

Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, Europe and External
Affairs
Michael Russell MSP



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Ms Joan McAlpine MSP
Convener
Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
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30 December 2020

Dear Joan

I am writing to you and also to the Convener of the Finance and Constitution Committee to alert your committees to the twenty eighth meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee on EU Negotiations [JMC (EN)] on 29 December and to report on the Scottish Government's actions at that meeting.

Due to the exceptionally short notice of this meeting I regret that it was not possible to provide you with the usual advance notice.

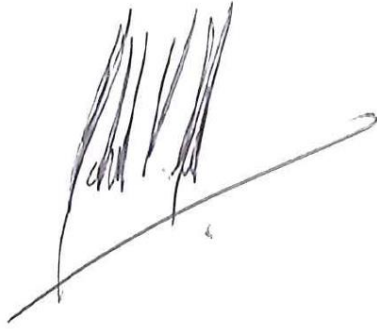
The other Ministers attending were:

- From the UK Government: The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Rt Hon Michael Gove MP; The Secretary of State for Scotland, Rt Hon Alister Jack MP; The Secretary of State for Wales, Rt Hon Simon Hart MP; The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP and the Paymaster General, Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP.
- From the Welsh Government: The Counsel General and Minister for European Transition, Jeremy Miles MS.
- From the Northern Ireland Executive: First Minister, Rt Hon Arlene Foster MLA, and deputy First Minister, Michelle O'Neill MLA.

I made clear that, although it is better than no deal, the Scottish Government is dissatisfied with the poor deal that has been agreed. Additionally there is not nearly enough time for full parliamentary scrutiny of this agreement. Consequently I indicated we shall not recommend legislative consent for The European Union (Future Relationship) Bill. I also called for transitional arrangements and detailed coordination between administrations to minimise the harms of ending the transition period.

I also sought further detail of this deal, in particular pressing the UK Government on the implications of this deal for the Scottish fishing industry and wider seafood supply chain.

I noted that the Scottish Government remains interested in participation in Erasmus, and that we do not expect the UK Government to stand in the way of these considerations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several vertical strokes followed by a long horizontal stroke that curves upwards at the end.

MICHAEL RUSSELL