

16th November 2016

Dear Constituents,

Thank you for contacting me about the recent High Court ruling on the process for triggering Article 50 for leaving the European Union.

I understand that the Government will appeal this ruling. This means a final decision will have to be made in the Supreme Court and of course the Government will respect whatever decision is made by our independent judiciary.

But in my mind, this case is really only a dispute about proper procedure and does not change the all-important fact that the British people have already made their decision. While the outcome of the referendum was not the one for which I campaigned, I believe it would seriously undermine trust in our democratic system if Members of Parliament were to seek to reverse the outcome of a national vote. Rather than utilising efforts to try to block the outcome of the referendum, I believe that as an MP it is my responsibility to help secure the best outcome for the British people as we seek to negotiate our exit from the European Union.

The Conservative Party manifesto, on which I stood at the last election, made clear that a Conservative government would hold an In-Out referendum on our membership of the EU and that we would respect the outcome of that vote. So if there is a vote in the House of Commons on triggering Article 50, I will vote to respect the outcome of the referendum.

It is important to remember that Brexit does not mean the end of our relationship with the EU, but it is about starting a new relationship which secures the best deal for Britain. We are not looking for an ‘off the shelf’ deal for our future relationship – a Norwegian model or a Swiss model, ‘Hard Brexit’ or ‘Soft Brexit’ – it is going to be an agreement between an independent sovereign United Kingdom and the European Union. We want that relationship to reflect the kind of mature, cooperative relationship that close friends and allies enjoy and I am confident the Government will deliver on this aim.

Parliament will of course have a say on withdrawal, not least through the Great Repeal Bill. The Great Repeal Bill, to be introduced in the next Parliamentary session, will remove the European Communities Act 1972 from the statute book. This means that the legislation which gives direct effect to all EU law in Britain, will no longer apply from the date upon which the UK formally leaves the EU. The existing body of EU law will be converted to UK law wherever practical and Parliament will be free to amend, repeal and improve any law that it chooses.

You may also be interested to know that the House of Commons recently debated Parliament’s role in scrutinising the UK’s exit from the EU and resolved that the Prime Minister should ensure that the House of Commons “is able properly to scrutinise that plan for leaving the EU before

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Alok Sharma, MP for Reading West

Article 50 is invoked”, but in such a way that respects the will of the British people in the outcome of the referendum and “does not undermine the negotiating position of the Government as negotiations are entered into.” I believe this is the right approach.

Thank you once again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Alok Sharma MP