

# **Yousaf plans a European Summit in Scotland – and to get back to the EU**

**Humza Yousaf will appoint a senior figure to head up Scottish Government strategy for re-joining the EU and is planning to stage a European summit in Scotland if he is elected SNP leader and First Minister.**

In a letter to David Clarke, (copy below) chair of the European Movement in Scotland, Mr Yousaf said: “If elected as First Minister I would seek to rebuild closer relationships with the EU as a matter of priority, bringing Scotland back to Europe, where we belong. I would envision having someone in place to lead this strategy.”



Humza Yousaf Health Secretary

He added: “We want to re-join Europe because we want to re-join the scientific research community as well as build transparent trading standards and regulations that sit within the EU. It is also, vitally, about working on issues of climate change and biodiversity on land and sea at a European level to ensure best practice and shared responsibilities.”

Mr Yousaf told Scotland’s leading pro-European campaign that the person leading the strategy of re-joining “as a small independent country” would be tasked with rebuilding the infrastructure “to help us transition back into Europe.” He

added that he does not rule out making this a cabinet-level role.

“I am confident we will return to Europe. We must. I must be very clear regarding my unwavering commitment to Europe, however. If elected as First Minister, I would work firmly with the belief that the only way Scotland can return to Europe is as an independent country. I will re-affirm the case to the people of Scotland, then, that our place in Europe is as a small independent country.”

The current Health Secretary said he intends hosting a European summit in Scotland if he wins the three-cornered contest with Kate Forbes MSP and Ash Regan MSP.

He said: “We would intend to engage in honest dialogue with not only our fellow EU partners the Greens/ European Free Alliance, but other EU groups that are open to democracy and furthering social justice across Europe.”

He also confirmed that the SNP will set up its own permanent office in Brussels as a way of “establishing our presence as a small European nation at the heart of Europe and ensuring Scotland’s case for returning to Europe be heard by our European neighbours”.

David Clarke, chair of the European Movement in Scotland said: “Europe should be centre stage of any political discussion in this country. Brexit has been the disaster we always knew it would be. There is but one way to overcome the chaos and economic deprivation of the last few years and that is to re-join the European Union as soon as possible. We applaud any politician from any party willing to tell this truth and to take steps to put this into action.”



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