

## Minister for Europe and International Development

Convenor of the European and External Relations Committee

### **JOINT MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON EUROPE, 15 JUNE 2015**

1. I attended the meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee on Europe on Monday 15 June on behalf of the Scottish Government. David Lidington (FCO) chaired the meeting which was attended by Liz Truss (DEFRA), James Brokenshire (Home Office), Andrea Leadsom (DECC), Ed Vaizey (BIS), Dominic Raab (MoJ), David Gauke (Treasury), Alun Cairns (Welsh Office), Ben Wallace (Northern Ireland Office) and from the other Devolved Administrations: Michelle McIlveen and Jennifer McCann (Northern Ireland Executive); and Jane Hutt (Welsh Government).

2. The agenda set for the meeting was (1) The Luxembourg Presidency, (2) Energy Union, (3) Digital Single Market, (4) EU Reform and Referendum update and (5) Preparations for the June European Council.

#### **The Luxembourg Presidency**

3. The Luxembourg Presidency of the EU will be a small but ambitious delegation that has as its focus a broad range of programmes that are likely to come to term during the 2017 UK Presidency. Amongst those programmes, and of key interest to the UK, are; completion of the single market, TTIP, climate and energy (with the COP21 in Paris this December), counter terrorism and immigration and asylum policies. I reiterated our current concerns in relation to TTIP.

#### **Energy Union**

4. I informed the committee of the Scottish Government's support in seeking a fully functioning internal market, enhanced energy security, high ambition on climate policy and a low carbon approach to developing the Energy Union. I also underlined Scotland's different approach to nuclear power, opposing the development of new nuclear power stations in Scotland and our evidence-based approach to unconventional oil and gas fracking. In addition, I stressed the importance of the UK Government involving the Scottish Government as the package develops.

#### **Digital Single Market**

5. I highlighted the importance of the Digital Single Market to Scotland and requested that the UK Government keep the Devolved Administrations engaged and involved in any progress at EU level on this matter. I noted the significant opportunities presented by the Digital Single Market for consumers to have available a wider range of digital content and to access that content freely across the whole EU. However, I also stressed that these proposals present a significant change and potential challenge for the business models of certain sectors within the creative industries.

## **EU Reform and Referendum Update**

6. There was a discussion on the UK's planned In-Out Referendum and EU Reform. I reiterated the Scottish Government's position on this.

## **Preparations for the June European Council**

7. The next European Council is scheduled to take place in Brussels on 25-26 June. Heads of State are expected to meet and discuss a variety of topics of key interest to the EU. Two strands of topics are expected to be covered; security challenges and economic issues. Security challenges will encompass relations with Ukraine and Russia, a stocktake on the situation in the Mediterranean and the irregular migration that the EU has witnessed and a progress report on 'The European Agenda on Security' which centres on the fight against terrorism. Economic issues will feature updates on the Digital Single Market, the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and the Four presidents' Report on better economic governance in the Euro area. However, it is likely that the situation in Greece will overshadow much of the planned agenda and this will impact on the time that leaders are able to dedicate to other subjects.

**HUMZA YOUSAF**  
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