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On 17 June 2020 New Zealand and the United Kingdom formally launched negotiations towards a free trade agreement (FTA). This is an important step in developing New Zealand's future trading relationship with the United Kingdom and follows preparations that began in 2017 under the New Zealand-United Kingdom Trade Policy Dialogue. Both countries are committed to the early conclusion of a high quality, comprehensive and inclusive agreement.

Why are negotiations being launched now?

Since 2017, New Zealand and the United Kingdom have shared a commitment to launch FTA negotiations. These negotiations could only begin, however, once the United Kingdom exited the European Union on 31 January 2020.

New Zealand is one of four countries that the United Kingdom has identified as priority partners for new trade agreements post Brexit.

New Zealand's key objectives are:

- * An agreement that provides comprehensive and commercially meaningful access for exporters by removing tariffs and reducing other barriers that impact goods and services trade and investment activity;
- * Outcomes which reflect New Zealand's Trade for All agenda on sustainable development (including environment, climate change and labour) and inclusive trade (for Māori, women and small and medium enterprises in particular);
- * An agreement that preserves the right of governments to regulate in the public interest, including for the environment, education, health and well-being of New Zealanders;
- * An agreement that preserves the unique status of the Treaty of Waitangi; and
- * An agreement that does not include Investor State Dispute Settlement provisions.