

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

27th October 2020

Dear Constance,

RE: EU 'EXIT' & THE WITHDRAWAL AGREEMENT

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of the Withdrawal Agreement associated with our departure from the European Union (EU) and the current state of the ongoing negotiations relating to our future relationship; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

By way of an update, following the European Council on the 15th and 16th October, the European Commission's chief negotiator, Michel Barnier, has now acknowledged the need to work intensively, that movement in the negotiations is needed from both sides if agreement is to be reached, and that the EU is negotiating with a sovereign country.

The UK negotiating team is willing and ready to work with the EU to see if it is possible to bridge the remaining gaps in our positions. Negotiations are now taking place daily, including at weekends, across all negotiating streams concurrently and on the basis of each side's legal texts.

Rest assured, the Government is fully prepared for every eventuality and is working tirelessly to secure the best possible outcome for the United Kingdom in these negotiations. In your correspondence, you also fleetingly refer to the *United Kingdom Internal Market Bill* and I have pasted below a link to a letter I wrote at the time the Bill was being considered by the House of Commons, which I trust will be of interest to you in clarifying my thinking on it. You can find it here:

<https://tinyurl.com/yyobk88x>

Personally, I think if we can get a free trade deal, that is the optimum outcome at these times of great broader challenge owing to COVID-19, and given it is mutually-beneficial, but if that cannot be achieved, we will leave the transition period without one - and recent developments demonstrate the Government's serious willingness to pursue that option, should it be required. Ultimately, the clock is ticking and we need to know where we stand and move forward accordingly.

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 PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE