

# First Minister agrees timetable for fiscal framework with David Cameron



*Scotland Bill, Trade Union Bill and security all on the agenda today.*

A fair and final deal on the fiscal framework accompanying the Scotland Bill has to be in place by February, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon agreed with Prime Minister David Cameron at a meeting in Downing Street today.

The fiscal framework is crucial to determining Scotland's budget once new tax powers are devolved and both parties have now agreed that the arrangement should be a fair deal for both parties.

The First Minister also used the meeting to raise the issue of the strong opposition in Scotland to the Trade Union Bill with the Prime Minister, and their discussions also covered ongoing security matters.

Following the meeting, the First Minister said:

"I have made clear to the Prime Minister that I want to conclude a deal on the fiscal framework in time for the Scotland Bill to pass into law before the Scottish elections, however, I will not sign up to a deal that is unfair to Scotland.

"Getting this agreement right is vital to ensure that Scotland isn't worse off by hundreds of millions of pounds a year simply as a result of the transfer of powers that have been promised.

“We were both able to agree that the financial deal that goes alongside the extra powers transferring to Scotland must be fair for everyone involved and that both governments want to secure a deal by February to allow the Scotland Bill to move forward.

“Following today’s discussion I hope the Prime Minister now understands the issues of key importance to the Scottish Government and that some real progress can be made towards an agreement.”

On the Trade Union Bill the First Minister said:

“There is widespread opposition from across Scottish society and the Scottish Parliament to the Trade Union Bill and it is essential that the Prime Minister understands that.

“Unfortunately the Prime Minister does not share my concerns. However, we will continue to work to find ways to prevent this damaging legislation coming into force north of the border.”

On security the First Minister said:

“I also received a security update from the Prime Minister and measures being taken to protect the UK. We are aware of the challenges we face and we have said consistently that we support law enforcement agencies and the security and intelligence agencies in having the powers they require in order to keep our communities safe.

“However, we take people’s civil liberties extremely seriously too and we need to make sure that these powers should only be used when it is necessary and proportionate to do so.”