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

The Lord Stirrup KG GCB AFC
Chair, European Affairs Committee
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

Dame Emily Thornberry MP
Chair, Foreign Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

13 May 2026

Dear Lord Stirrup & Dame Emily,

I am writing to update you following the Prime Minister's attendance at the European Political Community (EPC) summit in Yerevan, Armenia on 4 May.

This EPC Summit was the eighth occasion in which European leaders have convened to discuss the most pressing challenges facing the continent. Armenia's location within the South Caucasus, between Iran and Russia, brought sharply into focus the dual geopolitical crises of Russia's war in Ukraine, and the situation in the Middle East.

At the opening plenary session, the Prime Minister participated in a panel discussion on European security chaired by Cypriot President alongside European Commission President von der Leyen, President Macron of France, and Prime Minister Meloni of Italy. In his contribution, the Prime Minister emphasised the need for Europe to take responsibility for its defence and security, highlighted the importance of de-escalation in the Strait of Hormuz to stabilise economic pressures and reiterated UK support for Ukraine.

On Ukraine, the PM had a bilateral meeting President Zelenskyy to underline continued UK support and, alongside President Macron, convened a broader meeting with Ukraine, Italy, Poland, Canada, Norway, Finland, NATO, the European Commission and the European Council, to discuss European cooperation and maintaining pressure on Russia. Following the Prime Minister's meeting with Commission President von der Leyen, the leaders announced the opening of negotiations regarding the UK's formal participation in the £78 billion loan to Ukraine.

In relation to the situation in the Middle East, the Prime Minister held a meeting with President Macron of France and Secretary General of NATO Mark Rutte, where the leaders discussed ways to reinforce security and reopen the Strait of Hormuz to allow the free flow of global trade to resume. Additionally, the Prime Minister attended a roundtable discussion on energy and connectivity, within which he highlighted the need to work together to de-escalate the situation in the Middle East to relieve the cost-of-living pressures on ordinary people.

While migration did not feature as a part of the formal agenda at this EPC, the UK and Italy coordinated a joint statement on illegal migration, signed by 34 European leaders. This set out a number of areas for continued collective work, including surveillance and monitoring, humanitarian assistance, and targeting organised immigration crime. Leaders also committed to return to the challenges of illegal migration at the next EPC Summit in Ireland this Autumn.

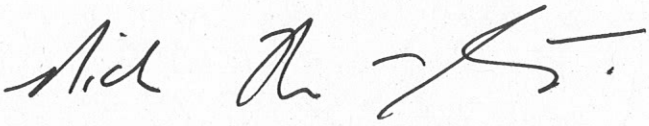
The Prime Minister and President von der Leyen also agreed that the UK and EU should begin negotiations on the UK's potential participation in the European Innovation Council Fund, the venture capital arm of the Horizon Europe programme, as well as the Scaleup Europe Fund, a new multi-billion pound growth fund that will support European high-growth deep tech businesses scale.

The Prime Minister also participated in small group discussions on Moldova and Armenia, in which he underlined continued UK support to both countries in the face of hybrid threats and malign interference in their democratic processes. In a separate bilateral with Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan of Armenia, the Prime Minister agreed a new UK-Armenia Strategic Partnership, on defence and security, economic growth and democratic resilience.

The Prime Minister held productive discussions with several other European leaders in the margins, including European Council President Antonio Costa, Prime Minister Tusk of Poland and Prime Minister Babis of Czechia. Additionally, the Prime Minister signed a joint statement coordinated by President Macron and Prime Minister Meloni, recommitting our support to the European Coalition Against Drugs.

The UK continues to regard the EPC as a valuable forum to advance progress on shared challenges with European partners. The EPC will next meet in Dublin on 8 October 2026.

Yours sincerely,



RT HON NICK THOMAS-SYMONDS MP
MINISTER FOR THE CABINET OFFICE
HIS MAJESTY'S PAYMASTER GENERAL