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New MEP makes maiden and valedictory speech in European Parliament

Press release from EFA MEP Heather Anderson (SNP)

Newly elected SNP MEP **Heather Anderson** has given her maiden speech to the European Parliament – the day before Brexit.

The speech was made during a debate on the European Commission's work programme for 2020 and in the presence of Maroš Šefčovič, Vice President of the Commission.

Ms Anderson highlighted Scotland's rejection of Brexit at the referendum and in successive elections – and asked for the EU to remember Scotland in its future work.

Commenting afterwards, **Ms Anderson** said:

"In my short time as an MEP I've been struck by the genuine warmth felt towards Scotland. People know that we rejected Brexit and increasing numbers are sympathetic to our return as an independent member."

"It was no accident that MEPs from across Europe chose Auld Lang Syne to mark our departure. The door is open for our return – and that choice is now in the hands of the people of Scotland."

Speaking in the European Parliament, **Ms Anderson** said:

"I am so honoured to be able to speak to you this morning on behalf of the people of Scotland. I thank you for the warmth of your welcome over the last four weeks and am so pleased to have settled status, even if just for four days as an MEP."

"I wish with all my heart that we could continue to have the conversations we've started with you about the Green Deal, sustainable food and farming, a just transition, pesticides and reforming the CAP but, for now, we can't. But I know you will do these discussions justice."

"My plea today is for you to remember Scotland in your work programme. Just imagine how difficult it is for a country, like Scotland, who has pledged their allegiance to the European Union on no less than three occasions, to be taken out against our will and without our consent"

“We do not live in a United Kingdom, we live in a disunited Kingdom and Brexit is not the settled will of the Scottish people.

“But we are resilient and have long memories. We have shared a long history with you in Europe, both before our current union with England and hopefully in the future.

“Tomorrow the Scottish government will publish the strategic priorities for Scotland in the EU. We know our best future is with you and when the people of Scotland have to choose between two unions, they are deciding to choose the European Union.

“Thank you very much for your attention.”

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