

24th July 2020

Dear Constituents,

Thank you for contacting me about the economy and your proposal to extend the transition period.

I understand your concerns but the deadline for extending the transition period has now passed. I also believe that an extension to the transition period would only have created more uncertainty for businesses. A future partnership agreement will provide stability in the long-term and encourage investment and trade.

An extension to the transition period could also have had significant economic and political consequences for the UK. Our contribution to the EU budget would have continued and we would have remained under the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice. The UK left the EU in January this year and the EU's control over our affairs must come to an end.

Negotiations have continued throughout the coronavirus outbreak with discussions by videoconference in April, May and June following the first round of talks in March. Face-to-face negotiations have now resumed and the technical detail is well understood by both sides. The differences that remain are largely of a political nature and I am hopeful that these can be resolved. The UK is not asking for a special, bespoke, or unique deal. We are looking for a deal like those the EU has previously struck with other friendly countries like Canada.

The UK and the EU agreed that the transition period would end on 31 December as part of the Withdrawal Agreement. This is part of UK law.

No deal is now an irrelevant concept. The UK left the EU on 31 January. The question now is whether we can agree with the EU a deeper trading relationship on the lines of the free trade agreement the EU has with Canada, or whether we have a trading relationship based on the 2019 deal, without a free trade agreement on the lines of Australia's. The UK and the EU have committed legally to reaching an agreement in good faith by the end of the year and the Government is working hard to achieve that outcome which would benefit both sides.

The UK left the EU in January and immediately entered a transition period where the market arrangements that applied before exit continue to apply. This means that the UK is continuing to follow EU legislation and European Medicines Agency processes. Any medicines or vaccines approved centrally in the EU will be authorised in the UK and the UK continues to receive public safety information from the European Medicines Agency. The future relationship negotiations are still ongoing and as I am sure you can appreciate, I would not want to pre-empt their outcome. Please rest assured that my ministerial colleagues will always seek to ensure that UK patients have access to the best and most innovative medicines available.

The rights of UK citizens who do not live in the EU but who are travelling there this year remain the same until 31 December 2020. This includes the right to move freely in the EU and continued access to the EHIC scheme. Once free movement ends and after the end of the implementation period, UK nationals will not need a visa when travelling for short stays of up to 90 days in every

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Rt Hon Alok Sharma, MP for Reading West

180-day period. Further rights, including access to the EHIC scheme, are a matter for negotiation. Both sides have committed to discussing future social security coordination.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Alok Sharma MP