

International Trade Secretary meets UK businesses on US tariffs

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss has today met with businesses, including the Scotch Whisky Association and Johnstons of Elgin, to discuss retaliatory tariffs which the US is due to introduce tomorrow.

Earlier this month, the US Government announced that they would introduce new tariffs following a ruling on the Airbus dispute at the World Trade Organization. The retaliatory measures are expected to include tariffs of 10% on aircraft, and 25% on a range of other products, including single malt whisky and biscuits.

As part of ongoing engagement between DIT and businesses who could be affected by the tariffs, the International Trade Secretary reassured them that the government is taking this issue seriously, had raised it with the highest levels of the US administration and will continue to do so until the tariffs are dropped.

Last week, the Prime Minister phoned President Trump to underline his disappointment at the US announcement of tariffs against UK and EU exports, pressing the President not to impose the tariffs. On Tuesday, the International Trade Secretary also spoke with US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer.

Speaking after today's meeting, International Trade Secretary Liz Truss said:

Resorting to tit-for-tat tariffs is not in any country's best interests and we are in regular contact with the Trump administration, urging them to refrain from resorting to such measures. As well as causing temporary disruption to UK businesses, it would also hit American consumers in the pocket.

The UK has complied fully with the WTO's ruling on the Airbus dispute and we do not believe our industries should be subject to tariffs.

We are working closely with the US, EU and European partners to support a negotiated settlement to the Airbus and Boeing disputes.

A new UK-US Free Trade Agreement could provide an avenue to avoid future trade disputes and negotiating an FTA with the United States is one of the highest priorities of the Secretary of State.

Businesses seeking advice should contact TradeDisputes@trade.gov.uk.