

Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP
First Minister of Scotland



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
T: 0300 244 4000

David Frost
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London
SW1 2AH

10 November 2016

Dear Daniel

I am writing to thank you for your contribution to the work of the Standing Council on Europe. As you know, my over-riding priority is to protect Scotland's relationship with, and place in, the EU and the Standing Council on Europe was created to advise on how best to achieve this.

Your experience and knowledge as a member of the Standing Council was valued and I wish you well for the future.

Yours
Nicola

NICOLA STURGEON

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St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
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Mr Malcolm Burr

By email: [REDACTED]

24 March 2017

Dear Malcolm,

STANDING COUNCIL ON EUROPE

Following the outcome of the EU Referendum last June, I am clear, as are my Cabinet, that our role is to protect Scotland's relationship with Europe.

To draw on support and advice from as broad a range of sources as possible I established the Standing Council on Europe, an advisory panel comprising a range of experts who can advise me and the Scottish Government on a range of important matters as we explore options to protect our interests - legal, financial and diplomatic.

This group is chaired by Professor Anton Muscatelli, Principal of the University of Glasgow, and encompasses voices from across the political spectrum in Scotland and indeed different views on Scotland's constitutional future.

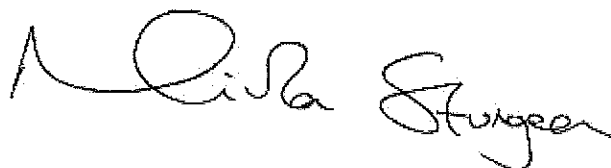
The purpose of this group is threefold:

- To provide expert advice on securing Scotland's relationship with the EU
- To consider the impact of any proposed changes to the UK's relationship with the EU on Scottish interests
- To advise Scottish Ministers through negotiations in order to secure Scottish interests and objectives

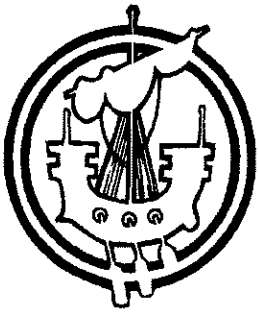
I would like to draw on your expertise, particularly in relation to Scotland's rural communities, and formally invite you to become a member of the Standing Council on Europe and to work with me and the other members of the group to deliver this remit.

The Council has now met in plenary on four occasions and it has had an important role in helping consider the options to protect and promote Scotland's interests. Minutes of previous meetings can be found [here](#). Following the publication of Scotland's Place in Europe, and more recent developments, we have moved to another phase but the role of the Standing Council in providing advice and support remains of vital importance.

I would be grateful for confirmation that you are content to participate in the Council by return, and my officials will be in touch separately to provide you with further information regarding the Standing Council.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nicola Sturgeon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

NICOLA STURGEON



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

Sandwick Road Stornoway
Isle of Lewis HS1 2BW

Rathad Shanndabhaig Steornabhagh
Eilean Leodhais HS1 2BW

Ms Nicola Sturgeon MSP
First Minister of Scotland

telephone : [REDACTED]
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e-mail : [REDACTED]
Writer : Malcolm Burr
Our reference : MB/LMC/L3301
Your reference :
Date : 24 March 2017

Dear First Minister,

STANDING COUNCIL ON EUROPE

Many thanks indeed for your letter of 24 March 2017 inviting me to join the Standing Council on Europe. It is both an honour and a privilege to be invited to serve on this panel, the work of which is so important for our country and its many and diverse communities.

I look forward very much to working with you and other Members of the Council and, would once again thank you for this opportunity.

Leis a h-uile deagh dhùrachd

Malcolm Burr
Chief Executive



St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
T: 0300 244 4000

Sir George Reid
Professorial Fellow in Politics
University of Stirling
Stirling
FK9 4LA

7 October 2016

Dear George

STANDING COUNCIL ON EUROPE

Following the outcome of the EU Referendum, I am clear, as are my Cabinet, that our role is to protect Scotland's interests and our place in Europe, particularly the single market.

I am determined to draw on support and advice from as broad a range of sources as possible and I established the Standing Council on Europe, an advisory panel comprising a range of experts who can advise me and the Scottish Government on a range of important matters as we explore options to protect our interests - legal, financial and diplomatic.

