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I am writing to update you on the progress made on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

The constructive discussions of the second negotiation round (11-16 November) bring TTIP back on track following various delays caused by the US government shutdown. Negotiators continued to define the scope and approaches of their respective sides and further position papers were exchanged in both directions on a range of issues.

Officials on both sides are pleased with the similarity in envisioned scope. The overlap reflects many of the UK's priorities, which were included in my last letter. This is true both for our sectoral priorities, which include automotives, pharmaceuticals and medical technology, and chemicals and for our horizontal priorities such as the treatment of SMEs.

In parliament, the Lords' inquiry into TTIP continues. I gave evidence on 21 November, including on the different sectoral aspects of TTIP and its potential impact on our relationship with the EU. My session is available to view in full online at <http://www.parliamentlive.tv/Main/Player.aspx?meetingId=14260> and the transcript should be available shortly.

You may have noted increasing media attention on TTIP in the weeks since my last update. I and my colleagues across government are responding to this with increasing communications to combat misconceptions on the deal (including <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/nov/11/eu-us-trade-deal-transatlantic-trade-and-investment-partnership-democracy>) and raise the profile of its benefits (including http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/business/news/10816807.N_E_chemicals_bosses_attend_free_trade_talks/). Our networks in the UK, EU and US are also doing considerable work to proactively raise support for TTIP amongst political, business and public audiences.

As you may be aware, I am retiring in early December and this will be my last letter to you on this matter. My successor, Lord Livingston of Parkhead should write to you with a further update following the third negotiating round.

STEPHEN GREEN