



## Press statement by Michel Barnier following the fourth round of Article 50 negotiations with the United Kingdom

Brussels, 28 September 2017

Thank you, David.

Good afternoon to all of you.

The Prime Minister's speech in Florence has created a new dynamic in our negotiations.

We have felt this during the negotiations this week, as David just said.

On Monday, I said that we needed a moment of clarity.

David and I – as well as our teams – worked well together.

I want to thank both teams for their dedication, professionalism and expertise.

We managed to create clarity on some points. On others, however, more work remains to be done. We are not there yet.

But we will keep working in a constructive spirit until we reach a deal on the essential principles of the UK's orderly withdrawal.

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Allow me also on my side to briefly outline what was agreed this week and what more needs to be done.

On **citizens' rights**, our priority, the UK has agreed to give direct effect to the Withdrawal Agreement.

This is very important.

It will give the assurance to our citizens that they will be able to invoke their rights, as defined by the Withdrawal Agreement, before UK courts.

We agreed to guarantee - for the citizens concerned - that the UK will apply EU law concepts in a manner that is consistent with EU law after Brexit.

But we failed to agree that the European Court of Justice must play an indispensable role in ensuring this consistency. This is a stumbling block for the EU.

There are others:

1. A big gap remains between our positions on family reunification. We want existing rights to continue for the citizens concerned.
2. The export of social security benefits also remains to be discussed.
3. Citizens need simplified administrative procedures. The UK stated its intention to put in place a streamlined system. We are looking forward, David, to hearing the details about this new system.

On the **financial settlement**, an expert group held detailed talks on some technical aspects. Those talks were useful.

Prime Minister May said two things in Florence,

- First: that no Member State should pay more; and no Member State should receive less because of Brexit.

- Second, that the UK will honour commitments taken during its membership.

This week, the UK negotiating team made clear that applying the first principle would be limited to 2019-2020.

The UK explained also that it is not in a position yet to identify its commitments taken during membership.

For the EU, the only way to reach sufficient progress is that all commitments undertaken at 28 are honoured at 28.

**On Ireland:** once again, we had a constructive discussion and we made progress in some areas.

As David just said, both the EU and the UK recognise that Ireland is in a unique situation. Any solution will need to be fully informed by the special circumstances on the island of Ireland.

As I mentioned several times, such solutions must respect both the integrity of the Union's legal order, and the Good Friday Agreement in all its parts.

We also confirmed our commitment towards maintaining the Common Travel Area, and started drafting common principles.

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Ladies and gentlemen,

We've had a constructive week – yes – but we are not yet there in terms of achieving *sufficient progress*.

Further work is needed in the coming weeks and months.

In three weeks from now, the October European Council will be an opportunity for me to take stock of the negotiations with President Juncker and President Tusk and the 27 Heads of State or Government.

I also look forward to the European Parliament's resolution next week – which is important.

I hope that the new dynamic created by Prime Minister May's speech in Florence will continue to inform our work.

Let's leave it here. We will pick up in the week of 9 October where we left off this week.

Thank you for your attention.

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