

News story

David Davis' closing remarks at the end of the second round of EU exit negotiations in Brussels

From: Department for Exiting the European Union (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-exiting-the-european-union>) and The Rt Hon David Davis MP (<https://www.gov.uk/government/people/david-davis>)

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The statement follows the second round of negotiations for a new partnership with the EU



Thank you Michel. Thank you for your contribution and indeed your team's constructive talks this week.

On Monday we agreed to get down to serious business. But before turning to the substance I want to reiterate the four core principles that continue to guide the United Kingdom's approach.

First, we continue to engage constructively, as a full and responsible Member State.

Second, we continue to work hard and at pace. We had 98 civil servants here this week.

Third, we negotiate for every nation and region of the United Kingdom. Our goal is to secure a deal that works for all parts of the country.

And finally, we will keep Parliament and the public informed as the negotiations unfold.

Which moves me onto the substance.

Overall, I am encouraged by the progress we have made on understanding each other's position on citizens' rights; the financial settlement; the first meetings of sub-groups on separation issues, and on the issues around Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Citizens' rights

Since the first round of negotiations, the UK has published its approach to citizens' rights.

The talks this week have demonstrated that this was both a fair and serious offer.

I am pleased by the progress we have made.

We have looked at each other's proposals in depth and identified many concrete areas where we agree as well as areas where there will be further discussion, which will be a priority for the next round as Michel has said.

We have also agreed to publishing a joint paper today that sets out the many areas of convergence in our proposals, and the areas we need to prioritise for future discussion in our future rounds.

Michel listed a number of the areas which require that future discussion and I won't reiterate them, I'll add to them: issues like voters' rights, posted workers and of course as he said the need for shared certainty. We agreed on the need for certainty on the part of citizens both the EU and the UK, we obviously have different views on how we achieve that.

Financial settlement

On financial settlement, we both recognise the importance of sorting out the obligations we have to one another, both legally, and in the spirit of mutual cooperation.

We have had robust but constructive talks this week.

Clearly there is a lot left to talk about, and further work before we can resolve this. Ultimately getting to a solution will require flexibility from both sides.

But as Michel said, we shouldn't expect incremental progress in every round.

Ireland

On Ireland and Northern Ireland, our coordinators – this is a discussion rather than a working group – have had a good discussion.

Both sides remain committed to the Good Friday Agreement and again as Michel said, achieving a flexible and imaginative solution to address the unique circumstances around the border, and particularly on the north/south dimension of the Agreement.

These include the mechanisms we have discussed to preserve the Common Travel Area and the rights associated with it. Rights laid down of course in a British Act of Parliament as well as in part to the Amsterdam Treaty.

Separation issues

On separation issues, we have made progress on a range of issues, Michel mentioned most of them: Euratom; legal cases pending before the European Court of Justice and administrative procedures before Union institutions; and of course goods on the market.

These discussions have laid important groundwork for progress in the next round.

Conclusion

All in all, the second round of negotiations have given us a lot to be positive about.

And they have also highlighted the need for both sides to demonstrate a dynamic and flexible approach in the way we approach these challenges.

We have conducted this round constructively and at pace, and I hope this is a model we can continue going forward.

To coin a phrase Michel, the clock is ticking.

I came here saying that it was important that we now made progress, identifying the differences so we could deal with them, and finding the similarities so we could reinforce them.

And this week, I think we have done just that.

Thank you.

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