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**The Rt Hon Lord Maude of Horsham**  
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15 July 2015

Dear Convenor,

**European and External Relations Committee report on the implications of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership for Scotland**

Thank you for your letter of 20 March 2015 to Lord Livingston, inviting the UK Government to respond to the Committee's report on the implications of the EU-US Free Trade Agreement (FTA), also known as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), for Scotland. The report was very useful and I am responding in my capacity as the new UK Minister for Trade and Investment.

As the Committee is aware, the UK Government represents the interests of the whole of the UK in Trade Policy. As part of this, we are ensuring that all interests, including Scottish interests, are represented in the UK position. There continues to be very constructive engagement between officials in the UK and Scottish Governments. Scottish Government officials are invited to bi-weekly cross-Departmental meetings where the BIS EU-US FTA team shares updates and information about the ongoing negotiations. Through this forum and wider bilateral contacts with UK Government Departments, the Scottish Government remains informed about developments and has input into discussions on the UK approach to the negotiations, particularly on issues of Scottish interest.

At Ministerial level, the EU-US FTA has been discussed at Joint Ministerial Committee, including at a meeting of the JMC(E) when my colleague, Ed Vaizey, presented a paper on the EU-US FTA. You will also be aware that, following the Smith Commission report, the UK, Scottish and Welsh governments and Northern Ireland Executive are reviewing inter-governmental working.

I agree with the Committee's recommendation that there is a need to continue to increase awareness of the EU-US FTA among the business community. Whilst the UK Government, European Commission and US Administration have all repeatedly emphasised that the deal will not lead to the undesirable effects which opponents are claiming, there is also a need for the public to understand the potential benefits on offer. As the Committee has noted, the EU has, for the first time, made

negotiating documents publically available and we will be encouraging the Commission to continue to make the EU-US FTA the most transparent bilateral trade negotiation it has ever undertaken.

As well as engaging with wider civil society and non-Governmental organisations, the UK Government will continue its work to engage with businesses across the UK, both to ensure that their needs are understood and fed into the UK's negotiating position, as well as to encourage them to strengthen their voice in the debate. I will be personally engaging with business and other stakeholders in Scotland and across the rest of the UK. I recognise that the Scottish Government has a key role to play in raising awareness among Scottish businesses, and that we should work together to ensure that this is done as effectively as possible.

The UK Government continues to support the EU negotiators in securing protection of UK food names in the US market. The EU-US free trade agreement will provide valuable opportunities for the UK food and drink industries to promote their products in the US market.

All parties in the negotiations have repeatedly confirmed that the NHS is under no threat from EU-US FTA. The UK has been signing Trade Agreements for decades – helping our businesses grow but ensuring it is up to our governments to decide how our public services are run. The EU-US FTA agreement will be no different. The rules governing which companies can run NHS clinical services in the UK are always set by the government of the day, or the devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. These rules have never been, and will never be, set by trade deals, including the EU-US FTA.

The Committee has seen that Lord Livingston reiterated this emphatically in his letter of 24 November 2014 to the First Minister. Both the European Commission and the US have also confirmed that “US and EU trade agreements do not prevent governments, at any level, from providing or supporting services in areas such as water, education, health, and social services.”

Given the importance of the agreement for the whole of the UK and its significant potential benefits, I am pleased that the Committee, and the Scottish Parliament as a whole, have taken an interest. I would be happy to write to the Committee periodically to provide an update on developments in the negotiations.



**FRANCIS MAUDE**