This group is chaired by Professor Anton Muscatelli, Principal of the University of Glasgow, and encompasses voices from across the political spectrum in Scotland and indeed different views on Scotland's constitutional future.

The purpose of this group is threefold:

- To provide expert advice on securing Scotland's relationship with the EU;
- To consider the impact of any proposed changes to the UK's relationship with the EU on Scottish interests;
- To advise Scottish Ministers through negotiations in order to secure Scottish interests and objectives.

I would like to draw on your expertise and commitment and formally invite you to become a member of the Standing Council on Europe and to work with me and the other members of the group to deliver this remit.

The group met for the first time in Edinburgh on 14 July 2016. Discussions were focused on three principal areas: policy priorities, process and engagement strategies. The Council met for the second time in plenary on 29th August and looked in detail at human rights and social protections, such as employment law and workers' rights, and the potential threat posed to these rights by Brexit. I have attached the minutes from the last meetings of the Standing Council to give you a better overview of key discussions.

The next two meetings of the group will take place on 16 November and 19 December 2016. Ahead of the next session of the Standing Council, Professor Anton Muscatelli and Ian Mitchell, the Deputy Director, EU Strategy and Engagement at the Scottish Government, would welcome an opportunity to have an informal discussion with you.

I would be grateful for confirmation that you are content to participate in the Council by return, and my officials will be in touch shortly to make arrangements for your first meeting.

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NICOLA STURGEON

Attachments:

1. First Minister's speech to IPPR on 25.07.2016
2. Standing Council on Europe - Minutes and attendance from first meeting on 14.07.2016
3. Standing Council on Europe - Minutes and attendance from second meeting on 29.08.2016

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Sir John Grant
By email: [REDACTED]

17 October 2016

STANDING COUNCIL ON EUROPE

Following the outcome of the EU Referendum, I am clear, as are my Cabinet that our role is to protect Scotland's relationship with and place in the European Union.

I am determined to draw on support and advice from as broad a range of sources as possible and I established the Standing Council on Europe, an advisory panel comprising a range of experts who can advise me and the Scottish Government on a range of important matters as we explore options to protect our interests - legal, financial and diplomatic.

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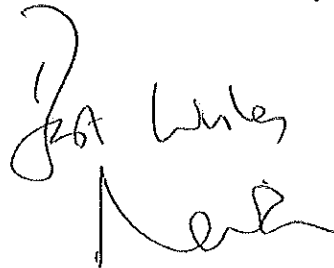
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First Minister Nicola Sturgeon
Edinburgh
25 July 2016

Available at: <http://news.scotland.gov.uk/Speeches-Briefings/Scotland-in-EU-2772.aspx>

Thank you Russell for that introduction and for inviting me to speak to you today about Scotland's place in Europe.

We are now exactly one month on from the EU referendum. It seems in some ways no time at all - and, in others, a lifetime. I'm sure many of you feel the same way.

Today, I will reflect on the result - on how it felt and what some of the lessons might be. I'll try to give you an insight into my own feelings and how my thinking developed in the early hours of 24 June.

Then I will consider where we are now and what lies ahead. I will root this firmly in Scotland's interests - what are our interests and values, why do they matter and how will we seek to protect them - in a way that, as far as possible, unites us.

I also hope to demonstrate that the question of Scotland's place in the EU - just like that of Scotland's place in the UK - is not some constitutional abstraction or distraction.

It is fundamentally about how we best equip ourselves to deal with the complex, interdependent, challenges facing governments, businesses and individuals in the 21st century.

It is about jobs and the economy. It is about living standards, fairness and equality. And it is about our place in and contribution to the world. It matters for, and to, all of us - and as we navigate our way through the difficult weeks, months and, indeed, years ahead, that is what we must bear in mind.

Firstly, though, let me take you back to the result - back to the morning of Friday 24th June.

Every generation has its "do you remember where you were when..." moments.

I suspect this will be one of ours.

We will all remember for a very long time exactly where we were - and, indeed, how we felt - when we heard the result of the EU referendum

Some of you will have woken up to the news, having gone to bed a few hours earlier assured that the polls, the bookies and the markets were all pointing firmly in the direction of a Remain vote.

Others, like me, will have watched events unfold right through the night and many, again like me, will have experienced a horrible, sinking feeling as the early results started to come in.

I told the Scottish Parliament a few days later that I was “disappointed and concerned” by the result. I have to admit that was parliamentary language for a much stronger feeling.

