

Brexit

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party convening in Amsterdam, the Netherlands on 1 to 3 December 2017:

Recognises:

- the unique situation that exists between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland and understands that this needs to be a clear focus in any discussions between the British government and the European negotiators;
- and welcomes the campaign by the UK Liberal Democrats to give the British people an opportunity to have a vote on the Brexit deal, including the opportunity to reject Brexit;
- and commends the effort and work to-date of the negotiation teams charged with negotiating the terms of United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, should the Brexit process be completed;
- the importance of and urges the maintenance of a cordial, open, and constructive relationship between the remaining EU 27 and the United Kingdom during the course of the negotiations;
- that the UK has financial obligations to the EU which must be met as part of the withdrawal agreement;
- the need for the EU institutions and for politicians at all levels to communicate better the positive impact that EU membership has had and continues to have on member states and its citizens.

Resolves to:

- ensure that a positive and close partnership and ongoing cooperation that goes considerably beyond a mere cooperation on WTO terms, will be maintained between the EU and the United Kingdom if the United Kingdom ceases to be a member of the EU.

Emphasises that:

- the single market is based on full acceptance of the four fundamental freedoms.

Welcomes:

- the European Commission's and European Parliament's recognition of the unique position of and the special circumstances confronting the island of Ireland;
- the European Commission's paper on the Guiding Principles for the dialogue on Ireland/Northern Ireland which calls on the United Kingdom to take into account the interwoven political, economic, security,

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societal and agricultural context in its approach to dealing with the challenges of the Irish border;

- the European Commission's paper on the Guiding Principles for the dialogue on Ireland/Northern Ireland that the 'Continuation of the Common Travel Area arrangements, in conformity with European law, should be recognised.
- Supports the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement which recognises "the birthright of all the people of Northern Ireland to identify themselves and be accepted as Irish or British, or both, as they may so choose, and accordingly confirm that their right to hold both British and Irish citizenship is accepted by both Governments and would not be affected by any future change in the status of Northern Ireland."

Calls for:

- the EU to make every effort to avoid a 'no deal' scenario which would have negative consequences for all concerned;
- a time-limited transition period to be agreed to allow for an orderly transition;
- the unique position of the island of Ireland to be recognised in the final agreement;
- a hard border to be avoided on the Island of Ireland which is pivotal from an economic, social and political aspect and is essential in terms of safeguarding and maintaining the Peace Process;
- the maintenance of existing bi-lateral agreements and arrangements between the United Kingdom and Ireland, including the Common Travel Area, an agreement which predates both countries membership of the EU, and all its associated rights and benefits to be maintained in full;
- the Belfast (Good Friday Agreement) which is an internationally binding treaty to be upheld in full, including the rights of citizens in Northern Ireland to EU citizenship if they so wish;
- the protection of the rights of EU citizens in the UK, and of UK citizens in the EU, with a view to avoiding exploitation and discrimination, over which the Court of Justice of the EU is to have full jurisdiction;
- other rights of European citizens, including streamlined family reunification procedures, the right to stand and vote in local elections, and the right of students to complete their studies in the UK/EU, to be maintained following the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union;
- national parliaments to engage more with its citizens on EU affairs to address the disconnect between EU, its institutions and citizens.

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