



Northern
Ireland
Office

The Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP

**Secretary of State for
Northern Ireland**

1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

Erskine House
20-32 Chichester St
Belfast
BT1 4GF

E: correspondence@nio.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/nio

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The Rt Hon. the Baroness Foster of Aghadrumsee
Intertrade UK

24 February 2026
Our reference: MC/26/121

Dear Arlene,

Thank you for your correspondence of 9 February regarding the issues affecting supply chains within the UK internal market, as presented by the Road Haulage Association (RHA).

As you know, the Government is committed to ensuring the smooth flow of goods within the UK internal market. You will be aware that the Government has accepted all of the recommendations made by Lord Murphy in his report of 4 September 2025, including the recommendation to look at all possibilities to reduce frictions for logistics and haulage businesses.

On 1 May 2025, the Government introduced important new arrangements for freight and parcels movements to ensure that goods can continue to move smoothly from Great Britain to Northern Ireland. The new arrangements mean that goods sent to or from consumers are not subject to customs declarations, duty, or safety and security declarations, all of which aids the logistics industry. We have also introduced a range of schemes to support businesses by removing unnecessary checks and paperwork; over 15,000 businesses are already signed up to the UK Internal Market Scheme.

However, we recognise the challenges hauliers and logistics businesses face and the Government takes seriously its manifesto commitment to remove barriers to trade for

businesses. The Common Understanding agreed with the EU on 19 May 2025 marks real progress against that objective, and which will remain a clear focus of ours, particularly as we continue to reset our relationship with the EU.

In relation to the specific proposal to move 'at risk' assessments to the 'point of sale', I understand the benefits this would afford hauliers and the logistics industry when moving goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland. However, this would be detrimental to businesses' dual market access as it would introduce disproportionate and unenforceable requirements on goods entering Ireland and the rest of the EU from Northern Ireland. Introducing these requirements would be inconsistent with the terms of the Windsor Framework as well as the Good Friday Agreement, under which it was agreed that there will be no hard border on the island of Ireland.

I know that officials from across government are continuing their constructive engagement with the RHA and its members to explore practical solutions to reduce frictions for logistics and haulage businesses. I will be meeting the RHA and other business organisations this week and as always I will be very pleased to hear from them about their issues and members' experiences.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Benn', written in a cursive style.

**THE RT HON HILARY BENN MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**