

First Minister to warn of long term uncertainty promoted by withdrawal deal

Speaking at the National Economic Forum in Dundee tomorrow First Minister Nicola Sturgeon will explain her view of the Draft Agreement which was agreed last week between the UK Government and the other 27 EU states.

She is expected to say: “The deal that the UK Government has agreed with the European Union is – obviously and demonstrably – worse than our current relationship with the EU.

“It provides for us to leave the single market, which is eight times the size of the UK market alone. That is something which will do immense damage to Scotland’s jobs and living standards.

“The UK Government’s refusal to even consider the Scottish Government’s detailed plan to keep Scotland in the Single Market, while accepting a differentiated solution for Northern Ireland, which we support, potentially puts Scotland at a competitive disadvantage.

“But perhaps worst of all, it leaves everybody completely uncertain about the shape of our long-term relationship with the EU.

“The 7-page political declaration on the future contains little more than vague aspirations and platitudes.

“But while we can expect more pages forthcoming on some aspects of the future relationship, there will be no concrete reassurances.

“There will be many more years of negotiations before we know with any certainty what a future trade deal will look like,

what migration policy there will be or the shape of long-term customs arrangements.

“Put bluntly, long-term economic uncertainty is hard-wired into the Prime Minister’s withdrawal deal.

“That is why we will continue to press for what is by far the best compromise solution. If the UK Government insists on leaving the EU, then it should remain in the single market and customs union. That is the solution which respects the outcome of the referendum, mitigates the worst economic consequences of Brexit, and largely resolves the Irish Border issue.

“If Brexit goes ahead – in any form – it is likely to reduce economic growth.

“But that doesn’t devalue our wider efforts to support business – in fact it makes those efforts all the more important.”



First Minister Nicola Sturgeon MSP making a ministerial statement to the Scottish Parliament on EU Negotiations and Scotland's Future. 27 June 2017. Photo- Andrew Cowan/Scottish Parliament

If you have a moment or two then you could read the Draft Agreement – all 585 pages of it here.



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