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Lord Kinnoull  
Chairman  
EU Affairs Committee  
House of Lords

*By email only.*

Dear Lord Kinnoull

### **PEACE PLUS Programme**

I am writing to update members on upcoming negotiations with the EU Commission to discuss the UK-EU Financing Agreement on the PEACE PLUS Programme, and on matters relating to PEACE PLUS more generally.

As you may be aware and confirmed by the Prime Minister in a Written Statement on 7 September, responsibility for the PEACE PLUS Programme has now transferred from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to the Northern Ireland Office.

You will recall the UK committed to continue to participate in the PEACE PLUS programme as part of the Northern Ireland Protocol. Within this the UK recalled its commitments to North-South Peace and Interreg funding programmes and to maintaining current funding proportions for the programme. In December 2020, it was agreed that in addition to the £300 million already committed, the UK Government will provide more than £200 million extra to PEACE PLUS between now and 2027.

To support delivery of the programme, a standalone UK-EU Financing Agreement is required. My department will start discussions with the EU on this agreement in the coming weeks.

You may also have seen that the Special EU Programmes Body, who administer the programme, launched their public consultation on PEACE PLUS on 10 March 2021,

which is a vital step towards finalising the programme and making funds available for those eligible to apply. This will run for a full two months until 12 May 2021 and we would encourage you to consider.

I look forward to future correspondence and I will provide a substantive update once a draft of the text has been agreed in principle. I appreciate your keen interest and I want to reiterate the UK Government's continued commitment to the PEACE PLUS programme, which I am confident will contribute to a more prosperous and stable society in Northern Ireland.

I am writing in similar terms to Sir William Cash MP and am copying this letter to the Clerks of both Committees, to the EU Document Scrutiny Manager in the Cabinet Office, and to the NIO Policy Leads on PEACE PLUS.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brandon Lewis', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**THE RT HON BRANDON LEWIS CBE MP  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**