



Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds MP
Minister for the Cabinet Office
HM Paymaster General
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The Lord Ricketts GCMG GCVO
Chair
European Affairs Committee
House of Lords
London
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19 May 2025

Dear Lord Ricketts,

You will be aware that the first UK-EU Summit will take place today, Monday 19 May. I wanted to write ahead of this historic moment.

As you know, the Government was elected with a clear and emphatic mandate to strengthen our relationship with the EU. After months of working closely with our European partners, the Prime Minister will host the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, and the President of the European Council, António Costa, at Lancaster House.

This will be different from any meeting we have held with the EU since the UK left the EU. For the first time, we will not be discussing how we separate the UK from the EU or negotiating the terms of our departure. We will be looking forward, discussing how we create a new 'strategic partnership' to deliver for the people of the UK and EU. This will be the first of annual UK-EU Summits, which are opportunities to continue to strengthen our relationship and secure new agreements over the years to come.

We've made no secret of what the UK wants from these discussions - we want a safer, more secure and prosperous UK. We want to ease red tape at the border, making it easier for businesses to trade between the UK and EU and greater cooperation on security and defence and energy.

Negotiations have been driven by our national interest - to deliver a package that meets the needs of Brits and business, without compromising on our red lines – no return to the customs union, no return to freedom of movement, and no re-joining the single market.

I wanted to thank your Committee for the constructive approach you have taken to engaging with the Government and scrutinising the UK's relationship with the EU. I look forward to continuing to work with you as we use our strengthened relations with the EU to deliver a long-term UK-EU strategic partnership.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'N. Thomas-Symonds', followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right.

**Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds
Minister for the Cabinet Office
HM Paymaster General**