I felt angry that Scotland faced the prospect of being taken out of the EU against our will - with all of the damaging consequences that would entail.

I felt, and still feel, contempt for a Leave campaign that had lied and given succour to the racism and intolerance of the far right.

I felt frustration - on behalf of people across the UK - at the political irresponsibility that had brought us to this point.

I am the last person you will hear criticising the principle of referenda. But proposing a referendum when you believe in the constitutional change it offers is one thing. Proposing - as David Cameron did - a referendum even though he opposed the change on offer is quite another. And to do so, not because of any public appetite, but simply to appease UKIP and the eurosceptic voices within the Tory party was worse. That was reckless.

I also felt my share of the responsibility - as a senior politician on the Remain side - for the collective failure to convince a clear majority across the UK of the case for staying part of the EU, imperfect though it may be.

So these were the feelings I was experiencing in the early hours of the 24 June.

These feelings were, of course, tempered by a sense of pride in Scotland and how Scotland had voted.

More than 60% of those who had voted – and a majority in every single one of our 32 local authority areas – had said clearly that they wanted Scotland to stay in the EU.

So as I started, at around 4am, to write the statement that I would give later that morning in Bute House, there were several thoughts crystallising in my mind.

Firstly, it seemed abundantly clear to me that people - even many of those who had voted to Leave - were going to wake up feeling very anxious and uncertain. It was therefore the job of politicians, not to pretend that we instantly had all the answers, but to give a sense of direction. To try to create some order out of the chaos. That's what I was determined to try to do for Scotland. I assumed that UK politicians would do likewise. I was wrong. Indeed, the absence of any leadership and the lack of any advance planning - both from the politicians who had proposed the referendum and from those who had campaigned for a Leave vote - must count as one of the most shameful abdications of responsibility in modern political history.

Secondly, although it was clear that the result would impact on all of our lives, it seemed obvious that the anxiety it would cause would be felt more immediately and more acutely by one particular group of society - nationals of other EU member states who had chosen to make their homes here in the UK. I felt then – and still feel very strongly today - that we must give them as much reassurance as possible. It is wrong that the UK government has not yet given a guarantee of continued residence to those who have built lives, careers and families here in the UK.

Thirdly, given how Scotland voted - and given the consequences, for our economy, society and culture, of being removed from the EU - I felt very strongly, and still do, that my job as First Minister is to explore every option to protect Scotland's interests.

That last point - protecting Scotland's interests - is the one I will dwell on today. I'll look at what Scotland's interests are and at how the Scottish Government will seek to protect them in the period ahead.

Before I do that, though, let me just briefly touch on one other thought that was in my mind then and that has developed and strengthened since - the need to learn the lessons of this referendum, both of the campaign and the result.

The lessons of the campaign will no doubt be talked about by politicians and political commentators for years to come. Some of them were the subject of advance warnings to David Cameron - warnings that I suspect he now wishes he had listened to a bit more carefully.

I don't have time to discuss these in detail. But there are three in particular that I will mention in passing.

First, the limitations and dangers of negative, fear based campaigning - particularly in the social media age where people have access to information from all different sources.

Second, the need to understand that campaigns are not year zero affairs. You tend to reap what you have sown over many years. It shouldn't have come as a surprise to politicians who have spent years denigrating the EU and pandering to the myths about free movement, that some voters simply did not believe them when they suddenly started extolling the virtues of both.

And, thirdly, the mistake of excluding certain groups of the population from the vote. I think it was wrong in principle to deny EU nationals and 16 & 17 year olds the right to vote. But, as well as being wrong in principle, it was also tactically foolish. These were precisely the groups that were most likely to be positive about the EU.

So, there is no doubt that mistakes were made. As I say, there will be plenty of time in the months and years ahead for all of us to mull over the lessons of the campaign.

What is perhaps more urgent - and certainly more important - is that we learn the lessons of the result.

To do that, we must make sure that we properly understand it.

Leave campaigners may have played the anti immigration card to the point, at times, of overt racism. And they did.

But 17 million Leave voters were not racist - nor even in many cases anti immigration. So why, in spite of all the warnings about the economic and financial consequences that would follow, did they choose to vote to leave the European Union?

