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Call for unilateral action to guarantee citizens' rights in Brexit

Press release from EFA MEP Alyn Smith (SNP)

Greens/EFA MEP **Alyn Smith** (SNP) has today urged the EU to act unilaterally to guarantee the rights of citizens who have been left in limbo following the UK Government's botched handling of the Brexit negotiations.

Speaking in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, the SNP MEP said:

"The United Kingdom is not exactly united, and it's being led by a Tory administration that is less united still.

"Scotland's position is clear – we voted to stay. Brexit is bad news for Scotland, bad news for the UK, and bad news for the EU.

"My job isn't to 'mitigate' Brexit – it's to stop it. I'm pleased to see so many UK colleagues working across party lines to bring sense to this process.

"We need more time. While a referendum may well be the way out of this mess, and the UK Government is starting to listen to voices outside of the echo chamber, we need more time to put the case together.

"And we need greater action on citizens' rights. The European Parliament is the People's House of Europe, and has a duty to its citizens – EU citizens in the UK, UK citizens in the EU – to look after them.

"We have a lot of work within the Withdrawal Agreement on citizens' rights. Those provisions must be spun out into a ring-fenced agreement now to give those people clarity and certainty over their day-to-day lives. They feel prisoners of a process they do not control. It is not good enough.

"In the absence of action from the UK, we must act and unilaterally guarantee the rights of citizens now."

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