hold the temperature rise to well below 2 degrees and take best efforts to limit warming to 1.5 degrees.

On 12 December we will be celebrating the five year anniversary of the Paris Agreement. We must ensure that it is implemented in full. We note with regret that the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement has formally come into effect today. As we look towards COP26 in Glasgow, we remain committed to working with all US stakeholders and partners around the world to accelerate climate action, and with all signatories to ensure the full implementation of the Paris Agreement.

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[New guidance to support safe care home](#)

visits during lockdown

- Visits should be tailored to residents and facilities and should prioritise residents and staff's safety to limit the transmission of COVID-19
- Care homes, especially those who have not allowed visits since March, will be encouraged and supported to provide safe visiting opportunities as new national restrictions come into effect
- Measures put in place should provide COVID-secure opportunities for families to meet using visiting arrangements such as floor to ceiling screens, visiting pods, and window visits

All care home residents in England should be allowed to receive visits from their family and friends in a COVID-secure way – with social distancing and PPE – following new guidance to be used while national restrictions are in place from Thursday 5 November.

The guidance will enable care home providers, families and local professionals to work together to find the right balance between the benefits of visiting on wellbeing and quality of life, and the risk of transmission of COVID-19 to social care staff and vulnerable residents.

It will set out clear principles for how visits are conducted – with arrangements to be adapted from home to home, based on the needs of their residents and taking into consideration factors such as layout and facilities – and reiterates the importance of ensuring social distancing and proper PPE use is observed.

Options for safe care home visits in line with the guidance could include:

- visits using COVID-secure visiting areas/pods with floor to ceiling screens and windows where the visitor and resident enter through different entrances, are separated by screens and visitors do not need to enter or pass through the care home
- visits at windows, where the visitor doesn't need to come inside the care home or where the visitor remains in their car, and the resident is socially distanced
- outdoor visits with one other person – visitors can meet outside with a loved one, in areas which can be accessed without anyone going through a shared building
- further support for virtual visits, encouraging the use of video calls

Plans are currently being developed to allow specific family and friends to visit care homes supported by testing. A sector-led group is overseeing the development of these plans with trials set to begin later this month.

A new national programme for weekly testing of professionals who regularly visit care homes, including community nurses and physiotherapists, will also be rolled out in the coming weeks following a successful pilot in Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Northamptonshire.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Matt Hancock, said:

I know how heart-breaking and incredibly frustrating it has been for families and friends who haven't been able to see their loved ones during the pandemic.

Care homes should feel empowered by this new guidance to look at safe options to allow visits to care homes that suit their residents and facilities. We've seen some really innovative solutions used to help families see each other safely, face-to-face, which has been life-changing for some.

It is vital high quality, compassionate care and infection control remains at the heart of every single care home to protect staff and resident's lives, but we must allow families to reunite in the safest way possible.

Minister for Care, Helen Whately said:

I know how incredibly hard visiting restrictions have been for families, friends and residents in care homes. There is no escaping the pain and the very real consequences of being separated for such a long period of time. The accounts I have heard personally are truly heart-breaking, especially where care homes have been unable to reopen for visiting during the summer.

I am determined to bring loved ones back together even during this second wave of the pandemic; that's why I am advising care homes to enable COVID-secure visits across the country.

We are also working to trial testing for visitors, so that we can reduce the risk of indoor visits and give families more opportunities to spend time with relatives in care homes.

We must get the balance right between reuniting families and ensuring care staff and residents are safe from COVID-19.

The government is also working with providers to help them communicate to families and help them plan visits in a way that minimises the wider risks – for example, avoiding travelling to and from the home using public transport, or maintaining social distance from other families when they arrive at the home for their visit.

Visits outside of these principles should still be allowed in exceptional circumstances such as end of life.

