# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Joint Ministerial Committee (EU Negotiations)**  |
| **DATE**  | **8 September 2020** |
| **BY** | **Jeremy Miles MS, Counsel General and Minister for European Transition** |

On Thursday 3 September, Joint Ministerial Committee (EU Negotiations) met virtually for the third time, and only for the fourth time this year. The communique can be found at:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/913670/Communique_for_JMC_EN__3_September_2020__1_.pdf>

The meeting began with an update on the EU negotiations from the UK’s Chief Negotiator David Frost. This gave me the opportunity to press the UK Government on the critical importance of reaching a deal with the EU, and to express concern that the UK Government does not seem intent on securing a deal which protects jobs and businesses. I also emphasised the need to come to a positive decision on continued participation in EU Programmes, notably the successors to Horizon and Erasmus Plus, and the involvement of the Devolved Governments in those decisions. I also pressed the UK Government as to its apparent refusal to commit to maintaining a robust state aid framework.

On preparedness matters, there was general agreement that there had been an improvement with the UK Government starting to share more detailed information about their assumptions and contingency plans. I highlighted the need for further discussions in relation to the supply chains for critical goods such as food, and on support and advice for businesses, expressing concern about the potential cumulative impacts of Covid-19 and the end of the transition period. I welcomed the fact that devolved Ministers will again be invited to UK Cabinet Committee discussions on preparedness, as was the case last autumn. I also welcomed that quadrilateral meetings with the Paymaster-General, Penny Mordaunt MP, would continue and would focus on preparedness issues. I made clear that these arrangements were long overdue and that we had lost important preparation time earlier this year as a result of the UK Government not doing so.

Thefirst two Common Frameworks – on Nutrition and Hazardous Substances - were endorsed by the Committee and also agreed that they can now progress to legislative scrutiny by the four legislatures. There was general agreement that work was progressing well given the circumstances and there was a shared understanding that, where it was not possible to complete work on Frameworks before the end of the transition period, all Governments would consider themselves bound by outline Frameworks, whilst legislative scrutiny and final agreement took place in 2021.

Finally, I reiterated the Welsh Government’s view of the negative impact the Internal Market Bill would have on the devolution settlements – not least in the area of spending powers - and the Union. I pressed for immediate sight of the Bill in draft, but without receiving assurances that this would be forthcoming. This is completely unacceptable for legislation with potential to upend the devolution settlement.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Senedd returns I would be happy to do so.