



Foreign, Commonwealth  
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Lord Kinnoull, Sir William Cash  
Houses of Parliament  
London  
SW1A 0AA

16 August 2022

Dear Lord Kinnoull, Sir Bill,

I am writing to provide an update on the UK's association to EU Programmes (Horizon Europe, Copernicus, Euratom Research & Training, and Fusion for Energy). The Government has pressed the EU repeatedly to finalise the UK's participation, in line with the terms agreed under the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA). Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, the EU has continued to delay finalising UK association to these Programmes, to the detriment of researchers and businesses across the UK and Europe.

With this context in mind, I wanted to take the opportunity to inform you that the Government has today written to the EU to request formal consultations, pursuant to Article 738 of the TCA, with the aim of finalising the UK's association to EU programmes.

As you know, the UK's association to EU Programmes was agreed under the TCA, but could not be finalised at the point of signing in December 2020. This was because the EU's long term budget was not adopted and the underpinning EU legislation was not in place at that time. The Joint Declaration made by the UK and the EU on the signature of

the TCA on 30 December 2020 was clear that UK association would take place at the earliest opportunity when the relevant EU legislation was adopted. That timeline was vital. It was the Parties' shared ambition that UK researchers and businesses would be able to participate from the beginning of the respective EU Programmes.

However, despite it now being more than 14 months since the EU legislation establishing these programmes was adopted, the UK has still not been allowed to associate. The Government is clear that this approach is contrary to the EU's obligations under the TCA and is causing serious damage to R&D cooperation between UK and EU researchers and innovators. The EU has politicised scientific cooperation by inappropriately linking UK participation in EU Programmes, and the Northern Ireland Protocol.

Association to these Programmes remains the UK's preference and we continue to press the EU at all levels. However, the UK cannot wait much longer; the continued delays are causing intolerable uncertainty for our research and business community. That is why we are now entering into consultations with the EU, with the aim of finalising the UK's association to EU Programmes. We hope the EU will engage constructively to fulfil its obligations.

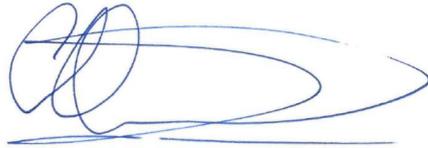
At the same time, we continue to develop plans for domestic alternative arrangements, should the EU continue to fail to meet its commitments. The Government's priority remains to support the UK's research and development sector through this period and ensure continued collaboration. This is why the Government has already put in place a guarantee for eligible, successful UK applicants to Horizon Europe who expect to sign grant agreements by December 2022. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) released a publication on 20 July and the Business Secretary separately wrote to Select Committee chairs, setting out further detail on these plans. If the delays continue, the Government will be forced to decide whether to put these arrangements in place.

We hope it does not come to this. UK association would be a win-win for the UK and the EU, allowing our respective science and research communities to continue to collaborate under these Programmes to tackle some of the greatest challenges we face.

The Government is ready to work together with the European Commission swiftly to resolve this issue.

I am copying this letter to Darren Jones MP, Chair of the BEIS Select Committee; the Rt Hon Mel Stride MP, Chair of the Treasury Select Committee; Dame Meg Hillier MP, Chair of the Public Accounts Committee; Baroness Brown of Cambridge, Chair of the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee; and to the Chair of the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Graham Stuart MP**  
**Minister of State for Europe**