

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

27th October 2020

New Contract,

RE: ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE EU & OUR FUTURE RELATIONSHIP

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns about leaving the European Union (EU) without reaching a further agreement before the end of the transition period on our future relationship. I have read your comments on this issue with great interest and fully appreciate the sincere place from which your concerns come.

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. I should also be clear in saying, however, that the UK was always due to leave the Single Market and the Customs Union at the end of the year and so there is no change in this regard. Businesses would always have been required to prepare for this scenario and I would encourage you to visit the following website for the most up-to-date information: www.gov.uk/transition.

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

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE