

Freer trade outside the EU

Yesterday the government issued an excellent document setting out the basis on which we will trade from 1 January 2021 as an independent state and member of the WTO. We will set out own common tariff for the rest of the world which will apply unless we have a Free Trade Agreement with the counter party.

Our tariff is lower, simpler and easier than the EU one we currently have to offer to non EU countries. It takes tariffs off items we cannot grow or produce for ourselves. It takes tariffs down to zero for products manufacturers in the UK need to help them make things here. So cotton, and various engineered tools drop to zero for example.

It takes all tariffs that are under 2% to zero to save all the admin. It takes fiddly tariffs down to the nearest whole number. It takes tariffs off energy saving, recycling and renewables. The tariff on thermostats for example disappears.

The Secretary of State for Trade confirms two crucial matters. Firstly, she makes it clear this will apply from 1 January 2021, so there are no plans for any delays to our full exit. Secondly, she confirms there will be no tariffs between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. The EU will not be allowed to wrestle Northern Ireland into their customs union and out of our common customs system.

Many of us MPs wanting to implement the referendum have been pressing for just such an outcome for many months.