



RESOLUTION:

A frictionless border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland and protection of the Good Friday Agreement

Adopted at the YEPP Council Meeting in Belgrade, on 02.12.2017

Recognizing that:

- The border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland is approx. 500 kilometers long.
- The United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union on 23 June 2016 but Northern Ireland voted in favour of remaining in the EU (55.8%).¹
- None of the border constituencies in Northern Ireland voted to leave the EU.
- That the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) is an internationally recognised peace agreement that was signed in April 1998 and brought an end to thirty years of political and religious motivated violence in Northern Ireland.
- That the GFA, which is based on commonly held membership of the EU by the Republic of Ireland and the UK, is about peace, reconciliation and societal progress on the island of Ireland.
- The GFA affords the people of Northern Ireland the right to choose either UK citizenship or Irish citizenship (and by extension, EU citizenship).²
- Both the UK and Irish governments are co-guarantors of the GFA.

Acknowledging that:

- A detailed examination of areas of North-South co-operation was carried out by the teams of Michel Barnier and David Davis and has produced 142 areas of North-South co-operation e.g. animal welfare, security, policing, energy, education etc. These are

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/ng-interactive/2016/jun/23/eu-referendum-live-results-and-analysis>

² https://www.britac.ac.uk/sites/.../TheGoodFridayAgreementBrexitandRights_0.pdf

provided for by the GFA and are underpinned by mutual EU membership by the Republic of Ireland and the UK.³

- That proposals put forward by the UK government regarding a border and the GFA so far have been vague, lacking in significant detail and have used language such as a new undefined custom “arrangement” - which the EU Brexit Taskforce have labelled “magical thinking”.⁴
- That there are twice as many crossing points on the Irish border as all other EU third country borders from the Arctic to the Black Sea making it enormously impractical to impose a hard border.
- The existence of an all-island economy.
- That the British government have unilaterally declined the solution of Northern Ireland staying in the customs union, which is a phase 2 issue. Therefore, they could also guarantee a hard border off the table before Phase 2 as well.
- That while the EU was never conceived as the sole guarantor of rights in Northern Ireland, rights deriving from the EU are, nevertheless, an important dimension of the post-GFA architecture.

YEPP calls on:

- The UK to ensure there is no divergence in rules adhered to in Northern Ireland regarding the internal market or customs union so as to not negatively impact cross-border trade, North-South cooperation or the all-Ireland economy, which are all consistent with the GFA.
- The EU to remain united in seeing all three issues in Phase 1 of Brexit negotiations, making sufficient progress before we move to Phase 2. These three issues include the need to ensure that there is no hard border on the island of Ireland, that the GFA is protected in all of its parts, and that the common travel area is retained.
- EU member states to consider the Irish proposal of moving the EU border off the island of Ireland and into the Irish Sea, requiring external border checks at Northern Ireland’s seaports and airports entry points.

³ <https://www.rte.ie/news/analysis-and-comment/2017/1117/920981-long-read-brexite/>

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