



# HOUSE OF LORDS

European Union Committee

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Dear Bruce

## **Brexit: devolution - new House of Lords EU Committee report**

On behalf of the Committee Chairman, Lord Boswell of Aynho, I am pleased to enclose a copy of the new report by the House of Lords EU Committee, published today, on *Brexit: devolution*.

The report concludes that the UK Government needs to work with the devolved governments to achieve an outcome that protects the interests of all parts of the UK. No durable solution will be possible without the consent of all the nations of the UK. Our report sets out in detail the particular circumstances in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the impact upon devolved competences, legislating for Brexit and legislative consent, and engagement with the devolved institutions.

We have been particularly grateful in the course of our work to meet colleagues from our equivalent Committees in the devolved legislatures, both before and after the referendum, and I am pleased to note that our officials are in regular contacts. In order to build on these mechanisms for collaboration, we propose in our report "more regular joint meetings with members of cognate Committees with responsibility for Brexit-related issues in the Scottish Parliament, National Assembly for Wales and Northern Ireland Assembly, and in the House of Commons, for the duration of the Brexit negotiations. These joint meetings could provide an opportunity to hear informally from UK and devolved Government Ministers, and to discuss issues of mutual interest and concern."

In order to facilitate this, and having consulted with the Senior Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords, Lord McFall of Alcluith, who chairs the House's Informal Brexit Liaison Group, we would like to propose quarterly informal meetings of representatives of Committees involved in scrutinising Brexit in the devolved legislatures, the House of Commons and the House of Lords for the duration of the Brexit negotiations. These meetings would provide a means to share information on issues of common interest, hear from experts and stakeholders on the Implications of Brexit, and, most important, provide an opportunity to hear from the UK and devolved Governments on the progress of negotiations and their discussions through the JMC (EN) and other fora.

We would like to keep the arrangements for such meetings as flexible as possible. However, we envisage inviting attendees from Committees in our legislatures scrutinising EU matters,

constitutional issues and delegated/ secondary legislation, with four or five participants in total from each legislature. We would also envisage a rotating venue for these meetings, although we are happy to host the meeting in the House of Lords whenever this is helpful.

We would like to begin our dialogue at an early point in the autumn, in order to maximise our ability to influence and scrutinise the Brexit negotiations. Accordingly, we would like to invite you to the first meeting in the House of Lords, in the week of **Monday 9 October**. I have invited our officials to liaise to finalise the date of the meeting.

I do hope you are willing to participate in this dialogue, which I am sure will be mutually beneficial in our respective efforts to scrutinise the Brexit process and hold our Governments to account. If you have any questions or comments about the proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me or my officials.

I have written in similar terms to the Committees with responsibility for EU Affairs, constitutional issues, and delegated/ secondary legislation in each of the devolved legislatures, and to relevant Committees in the House of Commons.

Yours Sincerely

Lord Jay of Ewelme  
On behalf of Lord Boswell of Aynho