



Rt Hon Lord Frost CMG
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Sir William Cash MP
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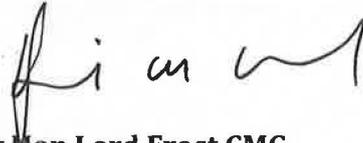
19 April 2021

EUROPEAN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE APPEARANCE

1. As you know, I am scheduled to appear before the European Scrutiny Committee on 26 April 2021. As we have discussed, I see your committee as having an important and necessary scrutiny role on EU matters, on behalf of the House of Commons, and I look forward to fulfilling the responsibility of appearing before it.
2. We are however currently in the middle of urgent discussions with the EU which are nearing important milestones. These cover (though are not limited to) the Northern Ireland Protocol, on which I am in constant touch with Vice President Šefčovič following my dinner with him on 15 April, the implications of the EU's regulation on the export of vaccines, and a range of other practical issues following the end of the transition period on 31 December. I am also engaged in monitoring closely the preparations in the various EU institutions for formal ratification of the TCA before the end of this month.
3. In this context I am also considering the significant and important questions raised by your Committee's most recent reports, including your 9 April 2021 report on the Northern Ireland Protocol.
4. Given these complex and unusual circumstances (and giving you as much notice as I am able to), I would be most grateful if we could defer my hearing until a convenient moment in May once the new session of Parliament has begun. Given the timings of the negotiations set out above, this would enable me to give you and the Committee a more comprehensive presentation on these issues and to answer questions in more depth. We would also have a clearer sense of the evolving debates within the EU on these matters, and overall we should be able to have a more substantive and richer discussion of where UK / EU relations then stand.
5. I hope this will be acceptable to you. If so, I would suggest that my office and the Clerk

to your Committee are in touch urgently to identify a new date. I very much look forward to meeting your Committee.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frost', written in a cursive style.

Rt Hon Lord Frost CMG