Press release | 24.12.2020

Greens/EFA welcome that deal has been reached but insist on time for parliamentary scrutiny

Brexit

Today, a deal has been reached between negotiators from the European Union and United Kingdom on a future relationship, to follow the end of the Brexit transition period, which concludes at the end of this year. The deal will still need to be approved by the European Council and the European Parliament. The Greens/EFA group are calling for the European Parliament to have sufficient time to scrutinise all elements of this agreement before it is voted on.

Philippe Lamberts MEP, President of the Greens/EFA group and Member of the UK Coordination Group in the European Parliament, comments:

"We welcome that the negotiators have found an agreement: the EU and the UK will remain close neighbours and the absence of a deal would have put our relationship, in which we are bound to one another by geography, on a path of lasting bitterness. We have always considered that in a world where, like it or not, we are all inter-dependent, the only way for democracies to "take back control" is to work together in order to face the global challenges of our times, and they are plenty. We are glad that, despite episodes of bombastic rhetoric, the British government has recognised that a deal with its largest neighbour is in the interest of its citizens.

"The primary goal from the EU's side has always been to protect the integrity of our single market, one of the key foundations of the Union, and it seems this deal achieves that. However, the devil is always in the detail and we insist that the European Parliament is given the proper time to scrutinise and potentially ratify such a wide-ranging deal. The European Parliament is not just here to rubber stamp agreements. Due process as well as checks and balances are vital pillars of democracy; they must be respected to give this deal any legitimacy in the eyes of European citizens.

"An agreement of this magnitude has never been done before and never in such a constricted timeframe. Given the enormity of the task, Michel Barnier and his team must be congratulated for their work and their respect for the role of the European Parliament."

Ska Keller MEP, President of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament, comments:

"It is essential to the lives, livelihoods and futures of millions of people that the worst of the negative consequences of no deal have been averted at the last minute. No deal would have been the worst outcome

and would have hurt the people of the UK the most. It's welcome that we appear to have an agreement that covers vital areas of mutual interest such as: Goods and services, social security coordination, programmes, security, energy and transport. We also welcome that the negotiators have reached agreement on a level playing field and police and security issues.

"The deal comes at a time when people in the UK are particularly suffering from the consequences of the Corona pandemic and new variants of the virus. Brexit was never our choice, but we have respected that choice throughout this process. We will always have our doors open to the English, the Scots, the Welsh and the Northern Irish as friends, allies and partners, in whatever form that will take."

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