

Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in
Europe
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Ms Joan McAlpine MSP
Convener
Culture, Tourism, Europe and
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Scottish Parliament
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15th November 2016

Dear Joan,

I wrote to you and to the Convener of the Finance and Constitution Committee on 07 November to alert members to the first meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee on EU Negotiations [JMC (EN)] on 24 October. I am now writing to report on the Scottish Government's actions at that meeting and to provide members with a copy of the Joint Communiqué (attached).

During the meeting we discussed our priorities for future consideration at JMC (EN), and the associated work plan. We also discussed the outcome of the judgements of the High Courts in England and Northern Ireland on the process for triggering Article 50. Members will be aware that the Lord Advocate has lodged a formal application to intervene in the UK Government's appeal to the Supreme Court on the triggering of Article 50. We also had an initial discussion on market access. We agreed to develop the work programme further to ensure its connection to and involvement with the process of negotiations, and to share evidence and develop joint analysis which will form that work programme.

Throughout the meeting I made it absolutely clear that in our view membership of the Single Market and the benefits that flow from it, including free movement of labour, is essential for Scotland's economic prosperity. I also stressed that it was vital that these discussions were linked to the UK Government's decision-making process for Brexit.

We agreed to meet monthly. I will continue to share what I can with you in keeping with the Written Agreement on Inter-Governmental Relations between the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Government.

I am writing in similar terms to the Convenor of the Finance and Constitution Committee.

MICHAEL RUSSELL

JOINT MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE (EU NEGOTIATIONS) COMMUNIQUE

The first Joint Ministerial Committee (EU Negotiations) was held today in 70 Whitehall under the chairmanship of the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, Rt Hon David Davis MP.

The meeting of JMC(EN) followed agreement reached at the JMC(Plenary) meeting on 24 October, chaired by the Prime Minister, to seek a UK approach to and objectives for Article 50 negotiations. Ministers discussed issues of importance to them, including Article 50, the JMC(EN) work programme and key sectors of interest.

The participants were:

- From the UK Government the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, Rt Hon David Davis, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt Hon James Brokenshire, the Secretary of State for Scotland, Rt Hon David Mundell MP, the Secretary of State for Wales, Rt Hon Alun Cairns MP, the Minister for State for the Department for Exiting the European Union, Rt Hon David Jones, and Rt Hon Alan Duncan MP Minister of State for Europe and the Americas in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.
- From the Northern Ireland Executive the First Minister, Rt Hon Arlene Foster MLA, the deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness MLA.
- From the Scottish Government Mike Russell MSP, Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in Europe.
- From the Welsh Government the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government, Mark Drakeford AM.

Ministers set out their priorities for discussion at JMC(EN), and agreed to develop further the proposed work programme to ensure its connection to and involvement with the process of negotiations. Ministers agreed to meet monthly to share evidence and to take forward joint analysis, which will inform that work programme.