Care homes should support the NHS Test and Trace system by keeping a temporary record, including address and phone number, of current and previous residents, staff and visitors as well as keeping track of visitor numbers and

staff. It is recommended homes have an arrangement to enable bookings or appointments for visitors and ad hoc visits should not be permitted.

Protecting staff and residents has been a priority throughout the pandemic, with 120,000 tests being sent out every day solely for the care sector. The government has provided access to £3.7 billion for local authorities through un-ringfenced grants so they can address the expenditure pressures they are facing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including social care, as well as £1.1 billion provided to support infection control in care homes.

In addition, 11,000 iPad tablets, worth £7.5 million, will soon be distributed to thousands of care homes across England to help residents keep in touch with loved ones.

[36th Universal Periodic Review: UK statement on Maldives](#)



The United Kingdom recognises Maldives' progress since its 2015 review, most notably in the field of consolidating democracy, improving governance and promoting respect for human rights.

The UK commends Maldives for a number of legislative reforms, which have

further embedded democratic principles, including seeking to strengthen judicial independence.

We welcome the peaceful conduct of parliamentary elections in 2019, but remain concerned that women are under-represented in Parliament.

We recommend that Maldives:

1. Strengthen existing national legislation to ensure that all modern slavery crimes are fully criminalised in line with international conventions, including human trafficking, slavery as a standalone offence, child prostitution, forced marriage, and the involvement of children in armed conflict.
2. Adopt an open, merit-based process when selecting national candidates for UN Treaty Body elections.
3. Expand and protect space for civil society organisations to operate in order to promote social cohesion.

Thank you.

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London Hammersmith tobacco company overlooks packaging obligations

Failure to comply with packaging regulations has led to a tobacco company handing over nearly £3,500 to charity.

Philip Morris Limited, which produces tobacco products, and is registered at 10 Hammersmith Grove, London W6 7AP, neglected to register as a packaging producer as required by law during 2014.

This also meant it failed to recover and recycle waste materials used in the course of its business, as would be required of registered companies.

As a result, the company has paid £3,438.11 to UK charity Trees for Cities, in what is known as an enforcement undertaking (EU). The company also had to pay costs, including those of the Environment Agency.

The money will go to supporting the work of the charity, which has completed

34 planting projects in 26 cities.

On discovering the oversight in late 2015, the company worked with the Valpak packaging producer compliance scheme to register for the 2015 compliance year, and submit an enforcement undertaking offer for the year that was missed. It worked with Valpak to make a pro-rata calculation of the amount of packaging handled in 2013, to determine the financial value of its enforcement undertaking.

The company has now incorporated responsibility for complying with the packaging regulations into the role of the Supply Chain Analyst. It also has a written methodology and employs the services of Valpak to ensure that its packaging data is accurately recorded and reported.

Companies handling more than 50 tonnes of packaging a year, and which have a turnover of more than £2 million, must register with the Environment Agency, either directly or through a packaging compliance scheme, and meet their responsibilities for recovering and recycling packaging waste. This comprises any material used to hold, protect, handle, deliver or present goods, such as bags or boxes.

Jonathan Coldicott, Senior Technical Officer in the Environment Agency, said:

It is important that all companies make themselves aware of their environmental responsibilities and ensure that they are appropriately registered.

In this case, Philip Morris Limited came forward voluntarily to make us aware of the error, and worked with us to redress the situation.

Throughout the investigation and EU assessment process, Philip Morris has been extremely cooperative and forthcoming. Representatives of company have been happy to engage with us and attended a face-to-face interview.

Enforcement undertakings allow companies and individuals to make amends for breaching environmental regulations, including through a financial contribution to an environmental project.

To agree this type of civil sanction, the Environment Agency must be satisfied the offender will make changes to its operations, to prevent future breaches of packaging legislation.

The Environment Agency continues to prosecute organisations and individuals where evidence shows high levels of culpability and serious environmental harm.

Notes for editors

Philip Morris Limited was sanctioned under the Producer Responsibility

Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2007.