



Department
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House of Lords European Union Committee
House of Lords
London
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Dear Lord Teverson,

Thank you for your letter of 1st July 2020. You asked me to write again by 5th August regarding the current state of play of the negotiations, any compromise positions offered, my view on potential ways forward and when I believe an agreement will be reached.

Following the High Level Meeting (HLM) between the Prime Minister and the Presidents of the Commission, Parliament and Council on 15th June, we agreed with the EU to intensify the talks in July and to create the most conducive conditions for concluding and ratifying a deal before the end of 2020. We have just concluded the 5th formal round of negotiations with the EU. As David Frost's statement of 23rd July noted, we will not reach an 'early understanding on the principles underlying an agreement' by the end of July, as set out at the HLM, and that while we have had constructive discussions on a number of areas, considerable gaps remain in the most difficult areas, including fisheries.

You asked me to outline any compromises made by either side in the negotiations. Our proposed fisheries framework agreement reflects our rights under international law and is in line with the practice of other independent coastal States. We've been clear that UK sovereignty over our fishing waters is not up for negotiation and we will not accept any proposals which compromise this. We remain willing to work hard to reach a separate fisheries framework agreement with the EU which will accommodate the reality of our well established position on this. As David Frost has outlined, we believe an agreement can still be reached in September, and that we should continue to negotiate with this aim in mind.

We are looking forward to the next formal negotiating round beginning on 17th August. We remain confident that we an agreement can be reached in September and remain committed to securing the best possible outcome for the UK.

Yours sincerely,

VICTORIA PRENTIS MP

