



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

20<sup>th</sup> June 2020

*New Contract,*

**RE: EU EXIT TRANSITION PERIOD.**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of the transition period associated with the UK's departure from the European Union (EU) and your wish to see it extended; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

As you know, the UK left the EU on the 31<sup>st</sup> January. A transition period has followed during which market access remains the same and the UK and the EU are negotiating an agreement on our future relationship. The manifesto I stood on was clear that the transition period would not be extended beyond December 2020 and this has been put into law.

The outbreak of COVID-19 is clearly serious and my ministerial colleagues are doing everything they can to tackle the virus based on the latest scientific and medical advice. The latest rounds of UK-EU negotiations took place via videoconference in the week beginning the 11<sup>th</sup> May and a further round took place a fortnight ago.

I appreciate that you have concerns about the deadline, but Ministers have already shown that they are able to negotiate international agreements with speed and efficiency. The *Withdrawal Agreement* was re-opened and re-negotiated in under three months, despite many believing that this would not be possible. I understand a high-level summit will take place soon, where both sides intend to take stock of progress.

The UK and the EU share closely aligned interests and I am confident that the determination and willingness of both parties to reach agreement on a free-trade deal will ensure that the matter is brought to a conclusion by the end of 2020, as legally committed to in good faith by both parties as part of the transition period. 'No deal' is now an irrelevant concept. The UK left the EU with a deal. The question now is whether we can agree with the EU a deeper trading relationship along the lines of the free-trade agreement the EU has with Canada, or whether we have a trading relationship based on the 2019 deal, without a free-trade agreement on the lines of Australia's. The negotiations are currently ongoing and both sides are seeking a free-trade agreement with no tariffs, quotas, fees, or charges across all goods sectors, as well as further provisions on services and security cooperation.

I am hopeful that this can be achieved. The UK is not asking for a special, bespoke, or unique deal. We are looking for a deal like those the EU has previously struck with other friendly countries like Canada. Personally, I happen to think that the current situation makes it all the more likely that a good agreement will be reached - as this is clearly of huge mutual benefit - and I am enormously conscious that this has now gone on long



enough and the uncertainty needs to end. As such, I am afraid I must politely disagree with your interpretation of the situation and cannot support your request.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes,*

*Tom*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**