That's a question we must address. And let me be clear - it is important to ask and to answer that question here in Scotland too. The country may have voted overwhelmingly to Remain -

but 1 million of us voted to Leave. We mustn't lose sight of that. As the First Minister, I have a duty to listen to and respond to the concerns behind that vote.

Academic theses will be written on this subject for years to come. I am a politician, not a doctor of philosophy, so what follows are just my observations.

I don't doubt that many people voted Leave - simply and straightforwardly - because of what they think about the European Union. The EU is not perfect - far from it. It's institutions too often seem remote and its regulations unnecessary and interfering. And, of course, as I said earlier, UK politicians have spent years blaming it for all our ills and denying its achievements. So it's hardly surprising that many took the opportunity to vote against it.

But for many, I suspect the real roots of their Leave vote lay closer to home. The referendum was a chance for many to send a message - consciously or unconsciously - about how they are governed, and the effect of government policies have on their day to day lives.

This vote was about Europe, yes; but in my view it also reflected a loss of confidence and trust in UK institutions that have become remote and detached from peoples' lives.

We should not be complacent in Scotland. But perhaps there is at least a partial explanation to be found for the different result here, in the statistics measuring trust in the Scottish and UK governments.

Ever since devolution, people in Scotland have trusted the Scottish Government more than the UK Government to act in Scotland's interests.

That's been true under all Scotland's governments since 1999, so it's not a party political point.

But it is worth pointing out that trust in the Scottish Government to act in Scotland's long-term interests is higher today (73%) than it has been at any time since the establishment of the Scottish Parliament in 1999 (81%), and it is more than three times higher than trust in the UK government (23%).

So trust in institutions - or lack of it - is in my view a factor.

But a bigger factor is policy.

There is little doubt that many voted to leave the EU - voted against the status quo, in other words - out of a feeling that they were being left behind.

Marianna Mazucatto, a member of my Council of Economic Advisers, has said - rightly - that many Leave voters were protesting about the effects of austerity and an economic system that doesn't work for them.

However, she also said that "If the leave campaigners were right about how many felt about life and work in Britain today, they were wrong about the causes, and wrong about the solutions. Blaming the EU was a category error. In truth, the blame lies closer to home."

And that is the hard truth. Much of the blame for what happened on 23 June lies with the UK government's ideological obsession with austerity, with its decision to make ordinary people pay the price of a financial crash they didn't cause and with its cynical collusion in the myth that cuts and public service pressures are the fault of migrants rather than a direct result of deliberate economic policy.

So this referendum result - if the right lessons are being learned - must put tackling inequality and democratic renewal at the top of the political agenda.

A good start - though I say this more in hope than expectation at this stage- would be for the new Prime Minister and Chancellor to abandon completely the austerity economics pursued by their predecessors.

So, those are my reflections one month on.

But the present and the future matter more than the past. However much we might like to, we can't turn the clock back.

So, how do things stand today?

Well, firstly and most obviously, we have a new Prime Minister and government. But we don't yet have any clear explanation of what a Leave vote means in practice.

If we can read anything from the early signs, whether from government appointments or initial pronouncements it is, though I hope I'm wrong about this, that the UK is heading towards a hard rather than a soft Brexit - a future outside the single market, with only limited access, and significant restrictions on free movement.

But while "Brexit means Brexit" is intended to sound like a strong statement of intent it is, in truth, just a soundbite that masks a lack of any clear sense of direction.

There is also, today, something of a sense of calm before the storm. The initial shock might have worn off but we don't have to look far for warning signs of what is to come.

Last week, the IMF cut its growth forecast for the UK by almost half.

And, on Friday, the Purchasing Managers' survey - in recent years a very strong indicator of GDP growth or, indeed, contraction - plunged heavily into negative territory.

These are just two of the plethora of warnings over the past few weeks and are surely a sign of things to come.

At a time when we were already dealing with real fragility in our economy - as a result of global trends and, here at home, the impact of the oil price - this is very bad news indeed. It will impact on jobs, investment, living standards and public services. Will a UK government facing shrinking tax revenues be willing even to protect the funding that currently comes from the EU, let alone deliver the increased NHS spending that the Leave campaign promised?

Of course, the impacts will not just be economic. Already there is evidence - initially anecdotal but becoming much firmer - of UK universities being shut out of research partnerships.

So, it is against this backdrop that I am so determined to protect Scotland interests.

