



Ein cyf/Our ref MA/P/EM/1236/19

David Rees AM  
Chair, External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee

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18 April 2019

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter of 25 March regarding the UK Government's sharing of the text of international agreements before they are signed. I can confirm that for agreements signed since 15 March, draft agreement text, once stable, has been shared with my officials for information purposes before signing.

Whereas we recognise that this first batch of international trade agreements being signed by the UK Government are not new trade agreements and are essentially technical exercises, I have been clear with UKG Ministers that the process to date has not really been satisfactory and, as I have already stressed to the Committee, we have been absolutely clear that this should not set a precedent for future negotiations. I have received a verbal commitment from the Minister of State for Trade that no new trade negotiations will begin until the administrative arrangements to enable the devolved administrations to feed into the negotiations are in place.

As your reports state, some agreements such as Switzerland, look less like a technical exercise because they omit large areas that await further clarity on the future economic partnership with the EU before they are negotiated. Excluding these areas, may well have an impact on Wales, but they do not require changes in policy within devolved competence. However, I have been absolutely clear with UK Government Ministers that were any of the Trade Agreement Continuity (TAC) negotiations to require legal changes within devolved competence, we should be consulted in advance of negotiations being concluded and not once the draft text is stable. I have also been clear that I expect the concordat to cover any re-negotiations of the current TAC agreements.

I greatly appreciate the work of the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee in scrutinising those international trade agreements being transitioned by the UK Government

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

and I think that it would be useful to meet to talk in more detail about how we might share information with you in a timely and sensible manner.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

**Eluned Morgan AC/AM**

Gweinidog y Gymraeg a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol  
Minister for International Relations and the Welsh Language