



Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds MP  
Minister for the Cabinet Office  
HM Paymaster General  
Cabinet Office 70 Whitehall London  
SW1A 2AS

Lord Peter Ricketts GCMG GCVO  
Chair, European Affairs Committee  
House of Lords  
London  
SW1A 0AA

By email: [hleuroaffairs@parliament.uk](mailto:hleuroaffairs@parliament.uk)

02 September 2024

Dear Lord Ricketts,

Thank you for your letters of 29 and 30 July, and for your warm wishes for my new role as Minister for the Constitution and European Union Relations. I look forward to working with your Committee as we seek to reset the UK's relationship with Europe and deepen the UK's relationship with the EU.

In my role, I will drive the Government's EU agenda, overseeing the existing relationship, and leading the cross-government work to deepen our relationship with the EU in the future. The FCDO will remain responsible for bilateral relationships, including with our European partners, and the Gibraltar negotiations using the department's diplomatic expertise.

I will be glad to discuss my priorities and your request for an evidence session, when we meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> September.

With regards to your letter on document-based scrutiny, I want to underline how important I consider the role of Parliament and your Committee in scrutinising the Government's work.

I have noted your Committee's decision to pause this work until there is clarity on arrangements for scrutiny of Northern Ireland affairs in Parliament. Our officials remain in close contact to ensure this important work can resume smoothly following the House's return from conference recess, and look forward to beginning discussions about future arrangements for scrutiny in the autumn.

I highly value the work and expertise of your Committee on the various aspects of the UK's relationship with the EU, and look forward to working with you over the coming months and years as the UK renews that essential relationship.

**Yours sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nick Thomas-Symonds". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "N" and a long, sweeping underline.

**RT HON NICK THOMAS-SYMONDS MP**

**MINISTER FOR THE CABINET OFFICE  
HIS MAJESTY'S PAYMASTER GENERAL**