

# Brexit update after London meeting

Following the Joint Ministerial Committee meeting in London earlier today, Mike Russell, Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in Europe, urged the UK Government to drop their plans for a hard Brexit, give clarity on the rights of EU citizens and focus on securing a deal that allows Scotland, and the rest of the UK, to remain in the Single Market and Customs Union.



Michael Russell

Mr Russell said: "Today's Joint Ministerial Committee meeting was a tale of two halves. We have been able to make some progress, including agreeing general principles that should ensure the role of the Scottish Parliament in any potential UK or GB wide frameworks. However we remain unable to recommend the Scottish Parliament consent to the EU Withdrawal Bill as currently drafted and will not be able to do so until the power grab is removed from the bill.

"I have and will continue to press for the amendments suggested by ourselves and the Welsh Government to be accepted, removing the power grab and providing a clear solution that respects devolution.

"When it comes to negotiations between the UK and EU on Brexit, I have made clear that no deal is not an option that the Scottish Government can or ever will support. We know from businesses in Scotland that a hard Brexit will cause serious and long term economic damage and it is crucial we stay in the Single Market and Customs Union.

"I also pressed for urgent certainty on a final decision on

the rights of our fellow EU citizens after Brexit – a decision which is long overdue and causing worry to people living, working and studying in Scotland. Of course, we have already heard from the UK Government that they accept the need for a transition period, today I pushed for more details on what that will mean for our businesses and communities.

“It is also welcome that the First Secretary of State has agreed the Joint Ministerial Committee will meet again well before Christmas.

“I hope that as discussion between the UK Government and the EU continue over the coming days we will see a way forward emerge. As I have made clear, it is crucial that Scotland’s interests are properly represented at future negotiations.”

*Photo courtesy of The Scottish Parliament*