Let me turn then to what those interests are and why they matter. Protecting our place in and relationship with the EU is not just an article of faith - it is about our vital interests and it really matters to the lives of people across our country.

Firstly, there is our democratic interest. To put it simply, we didn't vote to leave - we voted to remain. To be told that we have to leave, regardless, is tantamount to being told that our voice as a nation doesn't matter. Of course, some will say that we also voted to stay in the UK, so we must accept the UK wide verdict. But in 2014, we voted to stay part of a UK that was a member of the EU - indeed, we were told then that protecting our EU membership was one of the main reasons to vote against independence.

So, our democratic interest is, in my view, a strong one. But it's not the only interest at stake.

There is also our economic interest. For a country that sends almost half of our international exports to other EU countries, retaining membership of a single market of 500 million people matters. For a nation that has a strong financial services sector, the system referred to as 'passporting' matters. With a significant rural economy, retaining access to CAP payments matters. With a reputation for punching above our weight in research, ensuring access to competitive research funding and the global collaborations that flow from it matters. For a country that needs to grow its population to help address skills gaps and deal with an ageing population, free movement of people matters. All of that is now at risk - and it will be people who pay the price of this in real life if jobs, investment and living standards suffer as a result.

Then there is our interest in social protection. The EU guarantees core rights and protections for workers. The right to paid holidays and maternity leave, limits to working hours, the right not to be discriminated against, health and safety protections - they all matter to workers the length and breadth of our country. I genuinely fear that a UK government outside the single market will seek economic competitiveness through de-regulation and a race to the bottom. That would be devastating for the workers' rights and protections that we have come to take for granted.

We also have an interest in solidarity - in independent countries coming together for mutual protection against the threat of crime and terrorism and working together to address big global challenges. The European Arrest Warrant, intelligence sharing, the cross border enforcement of civil rights, collective action to tackle climate change, initiatives like Erasmus that give our young people the chance to study in other countries and deepen their understanding of different cultures - all of these matter to our collective peace and security and to the future of our planet.

And lastly, it's in our interests to have influence. To end up in a position, which is highly possible, where we have to abide by all the rules of the single market and pay to be part of it, but have no say whatsoever in what the rules are, would not be taking back control, to coin a phrase we've heard more than once recently- it would be giving up control. Having an influence in the world we live in matters - for all of us.

So democracy, economic prosperity, social protection, solidarity and influence - these are the vital interests that are at stake and we must now seek to safeguard. They are not abstract. They are real and they matter to every individual and business in country.

What then are our options?

Well, simply and in summary, we can seek to find - or create - a solution that enables Scotland's distinctive voice to be heard and our interests to be protected within the UK. Or we can consider again the option of independence.

I said the morning after the referendum - and I repeat again today - that, at this stage, we must keep all of our options open.

That means exploring in the first instance - starting in this crucial period before the triggering of Article 50, as the UK government develops its negotiating position - options that would allow different parts of this multi-national UK to pursue different outcomes. That means the nations that voted to Leave can start figuring out what Brexit actually does mean - while the others, like Scotland, can focus on how to retain ties and keep open channels we do not want to dismantle.

Now, let me say at the outset, that I don't underestimate the challenge of finding such a solution. Even if we can agree a position at UK level, we would face the task of persuading the EU to agree it. The barriers are substantial.

But to those who want to rule out the possibility of success before we even try, I would say two things.

Firstly, we live in unprecedented times. When Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty was drafted, it would have been considered inconceivable that any country would ever vote to exercise it. In fact, you only have to read it to know it was never drafted in a way to be actually executed. But that has now happened and, beyond a few lines of text, there are no rules for what happens next. The territory is uncharted, the page is blank. That gives us an opportunity to be innovative and creative - an opportunity to shape the future.

Already, ideas are being floated. Terms like "reverse Greenland" and the "Norway model" have entered our lexicon and a number of academics and experts have started to sketch out other possibilities. Some may prove impractical or undesirable. But in a union where the relationships between our nations are constantly evolving, there's no black and white. Let's consider all the options with an open mind and work to develop the right outcome for Scotland.

The second point I would make to those - particularly in the UK government - who are at pains to say how highly they value the United Kingdom, is this:

Now is the time to do more than just assert - against evidence to the contrary - that the union works for Scotland. It is surely time now to find ways to demonstrate that Scotland's voice can be heard, our wishes accommodated and our interests protected within the UK.

It seems to me that the UK government now has a responsibility - indeed a vested interest - to do so.

For our part, the Scottish Government has already started work - advised by our Standing Council of Experts that I appointed in the days following the referendum - to develop such options.

I welcomed the Prime Minister's commitment in Edinburgh just over a week ago that different options would be considered and that article 50 would not be invoked until there was agreement on an overall UK position.

My government is now working with the UK government to establish exactly what these commitments mean in practice.

We need now to set out in detail the manner in which the Scottish Government will be involved in the development of the U.K position ahead of Article 50 being triggered and the mechanism for ensuring meaningful assessment of the options we bring forward.

And we must also be clear what our involvement, and that of the other UK administrations and parliaments, will be in the political decision to invoke Article 50 - not just in the evidence gathering and consultation to inform that decision, but in the actual decision itself. I know other administrations are equally anxious about that and indeed at the British-Irish Council meeting in Cardiff on Friday Carwyn Jones, First Minister of Wales, put forward the suggestion about the involvement of all four parliaments across the UK being involved in that. This is the work we are doing to turn the commitments that have been given into practical reality.

I hope to be able to update the Scottish Parliament on the progress of these discussions - and the implications for the organisation of the Scottish Government's work - over the course of the summer.

As we do all of this, we will also continue our engagement with Europe - with the institutions and other member states - to build understanding of and support for Scotland's position. The response we have had so far has been warm and welcoming. Many across Europe can see that it would also be in Europe's interest to allow those who don't want to sever their ties with Europe to find a way of not doing so.

That brings me, of course, to the question of independence. I'm a life long nationalist - but I said in the immediate aftermath of the EU referendum that, in seeking to chart a way forward for Scotland, independence was not my starting point. That remains the case. Protecting Scotland's interests is my starting point and I will explore all options to do so.

But I am equally clear about this - if we find that our interests can't be protected in a UK context, independence must be one of those options and Scotland must have the right to consider it.

That is why we will take the preparatory steps to ensure that this option is open to the Scottish Parliament if the Scottish Parliament considers it necessary.

I don't pretend that the option of independence would be straightforward. It would bring its own challenges - as well as opportunities.

But consider this.

The UK that we voted to stay part of in 2014 - a UK within the EU - is fundamentally changing. The outlook for the UK is uncertainty, upheaval and unpredictability.

In these circumstances, it may well be that the option that offers us the greatest certainty, stability and the maximum control over our own destiny, is that of independence.

So these are my reflections on the past month and my thoughts at this stage on the way forward for Scotland.

Just as the past few weeks have been the most tumultuous in my memory, so too will the period ahead be difficult and uncertain.

Standing here today, I don't claim to have a clear line of sight to the future - nor do I have all the answers to the many questions we face.

What I do know is this. Scotland didn't choose to be in this situation. I also know that our vital interests are at stake, with potential consequences that will affect all of us.

So, as your First Minister, I have duty to do all I can to protect those interests - and to do so, as far as I can, in a way that unites us a country.

That is what I am determined to do as we seek to chart the best way forward, together.

Thank you for listening. I look forward to your questions.

**Standing Council on Europe
First Meeting 14.07.2016**

Present: Chair: Prof Anton Muscatelli, Principal and Vice Chancellor, University of Glasgow

Members in Attendance

Vasco Cal, Sir David Edward, David Frost, John Kay, Lord Kerr, Dame Mariot Leslie, David Martin, Alyn Smith, Grahame Smith, Professor Andrew Scott, Fabian Zuleeg.

Apologies: Dame Anne Glover, Charles Grant, Amanda McMillan, Frances Ruane, Anne Richards, Alan Miller

Opening Remarks from First Minister

- First Minister opened up the discussion by stating her objective:
 - To protect Scotland's relationship with Europe
 - To look at all the options to achieve this aim.
- The purpose of the Council will be
 - Advice on priorities
 - Advice on UK Article 50 Negotiations
 - Analysis of particular options for delivery policy position

Meeting

- The meeting was opened with an introduction from the Chair setting out the high-level role for the Council and that the discussion would focus on three principal areas: policy priorities, process and engagement strategies. Members indicated their enthusiasm for these tasks.
- The flexible membership of the Council was also set out and the operating principles agreed.
- Discussion was broadly grouped under these themes with the following issues covered:
 - The overarching policy priority is set by the First Minister already and more detailed policy analysis will underpin the development of options to protect our relationship with the EU.
 - Scotland should have early conversations with the UK government to feed policy positions into the UK policy.
 - It is important for Scotland to maintain its presence in Brussels and continue to develop and invest in existing relationships and areas of policy collaboration.
 - The process of Article 50 is complex and likely to be made up of two principal strands of negotiation, one focussed on leaving the EU and a second, under a framework set by the first, on establishing a new relationship.
 - There is a need to look at what expertise SG and partners have at their disposal and to make best use of this.

