

Statement by Michel Barnier following his working lunch in London with David Davis

Good afternoon to all of you. First of all, I want to thank you, David, for your hospitality. I was very pleased to also meet today the Prime Minister, Theresa May. In a very short time, from now until October, we must advance on three fronts.

First, translating our Joint Report into legal text.

Second, the transition period, which you just mentioned, David. Let me recall that the UK government has decided the date of the UK withdrawal: [the 29th March 2019](#). This was the UK's sovereign decision. Mrs May has asked to benefit from the Single Market and the Customs Union for a short period after this. The European Council has indicated its readiness to consider this request. The conditions are clear: everyone has to play by the same rules during this transition. Let me add one point about this transition: the certainty about the transition will only come with the ratification of the withdrawal agreement.

Number three: our future partnership between the UK and the EU. On that point we need also clarity about the UK's proposals for the future partnership. The only thing I can say now is that without a customs union- and being outside the Single Market – barriers to trade and goods and services are unavoidable. The time has come to make a choice. Thank you.