# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Joint Ministerial Committee (EU Negotiations)**  |
| **DATE**  | **06 February 2020** |
| **BY** | **Jeremy Miles AM, Counsel General and Brexit Minister**  |

On 28January, the First Minister and I hosted the Joint Ministerial Committee (EU Negotiations) in Cardiff, only the second time it has taken place outside London.

The First Minister welcomed the First Minister and Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland who were taking part in their first joint meeting outside Northern Ireland since the re-establishment of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Northern Ireland Executive. The meeting was also attended by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and five other UK Ministers, and Mike Russell, MSP, Minister for Government Business and Constitutional Relations. The communique can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-ministerial-committee-eu-negotiations-communique-28-january-2020>

The JMC (EN) focused on the strategic choices within and between trade negotiations facing the UK Government and the role of the Devolved Governments in negotiations.

On strategic choices, I stressed the Welsh Government wants to engage with the UK Government but in order to do so we need to see the underlying information being considered by them. The First Minister and I regretted that papers shared ahead of JMC (EN) had not been proposed jointly and didn’t address the outstanding issues comprehensively. We stressed the need for the UK Government to share information on their thinking and the evidence underpinning it. I also noted that the Welsh Government has been clear in our policy document, [*The Future UK/EU Relationship: Negotiating Priorities for Wales*](https://gov.wales/the-future-uk-eu-relationship-negotiating-priorities-for-wales-html) that we believed priority should be given to the future relationship with the EU and that we wanted to see continued participation in European programmes.

On negotiations, the First Minister acknowledged the UK Government’s recent comments with respect to their continued commitment to the Sewel convention and pressed them to extend this principle to the forthcoming UK-EU negotiations. He pointed out that a clear commitment to involving the Devolved Governments would actually strengthen the UK’s hand in the negotiations. While some proposals had been made as to a structure for the negotiations, this needed further work and the principle of not normally proceeding without the agreement of the Devolved Governments in relation to devolved matters needed to be agreed urgently by the UK Government.

The First Minister also stressed that rapid progress on the Intergovernmental relations review (IGRR) was now essential: we would expect to see IGRR proposals, as well as more detailed information on the UK Government’s approach to the negotiations in advance of the next JMC (EN).

Provided that substantive progress has been made in relation to those outstanding matters, I hope the next JMC (EN) can take place later this month.