

11 August 2022

Rt Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP
Secretary of State for International Trade
Old Admiralty Building, Admiralty Place
London, SW1A 2DY
United Kingdom

Dear Secretary of State for International Trade,

As negotiations continue towards an ambitious free trade agreement between the United Kingdom and India, we the undersigned organisations (representing a significant cross-section of major traders) urge the Government and its negotiators to hold out for a commercially meaningful and comprehensive deal, even if doing so means that the self-imposed deadline of Diwali is not met.

The Cabinet has announced that, rather than initiating new policy or revisiting previously agreed positions, the Government should focus on delivering the agenda it has already collectively agreed. Negotiating until a balanced outcome is achieved, even if that means continuing past October, is entirely consistent with the Government's manifesto commitments.

A new free trade agreement between the UK and India represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to strengthen the already close economic ties between the two countries and to set a new international standard for India's trade agreements.

It is the content of the deal which matters for UK businesses, not speed of negotiation. We appreciate the efforts of negotiators on both sides, who are working tirelessly, but substance needs to come before any deadline.

We are committed to continuing to provide the UK Government with every support to see these negotiations concluded.

Yours sincerely,

Bar Council
Chartered Institute of Public Relations
Chemical Industries Association
City of London Corporation
Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
Law Society of England and Wales
MakeUK
Professional and Business Services Council (Business-side)
Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders
TechUK
The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry