# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Joint Ministerial Committee (European Negotiations)** **and** **Joint Ministerial Committee (Europe).** |
| **DATE**  |  **24 October 2019**  |
| **BY** | **Jeremy Miles, AM, Counsel General and Brexit Minister**  |

On 10 October in Edinburgh I attended the Joint Ministerial Committee (EU Negotiations) and Joint Ministerial Committee (Europe).

The Joint Ministerial Committee (EU Negotiations) focussed on preparedness, the role of the Devolved Legislatures in negotiations and the Common Frameworks. On preparedness I reiterated the Welsh Government view that though progress has been made since the end of March, it is not possible to mitigate fully all the consequences of EU exit and the position of the Welsh Government remains that the UK should not leave the EU. I made the point that the UK Government needs to involve the Devolved Governments in ‘no deal’ planning to a greater extent. The Welsh Government needs to have sight of all issues that could impact on Wales regardless of whether these issues relate to a subject matter that is reserved to the UK Government. I also pressed for commitments that specific funding will be made available through the UK “Kingfisher” scheme.

On negotiations I pressed for an enhanced role for the Devolved Governments in the negotiations. The lack of information sharing and no attempt by the UK Government to agree UK positions with the Devolved Governments has failed to satisfy the terms of reference of the JMC(EN).

On the Common Frameworks the concern is the potential impact of contradictory statements by the UK Government on its commitment to common standards as against deregulation. We will be reviewing at the next JMC (EN) how the Common Frameworks arrangements can deliver against their original objectives in light of this tension.

The Joint Ministerial Committee (Europe) focussed on the UK Governments attendance at EU meetings, priorities for the October European Council, the UK Government’s engagement with the new EU Commission and a verbal update from Jake Berry MP, Minister of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on the proposed Shared Prosperity Fund.

In relation to attendance at EU meetings, I stated my disappointment that the UK Government took the decision to withdraw from some EU meetings without prior consultation with the Devolved Governments even though Welsh Government officials had attended meetings in the absence of UK Government officials. I called for fuller details of meetings which will not be attended by UK Government officials to be shared to ensure that Devolved Governments are able to reach their own judgements in a more informed way.

In relation to the October European Council agenda item on the Multiannual Financial Framework, I called for urgent clarification on proposals in relation to UK participation in programmes post Brexit and to ensure that Devolved Governments interests in key areas are recognised.

Ongoing engagement with the new EU Commission is vital and I highlighted this will need to take into account the views of all Governments as future common priorities are developed.

The general update on the Shared Prosperity Fund enabled me to stress that Wales should not receive a penny less or have a single power taken away as a result of leaving the European Union. I stressed the urgent need for engagement, including the sharing of draft consultation documents with Devolved Governments in developing the design and implementation of the Fund to ensure that the devolution settlement is respected.