

UK nominates Liam Fox as next Director General of the WTO

Press release

UK nominates former International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox as next Director-General of the World Trade Organization.



The UK will today nominate former International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox as the next Director-General of the World Trade Organization.

The Government believes he is the ideal candidate for the following reasons:

- He is a passionate advocate of multilateralism, and fully committed to advancing the WTO and rules-based trading system.
- Dr Fox brings decades of experience in global politics, as well as first-hand experience of running a trade ministry.
- He believes that rules based free trade underpins global prosperity and security and that the benefits must be widely shared for all citizens and countries.

Writing to the WTO today, the Prime Minister will say:

As the world seeks to recover from the shared challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, the role of free and fair trade has never been more crucial.

Dr Fox is a passionate advocate of multilateralism, who brings detailed knowledge of the global trading system from his years as a UK Cabinet Minister and Secretary of State for International Trade. He has first-hand experience of the political and technical challenges of negotiating trade agreements, and the reforms that are needed to ensure the global trading system truly delivers for all WTO members.

Liz Truss, International Trade Secretary, said:

The new WTO Director General needs to be a fierce champion of free and fair trade, an advocate of multilateralism, and be able to get things done and increase the pace of reform. Dr Liam Fox brings all those things to the table.

He has experience making tough political decisions as a former UK Trade Secretary, is committed to the fundamental principle of free and fair trade and has excellent relationships with WTO members around the world. He is the ideal candidate to lead the WTO into a new era and help push forward much-needed modernisation of the organisation.

The Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox MP said:

I am honoured to have been nominated by the Prime Minister to be a candidate to lead the World Trade Organization. I believe that if we want to keep the WTO relevant and vibrant our task is clear: Update. Strengthen and Reform. We must ensure that global trade works for everyone.

Trade is a way in which we spread prosperity more widely. That prosperity underpins social cohesion, that social cohesion in turns underpins political stability and that political stability is the building block of our collective security.

The WTO announced earlier this year that its current Director-General, Roberto Azevedo would step down from his post in August, following 7 years in charge.

The formal selection process for the new Director-General is run by the three most senior chairs of the WTO, the General Council, Trade Policy Review and the Dispute Settlement body.

The successful candidate must attract a consensus from all member states and once appointed will serve a four-year term.

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