The meeting was followed by a dinner hosted by Dr Alastair Allan, Minister for International Development and Europe.

**Standing Council on Europe
Second Meeting 29.08.2016**

Present: Chair: Prof Anton Muscatelli, Principal and Vice Chancellor, University of Glasgow

Members in Attendance

Vasco Cal, David Frost, Dame Anne Glover, Charles Grant, John Kay, Lord John Kerr, Dame Mariot Leslie, Sir David Edward, Amanda McMillan, Alan Miller, Frances Ruane, Anne Richards, Alyn Smith MEP, Grahame Smith, Professor Andrew Scott, Fabian Zuleeg.

Apologies: David Martin MEP

Ministers in Attendance

Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister
Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Europe and External Affairs
Alasdair Allan, Minister for International Development and Europe
Michael Russell, Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in Europe

Opening Remarks

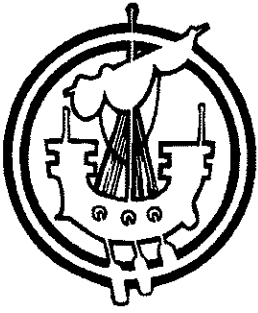
- Meeting opened with a short introduction from the Chair.
- First Minister then gave a short context and introduction:
 - Welcomed support from the Standing Council in working through detailed and complex issues and welcomed the sub-groups which had been developed;
 - Stated there was no clarity from UK Government on when Article 50 will be triggered or on what the UK negotiating strategy would be;
 - Scottish Government undertaking detailed preparation for negotiations on which the work of the Standing Council was key;
 - Engagement with the UK Government on the question of how the Scottish Government will be involved in developing the UK position is progressing, but has not concluded;
 - Welcomed work of the Council to understand impacts at sectoral level.

Meeting

- Professor Drew Scott gave a presentation. There was a discussion around a range of options that might be available to Scotland, including options which would allow membership of/full access to the single market –either on a UK or differentiated basis.
- Engagement with the UK Government should focus on bringing Scotland's policy position as close as possible to the five tests set out by the First

Minister. Full membership of the single market is very important because it encompasses much more than just trade in goods – includes free movement of people and services and rights of establishment for business and cross border trade.

- There was a discussion on the importance of engagement with EU states to set out Scotland's position and to appreciate and listen to what EU states are thinking.
- There was further discussion on the working groups of the Council which will develop more detailed positions in due course. The work-groups set out are as follows:
 - Economy and Financial Services;
 - Social Protections;
 - Higher, Further Education and Funding;
 - Diplomacy and Influencing.



Ms Nicola Sturgeon MSP
First Minister of Scotland

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Writer : Malcolm Burr
Our reference : MB/LMC/L3301
Your reference :
Date : 24 March 2017

Dear First Minister,

STANDING COUNCIL ON EUROPE

Many thanks indeed for your letter of 24 March 2017 inviting me to join the Standing Council on Europe. It is both an honour and a privilege to be invited to serve on this panel, the work of which is so important for our country and its many and diverse communities.

I look forward very much to working with you and other Members of the Council and, would once again thank you for this opportunity.

Leis a h-uile deagh dhùrachd

Malcolm Burr
Chief Executive



THE RT HON SIR GEORGE REID FRSE

26 October 2016

Dear First Minister,

Thank you for your kind invitation to join the Standing Council on Europe.

I am very happy to accept.

I am deeply conscious of the damage which Brexit, particularly in its "hard" form, can do to Scotland. I commend you for the clear and principled leadership which you have given on this issue.

I look forward to contributing to the Council and being of assistance to the Scottish Government.

*Sincerely,
And with warm regards,
George*
GEORGE REID

The Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP
First Minister
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

